

The Children's Ark

Christian Early Childhood Development Center

"Providing all day Christian child care in a preschool setting"



Parent Handbook

August 2018

Please note the date above because this handbook replaces all earlier Parent Handbooks and takes precedence over all memoranda and/or oral description of the terms and conditions of employment. To avoid confusion, please discard any old handbooks.

A LETTER TO THE PARENTS

We are pleased that you have chosen The Children's Ark for the care of your child, or children. As caregivers and teachers, we understand the significance of our role in the life of each child. We hope to provide every child in our care the opportunity to learn and grow in a warm and nurturing environment.

The purpose of this handbook is to answer many of your questions about the policies and procedures of the center. Please feel free to contact the center's office, Monday through Friday, for any questions or concerns that may not have been answered for you in the handbook. We are available by telephone or personal appointment to serve you at 972-491-0844 or e-mail info@thechildrensark.org to ask any questions.

The reason for all we do at The Children's Ark is to help establish a strong, Biblical foundation, so that our children will fulfill God's plan for their lives. Please keep The Children's Ark and the staff in your prayers as we do the same for you.

Sincerely,

The Children's Ark Management Team

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of The Children's Ark is to:

- Make a positive impact on young children at an impressionable age.
- Impact the children and their families for Christ.
- Provide an example of Christian care and witness to our community.
- Serve as models for children and families alike of lives based on Christian morals and ethics.

This is accomplished by providing a caring Christian setting for the education and nurture of children. This philosophy is founded on principle that faith in Jesus Christ is our only hope of salvation and God's Word is the basis for life and practice of a Christian. We expand this principle and show students how this truth can be applied to all areas of life as well as their education.

We will strive to meet these goals by having daily Bible stories, praise & worship and prayer times. The mission is presented through a Christ-centered, biblical perspective to early childhood education and care in the major areas of human development (physical, cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual). God loves all people and He has a purpose and a plan for the life of each individual that He has created. Our desire is to help bring forth each child's destiny and develop their skills to fulfill God's plan.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Children's Ark is a part of the educational ministry of Sent Church.

We believe...

- in one God, as expressed in 3 persons- the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- that the Bible is God's inspired Word and holds the answer for man's needs
- that all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God
- that God offers forgiveness, salvation and eternal life through the glory of God
- that the Church exists for the purpose of evangelizing the world, and helping Christians grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

OUR GOALS

TO PROMOTE EMOTIONAL GROWTH

- To build self-confidence and a sense of self-worth by allowing choices with limits and to build on successful experiences.
- To provide a warm environment for the children to work and play in.
- To encourage curiosity and a sense of wonder with emphasis on self-motivation.

TO PROMOTE INTELLECTUAL GROWTH

- To instill a sense of curiosity.
- To provide a wide variety of activities with a routine where cooperative play is encouraged. Curriculum areas include art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, practical life, dramatic play, language arts and fine motor activities. Through these activities, children are learning to be able to trust their own feelings about what they learn, hear, see and do and begin sharing these activities with others.
- To provide an atmosphere where children discover and explore, and to teach independence through teaching HOW and WHERE to find solutions.

TO PROMOTE SOCIAL GROWTH

- To promote and instill a sense of caring for and sensitivity towards others, and recognition of group needs vs. individual differences.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

Our school takes every precaution we can to prevent accidents. We train our staff in risk management and safety standards. Still, there will be times when a child will have an accident, or an incident may occur between your child and another child that is out of the ordinary. Regardless of how minor the accident or how easily forgotten the incident may be, our teachers will fill out a report for you concerning what happened with full details. If it is decided that first aid is necessary, the treatment will be described to you. Should we feel it is necessary, we will call you on your cell phone or at your place of employment simply to relate to you what happened.

If for any reason you feel that your child was hurt on our premises, you are required to contact our center director immediately. We are mandatory report institution since we are licensed by the state.

Parent/Guardian Name Printed: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

A space for your child at The Children's Ark can be reserved with a one-time, non-refundable registration fee of \$125, family registration \$200. This holds the child's spot for up to two weeks. The Children's Ark reserves the right to grant or deny an extension on the date of enrollment after the two week holding period has expired.

The following will be needed before your child/children begin at the center.

