

EAST END PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



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EAST END PRESCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide preschool-aged children with a quality learning experience. As a parent cooperative, east end preschool (EEP) views education as a partnership between parents and teachers. We believe that small classes and individualized attention encourage a creative, expressive environment while nurturing a sense of independence and ownership of the process of learning. Our school utilizes a center-based teaching philosophy that enhances cross-curriculum learning with lessons organized around themes.

STATEMENT OF SERVICES

EEP is a part-time program that offers care for children ages 6 weeks through Pre-K 4. Daily activities consist of a flexible schedule that has been created to provide diversity and challenge for children in all age groups. Our activities include school readiness skills, arts and crafts, games, music, outdoor play, and story time.

STATE LICENSING

EEP complies with the applicable state licensing regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facilities, playground, health and safety guidelines, and child/staff ratios. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this parent handbook.

HOURS AND DAYS

EEP begins the last week in August and will end the 3rd week in May. Early morning drop-off begins at 7:45 a.m. The regular school day is from 8:45 to 11:45 a.m. A stay and play option until 3:00 are available Monday through Friday, except one Friday of each month for staff meetings. EEP follows the GISD academic calendar. We are closed New Year's Day, Good Friday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving break (3 to 5 days), two weeks for Christmas, and spring break. These days will be decided by the GISD school calendar. All holidays will be charged at the regular rate.

An eight-week summer program is also available. A school age class may be offered to siblings of children who are enrolled in EEP or alumni of the program. This program begins the 1st full week in June. The summer program is open Monday to Friday except for the July 4th week. The hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

CLOSURES

EEP follows the GISD guidelines for snow/ice and other inclement weather. Any days missed for weather will not be made up. Tuition will still be required during the event of a school closure.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Enrollment in our program is open to all families in our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one shall be excluded from any of our programs because of race, color, religion, disability, sex or national origin.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Only the child's parent or legal guardian may enroll a child. (Proof of custody may be required). All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend. All parents will be required to fill out a waiver for Covid-19. All personal information is kept confidential.

Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell and work numbers, and the names of individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must be submitted to the center upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. East End Preschool must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child(ren)'s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this parent's handbook.

ADMISSION PROCESS

Parents wishing to enroll their child in EEP are encouraged to set up an appointment with the office to tour EEP and meet the Director and their child's Lead Teacher. Tours are scheduled between 9:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Monday through Friday. The purpose of the informal tour is to answer questions concerning policies and procedures, view classrooms and facilities, and discuss typical class schedules. At this time, you will be given a copy of the parent handbook and necessary enrollment forms.

ENROLLMENT PERIOD

All children shall be considered continuously enrolled from the time enrollment paperwork and registration paperwork is turned into the office and the student has started classes, until they are formally withdrawn according to the procedure outlined in the section "Vacations, Absences, and Withdrawal."

VACATION, ABSENCES AND WITHDRAWAL

Parents are required to notify EEP two weeks prior to their child withdrawing including withdrawing from pre-registration.

Vacations and illnesses will be charged at the regular monthly rate. Failure to notify EEP will cause all fees to continue until written notification is given. EEP reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of a child according to our "discipline policy". EEP also reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of any child whose parent and or guardian has become a problem at EEP or who has developed an un-cooperative, aggressive, dissatisfied, or angry demeanor towards EEP, its policies or its staff.

REGISTRATION

Registration for each school year will begin in March of the preceding year. Registration consists of a period of "in-house" enrollment followed by "open" enrollment. During the "in-house" enrollment period, students currently enrolled at EEP