- All appropriate forms must be filled out completely and clearly, signed, notarized (if necessary) and on file with us **PRIOR** to admission. All necessary forms/consents will be given to you in your admission packet.
- All required immunization records or certified state copies of immunization exemptions should be on file.
(Under no circumstances are children allowed to start at The Children's Ark unless immunization records or certified exemptions have been turned in.)
- Read through and become familiar with the Parent Handbook. You will be required to sign a form that indicates you have read, understand and agree to ALL the policies as outlined. If any of these policies change, you will be notified in writing and be asked to sign an acknowledgement receipt. A reminder of the new policy will also be posted in our monthly newsletter.

Please be sure to have all contact information, including emergency contacts, updated at all times.

REGISTRATION POLICY

Families must pay tuition up front prior to leaving on an extended vacation. The Children's Ark will **NOT** hold a spot for the child unless tuition is paid in advance.

ALLERGIES

Nut Free Facility

The Children's Ark is a nut free school. Due to the possible risk of exposing children with certain food allergies, we are a nut free facility. This includes peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts and all nut butters. **No nut products or traces of nut products will be in the school, and none may be brought in.**

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents are expected to provide transportation to and from the center and to escort children into the building. Parents must sign their child in/out each day and make sure the teacher sees that their child has entered the classroom. Parents must pick up their child directly from the teacher.

Children must be signed in and out by a parent, guardian or authorized adult.

The Children's Ark families will sign in their child/children at the front desk.

Children must be walked to their classroom.

Parents with more than one child are required to drop off the oldest child first and the youngest child last. At pick-up, the youngest child should be picked up first and the oldest child last. This rule is for the health and safety of our youngest children. Older siblings are not allowed in the infant and crawler classrooms.

Please do not allow your child to run through the center. Keep your children at your side at all times. Do not allow your child to run out of the building without you. The parking lot is not a safe place for unescorted children; please make sure they are properly supervised while in the parking lot.

Parking is not permitted in any area other than the parking lot. (Remember, children are present and cars parked in non-designated spots may limit another driver's view of children). **The speed limit in the parking lot is 5 mph.** Under no circumstances are you to park in the fire lane.

ARRIVAL TIMES

For the benefit of your child's education and for ease of classroom flow, please make every effort to have your child in the classroom by 9:00AM. We have scheduled the bulk of classroom "structured learning time" between 9:00-10:30AM. This is the time when your children are mentally fresh and will get to participate in planned activities.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE (CONTINUED)

CHILD PICKUP

Children must be picked up by a parent or preauthorized person. The Children's Ark requires any preauthorized pick-up person to have a picture ID and be 18 years of age or older. Please do not allow siblings or other family members under the age of 18 to pick up your child.

Authorization for someone other than the persons listed on your enrollment form to pick-up your child must be in writing and submitted in advance to the office. Identification (driver's license or work ID with photo) will be required for anyone picking up children, other than parents, if not recognized by the staff. If you, or a preauthorized person, arrive to pick up your child and appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, we will call another emergency contact person designated to pick up your child.

In order to prevent a non-custodial parent to visit or pick up during unauthorized times, we will require a written custody agreement with a special statement supported by the court.

A long day at child care can be hard on some children. If you are going to be later than normal, please call and let us know so we can reassure your child that you are fine and are just running late.

Parents, please plan your afternoon pick-up so that you are out of the building by 6:30PM. Please be considerate of your teacher's time. Some of our staff may have evening classes to get to, family commitments, and some even have second jobs. If you want to meet with a teacher, ask for mutually convenient time.

For The Children's Ark, anytime your child is picked up after 6:30PM, there is a late pick-up fee.

****Parents with a school age child must call and let us know when their child won't be on the bus; failure to do so will result in a \$5 no call fee.**

CLOSING TIME FOR THE CHILDREN'S ARK

The center is closed at 6:30PM. We ask parents to cooperate by picking their children up before 6:30PM. If for some reason, a parent will be late in picking up a child, we ask that you call the center to inform the closing staff member. A late charge will be assessed and payable immediately by the parent to the staff personnel forced to remain past 6:30PM (Refer to Late Pick up fees). This means, with no exception, that you must be out of the center by 6:30PM closing time. We recommend finding someone willing to serve as backup who might be able to help you out in an emergency situation. Should tardiness become a consistent problem with any one person, the center reserves the right to request the child to be withdrawn from the center. We will also request withdrawal if the late fee is not paid to the staff.

LATE ARRIVALS

If you have a 'late arrival' day, it would be most helpful to the class if your child arrives prior to 11:00AM. If your child arrives after 11:00AM please feed them lunch prior to dropping them off. Please **do not bring fast food for your child to eat in the classroom** as this poses a "jealousy" issue with other children.

Please keep us informed when extenuating circumstances hinder you from timely drop off of your child, so we can let the teacher know of the situation.

BABYSITTING

To protect the Center, The Children's Ark does not provide any type of after hour services. Hiring staff of The Children's Ark for personal services is strictly prohibited. Should you hire our staff for your personal use, The Children's Ark will not be held liable. **Under no circumstances will be staff be allowed to transport any child in his/her vehicle without the parents signing a permission form relieving The Children's Ark of liability.**

BEHAVIOR ISSUES

Communication between the parent and the school is vital to the child's success. A child needs to feel loved, wanted, and respected. Fostering a child's positive self esteem lays the foundation for appropriate behavior.

The Children's Ark has the responsibility to ensure that no child's learning will be infringed upon by another child's misbehavior. Discipline for misbehavior that children exhibit outside of the center may not affect the child while at our facility.

BITING

Since toddlers (approximately one to three years olds) have limited language, we can only make an educated guess as to why they bite. Some of the probable reasons that toddlers bite are:

1. **TEETHING**-Cutting teeth hurt. Chewing on something relieves the pain. Toddlers are egocentric and cannot put themselves in the place of others. They **do not** know they are hurting another.

2. **SENSORY EXPLORATION**-Anyone who has spent much time with babies and toddlers knows that they put everything in their mouths. This includes other children and adults. Biting is sometimes a way of learning about another child.

3. **CAUSE AND EFFECT**-"If I bite Andrew, I hear a high pitched scream and my special adults come running to my side, I wonder if it will happen again?" This thought seems to be in the mind of some biting toddlers. Toddlers are learning to have an impact on their world and biting definitely has an impact.

4. MIMICRY-Modeling or copying the actions of others are an important and powerful way for toddlers to learn. Unfortunately sometimes the toddlers learn negative behaviors like biting. Any adult who has spent much time with a group of toddlers can testify to the fact that biting is more contagious than chicken pox.

5. SELF-ASSERTION-The accident report given to the parent by a caregiver at the end of the day reads, "Child was bitten during a struggle over a toy." Toddlers have very limited language skills. Consequently, biting is a way to register a complaint.

6. FRUSTRATION, FATIGUE, AND STRESS-Some children bite when they are tired, hungry, rushed, when parents are out of town, or when parents worked a late night. Adults need to be aware of what is happening in the life of the biting child and take action to prevent other children from being physically hurt.

Biting is an age-appropriate behavior for toddlers (approximately one to three years old). Biting is especially likely among those toddlers in group care settings. Even so, biting is **not** an acceptable behavior and adults must help toddlers control their urge to bite other children (although we wish we could, caregivers and teachers cannot promise that your child will never be bitten.)

Uncontrolled biting or biting that breaks the skin results in an immediate phone call to the parent and may require the parent to pick up the child for the remainder of the day.

BULLYING

The Children's Ark has a zero tolerance policy for bullying.

FIGHTING

Hitting, punching and scratching are not allowed. Children who engage in such activity may be sent home.

INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

We all know that children repeat nearly everything they hear. We encourage families to carefully monitor their choice of words in the home. "Potty" words (vulgar and inappropriate words) are not acceptable for children to say and definitely not appropriate to be used at The Children's Ark.

CHILD ABUSE

Reporting Abuse and Neglect

The Children's Ark employees are required by Texas state law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance where there is a reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual or emotional child abuse , child neglect, or exploitation.

The Children's Ark staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS has been called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police.

Children will be visually checked by teachers and staff upon arrival at the center. If abuse, neglect, or exploitation is suspected, your child will be further checked for unexplained marks, bruises and child hygiene issues. We will also watch for children left unattended in a vehicle, not properly secured in a car seat, seatbelt or booster seat.

To help them identify suspected occurrences of abuse, The Children's Ark employees are required to obtain at least one clock hour of annual training focusing on preventing, recognizing and reporting child abuse and /or neglect.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the director. You may also contact our state licensing representative at 214-583-4253 or on the internet at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

The statewide Abuse and Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect. Programs are available through local organizations such as:

*Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County
2205 Los Rios Boulevard
Plano, TX 75074
972-633-6600

*STARRY Family Counseling - Plano
17440 North Dallas Pkwy
Dallas, TX 75287
972-984-9207

*STARRY Family Counseling – McKinney
4501 Medical Center Drive, Suite 300
McKinney, TX 75069

*Dallas Children's Advocacy Center
5351 Samuell Blvd.
Dallas, TX. 75228
214-818-2600

CLOTHING

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing. **Sandals, hee-lies, cleats, jelly shoes and flip-flops are not acceptable;** shoes with traction, such as tennis shoes are required. Girls must wear shorts under their dresses or skirts. When available, smocks will be provided for paint and water activities. Please remember that children are taken outdoors daily (weather permitting) and should dress accordingly: light jacket and cap in spring and fall, heavy jacket, hat, scarf, mittens and boots in the winter. **ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE LABELED!**

Water activities, occasional spills and bathroom activities necessitate that extra changes of clothes (including socks and underwear) are left at the center at all times. Two changes of clothing should be marked with the child's name. All extra clothes should be changed with the seasons. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes the next morning. If a child needs an extra set of clothes and does not have one, parents will be called to bring clothes. We do not provide clothes or borrow clothes from other children as this too often leads to lost articles.

Parents are responsible for providing diapers and baby wipes for children who are not potty trained. Anyone who consistently does not provide an ample supply of diapers will be charged \$1 per diaper at the center's discretion. Parents should plan on providing 8-10 diapers each day. If your child is in the process of potty-training, please supply several changes of clothing until your child is no longer having potty-training accidents.

COMMUNICATION

Our staff must attempt to give daily feedback to the parents regarding the child's day at school. In turn, it is helpful if parents inform the staff if there is anything at home which may affect the child at school, such as a visit from a grandparent, illness in the family, a restless night, or an event which has excited or upset the child. If the staff is aware of such events, they can respond accordingly to any needs or concerns of the child while at school.

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled upon request. Parents may request to talk with our directors at any point in time.

To further aid staff in communicating with your family, please keep the school advised of changes to address, phone numbers and other contact information.

CONFIDENTIALTY

All records and information are strictly confidential. Children's records are kept in a locked file cabinet in the Director's office. We will not release any information on a child without prior written consent.

CUSTODY ISSUES

The Children's Ark does not have the right to withhold a child from any parent having custody or joint custody. The center cannot become involved in custody disputes. Parents indicating that they have custody issues should be directed to speak with the director about this issue. Families with unresolved custody issues that interfere with the operation of The Children's Ark will be asked to withdrawal their children from the center. **Current court order must be on file.**

DISCIPLINE

The following forms of discipline are used at The Children's Ark:

- RE-DIRECTION: To channel a child's misbehavior to an acceptable behavior.
- NATURAL CONSEQUENCES: When children are allowed to experience the consequences of their own actions and decisions, they learn to respect themselves, others and the natural order of things. They also learn to make decisions that are more responsible.
- LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES are related to the misbehavior and are arranged by an adult, often in the form of an agreement with the child. Consequences are applied without anger, hostility, vengeance, lectures, moralizing, or criticizing, and are preferably in private. Consequences are concerned with present or future behavior rather than the past.
- "REFLECTION TIME" For clarification purposes, The Children's Ark/The Light House uses the following definition for "Reflection Time": "Reflection Time" is the removal of a child for a short period of time (1 minute per age of child) from a situation in which the child is not following the classroom rules and has not responded to other discipline techniques. The "reflection time" space is usually in the library area located away from classroom activity but within the teacher's sight. During "reflection time," the child has a chance to think about the misbehavior which led to his removal from the group. After a brief interval, the teacher will discuss the incident and appropriate behavior with the child. When the child returns to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same affection and respect shown to the other children.

DISCHARGE/DISENROLLED POLICY

A child may be discharged from the Center if:

- It is determined that the child's needs are not being met at the Center
- The parent does not comply with the policies of the Center
- It is determined that a child is disruptive, uncooperative, or in any other way disturbs the other children or the program

The Center reserves the right to ask a child to leave at any time with or without the completion of some or all of these steps:

- The parent or guardian would be contacted and the situation with the child would be discussed, including requests for parental assistance.
- If the behavior continues, a conference would be set up between the parent or guardian and representatives of the Center. The conference would include discussions regarding possible corrective action. Additional information conferences may be necessary.
- If the Center staff determines that the child's behavior cannot be modified or if it is beyond their abilities to properly care for that child, the child will be dismissed from The Children's Ark with or without extended notice.

DONATIONS

The Children's Ark is a nonprofit organization funded mainly by tuition. Any donations of money or new or used materials are considered acceptable tax deductions by the IRS. Tax receipts can be provided, when requested, to anyone making a donation to the Center.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND RELOCATION

In the event of an emergency evacuation of the building, all staff and children will remain safely away from the building until all threat of danger has subsided. If, however, immediate re-entry to the building is not possible and/or adverse weather conditions exist, The Children's Ark staff and children will walk to DaySpring Assisted Living Center located at 6400 Cheyenne Trail Plano, Texas 75023 where they will remain until it is safe to re-enter the child care center. Parents looking for their children should go directly to DaySpring. (The Assisted Living Center is located on the far north end of our campus. Phone # for the center is 972.769.7709.) Emergency evacuation procedures are available for those who wish to view them.

GANG FREE ZONE

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of The Children's Ark Christian Day School. Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties. Gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of the center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law. The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. The local municipal or county engineer may produce and update maps for the purposes of prosecution. Parents may contact their local municipality or court house for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

HEALTH

IMMUNIZATIONS

Children must be current on all required immunizations. Health reports signed by a physician will be kept on file. A list of required immunizations can be obtained at the office or by contacting your private physician or the health department.

Parents are required to complete and submit the Health and Emergency Permission form and Health Information forms **prior** to enrollment.

Vaccine-preventable Diseases for Employees:

While the safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases **OPTIONAL** to the employees.

Our staff is required to obtain TB tests on a yearly basis, no other immunizations are required. Vaccines that we currently recommend our employees to receive: Influenza (annually) and Pertussis (Tdap).

If the employee is not exempt from having these immunizations, The Children's Ark recommends that employees consider these immunizations.

The employee will indicate below if there are any exemptions that would prevent them from receiving an immunization for a vaccine-preventable disease.

If the employee decides that their immunizations are appropriate and beneficial for their health and well-being, and receive the immunization, they are asked to provide the Center Director with documentation that the immunization have been received.

The Children's Ark will encourage the use of protective medical equipment to protect employees and children in care from exposure to possible disease. In addition to hand washing, the protective medical equipment would include gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer.

The use of protective medical equipment will be based on the level of risk the employee presents to children by the employee's routine and direct exposure to children. Employees should not be in direct contact when they are ill or exhibiting signs of illness. The Children's Ark will monitor information provided to the public through The Center of Disease Control and/or other sources to determine the level of risk the employee presents.

There will be no discrimination or retaliatory action against any employee who does/does not receive immunizations for vaccine-preventable illness. The use of protective medical equipment will not be considered retaliatory when used by employees of The Children's Ark.

All employees will be required to sign this policy and the signed policy will be retained on file. The information related to whether or not an employee chooses to have immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases will be kept confidential. Failure to sign this policy will result in the employee not being able to work directly with children.

HEARING AND VISION

Children four years of age or older, who are enrolled in our facility for the first time, must be screened for possible hearing and vision problems within 120 calendar days of enrollment. If a child is enrolled within 60 days of the date a facility closes for the summer, the child's hearing and vision must be tested by December 31 of that year.

Children previously enrolled in a facility who are four years of age on or before September 1, must be screened for possible hearing and vision problems by December 31.

LICE POLICY

A child who is found to have nits or live lice will be sent home. The child will be allowed to return to school after the parent has treated the children and has provided The Children's Ark with proof of treatment. Proof of treatment is the receipt or box from the treatment. The child will be rechecked when returning to school and again in 6 days to be sure that any remaining nits have not hatched. Parents will be provided with additional information if their child is sent home.

HEALTH (CONTINUED)

MEDICATIONS

In order to be able to administer medications as required by the State of Texas, the following procedures will need to be followed:

- **Prescription medications must be in the original container labeled with the child's name, a date, directions, and the physician's name.** The center must not administer medication after the expiration date on the container.
- All medications MUST be brought to the office, not to the child's teacher or left in a backpack.
- The school requires written authorization from child's physician to accompany any medication and breathing treatment.
- Parents must complete consent form for The Children's Ark to administer any medication, including diaper rash cream or sunscreen.
- Non-prescription medications must be labeled with the child's name and the date that the medication was brought to the center. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container. It must be administered according to the directions on the label. We cannot dispense medicine if the directions say "Consult a Doctor".
- **Due to fever reducer's, such as Tylenol, Motrin, etc., ability to hide existing illnesses, we will no longer administer it except with a doctor's written permission and a statement that the child is not contagious. You will need to provide the medication for your child.**
- We only dispense medicine at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. We also ask that any medicine that requires two doses a day or less be given at home.

The office will notify parents when an illness needs attention or is contagious. Parents will also be notified if their child sustains an injury which needs attention. In a medical emergency the center will call 911 immediately.

The office must follow the recommendations of the Texas Department of Health concerning the admission or readmission of any child after a communicable disease (example: chicken pox, measles, etc.)

The Special Senses and Communications Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires a screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for the following children who are enrolled in a childcare center:

1. First-time enrollees who are four years of age or older and all children enrolled in programs who are four years of ages by September 1 of each year will be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest, or present evidence of screening conducted one year prior to enrollment; and
2. Each child who is in the first, third, fifth, or sixth-grade must complete a screening or examination within the school year. Child care center must have a copy of screening on file.

HEALTH (CONTINUED)

SICK CHILD POLICY

We are not equipped to care for sick children. Do not bring your child when sick. Should a child show any symptoms of illness, he should be kept at home until he feels well again and it has been determined that he has no contagious disease. Take time to check out complaints or symptoms you may notice. If your child becomes sick at school, he will be isolated and you will be notified to pick him up as soon as possible. Parents should make arrangements with their employers so that they have the freedom to leave work to take care of their sick child.

CHILD MUST BE 24 HRS SYMPTOM FREE BEFORE RETURNING TO THE CENTER OR HAVE A DOCTOR'S NOTE STARTING HE/SHE IS NOT CONTAGIOUS.

Symptoms should not be masked by any fever reducers, such as Tylenol or other medications.

A child who appears ill will not be re-admitted to The Children's Ark unless approved in writing by a physician. The following symptoms will be used as guidelines for dismissal, but are not all inclusive. Readmission to the center will require your child to be **24 hour symptom free. Or you may submit a note from your doctor stating the diagnosis and specified return date.**

The following conditions require exclusion from class:

- Temperature of 101 or higher (using ear thermometer)
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Mouth sores
- Infected sores
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hour
- Severe diaper rash
- Persistent cough
- Severe itching of body or scalp; or scratching of scalp
- Grey or white stools
- Head Lice
- Unusually dark or tea-colored urine
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Pink eye-conjunctivitis, viral or bacterial; tearing and redness of eyelid lining; irritation followed by swelling and green or yellow discharge
- Yellowish skin or eyes-these may be signs of hepatitis
- Difficult or rapid breathing-extremely important in children under 12 months

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Children's Ark is open daily:

6:30AM-6:30PM, Monday-Friday, with the exception of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day (or 1 workday, depending on when New Year's Day falls)
- New Year's Eve (early closing or 1 workday depending on when New Year's Eve falls)
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)
- Christmas Eve/Christmas Day (or 2 workdays, depending on when Christmas falls)

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Children's Ark will follow Plano Independent School District's decision regarding school closings for hazardous weather. Listen to local radio and television stations for the latest information.

We will follow PISD with regards to delayed school openings as well.

- **We will also post our closings on the following website: nbcdfw.com**
- **There is no discount in tuition for inclement weather closures**

LICENSURE

Our school is licensed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The rules and regulations for childcare licensure by The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services are available for review upon request.

MEALS AND SNACKS

The Children's Ark provides a morning snack and hot lunch before rest period and an afternoon snack after their rest period. Our food is catered and meets the nutritional requirements with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Children who are dropped off between **6:30AM – 8:30AM** may bring a well-balanced PREPARED breakfast or snack. Please make sure containers are labeled with your child's name. No candy or fruit snacks. Parents are responsible to provide food substitutes for children with allergies. Substitute snacks may be provided to Crawlers/Toddlers by The Children's Ark if catered snacks are inappropriate.

Morning snack is typically served between 8:00AM-8:30AM. Classroom flow necessitates snack clean up by 8:30AM. Children arriving after 8:30AM will not be served a morning snack.

If a child's diet consists of formula taken from a bottle, parents must provide the appropriate number of prepared bottles containing the formula necessary for the child each day. Each bottle must be clearly labeled with child's first and last name.

The Children's Ark is a **NUT FREE** school. No nut products or traces of nut products will be in the school, and none may be brought into the facility. (See Allergies)

Birthdays and Special Occasions

For the safety of our children, the Health Department requires that all food brought into the center must be store bought. Parents are welcome to send cookies or cupcakes to share with their children's classmates on birthdays or special occasions. Please let the teacher know in advance that you will bring a treat. On major holidays, each class may have a special party. Parents may be requested to bring treats and or food items. Sign-up sheets will be posted on classroom doors or parent bulletin board. This is a totally voluntary decision on your part to contribute something to the party.

NAPTIME POLICY

A supervised sleep or rest period is provided in all classrooms. A child who is awake after lying quietly or sleeping for one hour will be given an alternative, quiet activity until nap/rest time is over for the other children.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

No person, on the grounds of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in receiving services at The Children's Ark, nor do we hire or assign staff on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin.

NURSING MOTHERS

The Children's Ark accommodates nursing mothers. Moms wishing to nurse their child should make arrangements with the lead teacher in the Infant Room. There are comfortable adult sized rockers located in the infant room for parents to breastfeed their child.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

The Children's Ark welcomes parents anytime during the day to visit a child's classroom. If the time a parent spends in the classroom exceeds one hour a day, that parent is considered a volunteer. Volunteers must complete a criminal history check one week prior to the first volunteer day.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in program activities, both through fund raising activities and through classroom involvement. Staff welcomes parental assistance on field trips. Also, parents may have a special profession, interest or skill which can be integrated into the daily program. In the past, doctors have become involved in sunscreen talks, dentists in tooth care demonstrations (including a field trip to the dentist's office) and a parent came to play his violin. Staff can always use assistance with special crafts. (Please

volunteer your talents and time to the children and staff). Even if you feel you lack the necessary talent, the staff may have a special project or tasks in mind which requires extra help.

PARENT BULLETIN BOARD

Each classroom has a parent bulletin board or door used for displaying menus, programs, enrichment sign-up sheets and other notices to parents. Please be certain to look at these each day for news of the day.

PARKING AND PARKING LOT ETIQUETTE

The driveway just outside The Children's Ark entrance is a fire lane. It is illegal to park your vehicle in this space. Please do not park in this area to drop off your child. Help us enforce the city code to ensure the safety of all children. The speed limit in the parking lot is **5MPH**, please obey this speed limit. We ask that you do not cut through the parking spaces and use the designated paths to drive in the lot.

PETS

The Children's Ark will not allow children to come in contact with chickens, ducks, and reptiles (such as snakes, turtles, lizards, iguanas), and amphibians (such as frogs and toads) while in our care.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND PUBLICITY

Our staff enjoys taking pictures of the children participating in class and school wide activities. These pictures may appear in promotional materials for the school including school website, magazine advertisements, and other publicity materials. We require a statement of consent from the parent prior to using a child's picture. The Photo Policy Consent is on the bottom of the Policies and Procedures form found in the Admission Packets.

POTTY TRAINING

Potty training is a huge milestone for children and parents. Consistency is the key to success. Please discuss your child's potty training with his/her teachers before you send your child to school in training pants or underwear. Every child is different and we want to meet the needs of the children on an individual basis. Warm weather is a good time to start. If you begin potty training before your child is two and he/she loses interest, stop and try again in a few weeks. Once an older child starts the process, keep trying, they will catch on eventually. We will keep in close communication with you during this important learning process. When your child begins to show interest we will start to work on potty skills. A letter detailing The Children's Ark potty training policy will be furnished to parents when the child is ready for potty training. Accidents are handled matter-of-factly and the child cleans him/herself and changes his/her own clothes. Children having an accident one or more times per week are not considered completely potty trained. Children entering

PreK2 class (three's) must be completely potty trained and able to communicate their potty needs to the teacher.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

The Children's Ark arranges with the local fire department for a fire safety talk for each classroom so that the children are familiar with fire safety. We also conduct monthly fire drills. These drills are intended primarily to ensure that the staff and children know what to do and how to do it properly in the event of an emergency. If necessary, the individual staff will work on fire safety with their class to alleviate fear or other concerns. Severe weather drills are conducted every 3 months. A record of the drill is kept in the Director's office.

SUMMER PROGRAM

Children enrolling in our Camp 360 summer program must be at least 5 years old and have completed kindergarten by June 1st in order to participate.

SUNSCREEN

Children do have a daily play time outside. You can help your child practice sun safety by applying sunscreen prior to bringing them to school. Parents must complete a consent form for The Children's Ark to apply sunscreen.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Children must be accompanied by an adult at **ALL** times, regardless of their age, including walking children to their classroom.

TERMINATION OF CARE

Circumstances that may require The Children's Ark to terminate care of a child include but are not limited to the following:

- Failure to adjust after a trial period (at least 1 month)
- Failure to pay tuition/fees
- Failure to provide state required documentation
- Excessive late pick-up fees
- Behavior that is harmful to other children/staff

TOYS, VIDEOS AND GUM

- Toys may not be brought from home except for scheduled Show and Tell days. Children may bring a small stuffed animal to sleep with, if needed. All toys must be kept in their cubbies before and after naptime. The school can in no way be held responsible for toys brought into the classroom. Parents are instructed to not bring war or violent toys on Show and Tell Days.
- **No guns or swords are allowed.**

- We do not allow any TV but on occasion we will show a video. Parents will be informed of movie showings and ratings. Other activities will be available to children during video viewing.
- Please do not allow children to bring or chew gum in school.

TRANSPORTATION-THE CHILDREN’S ARK

AFTER SCHOOL

The Children’s Ark transports children from a limited selection of public schools to the center. We ask that you discuss with your child our policies and procedures while in the van. As part of your admission package to our after school program you will be asked to sign a pick up form. Parents must inform The Children’s Ark office if their child will not be at the school for pick up.

For each “failure to inform” The Children’s Ark will add \$5 to the child’s account.

TRANSPORTATION-THE CHILDREN’S ARK (CONTINUED)

FIELD TRIP TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Children ages 5 and over may participate in field trip activities. Child must comply with the rules and regulations while on the van and at the field trip location in order to participate. Parents are required to read and sign the Field Trip Guidelines prior to field trips. We will not allow any child to be dropped off at the field trip location. Children must depart in a The Children’s Ark vehicle in order to participate in the field trip.

The Children’s Ark requires a transportation consent form signed and notarized before leaving for the field trip.

TUITION AND FEES

THE CHILDREN’S ARK

Tuition is due each Friday by closing for the upcoming week. Tuition is late after 6:30PM on Monday.

- Tuition can be paid by cash or credit card (if you choose to pay by checks a \$25 return check fee will be assessed to any returned checks)
- Tuition not paid by Monday at closing will incur a \$10 late fee.
- An additional \$10 late fee will be charged to your account **EACH DAY** tuition is late, starting end of day Tuesday.
- Tuition unpaid by Friday at closing gives The Children’s Ark the right to deny care for your child until your account is paid in full.
- Late fees will be waived when a payment plan is set up with director, providing said payments are kept current.

THE CHILDREN'S ARK

Tuition payments secure a class spot and is payable regardless of times attended. **Refunds and make up days WILL NOT BE made for absence, sickness, days missed due to inclement weather or withdrawals.** Should it become necessary to withdraw your child, please give a 2 week notice. We do require tuition equal to 2 weeks of class attendance when withdrawing.

TUITION AND FEES (CONTINUED)

LATE PICK-UP FEES

The Children's Ark closes at 6:30PM and children must be picked up by that time. After 6:30PM, a **\$1 per minute** late pick-up fee will be charged. This fee is payable in cash and due upon pick-up. If child has not been picked up by 7:00PM and all attempts to contact the parent and all emergency contacts have failed, The Children's Ark is obligated to call Family Protective Services and the police.

REFERRAL DISCOUNT

A referral discount of \$80 will be applied to the referring family's account after the referred family remains enrolled with tuition paid for 1 month. Referred family must indicate referring family at time of enrollment.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

Sent Church members receive a 10% discount on tuition for children enrolled at The Children' Ark. Membership means the parents must become ministry partners of Sent Church and be active attenders of Sent Church, attending an average of 2 out of 4 Sundays a month. Only one discount per family will apply.

Families with 2 or more children will receive a 10% discount towards the second child's tuition. Discount will be taken off the lower tuition.

Unsafe Children's Products

Recalls of unsafe consumer products, including children's products, are available. Visit the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission web site at www.cpsc.gov or you may access the recall information through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services web site www.dfps.state.tx.us. A link is also provided on the parent page of our web site.

The Children's Ark

3701 W. Spring Creek Parkway
Plano, TX 75023
Phone: 972-491-0844
Fax: 972-618-5838
Email: info@thechildrensark.org

I acknowledge that I have received and read The Children's Ark Parent Handbook dated August 2018. By signing below, I am acknowledging that I have read the handbook and accept the terms therein.

Parent Signature

Date

www.thechildrensark.org

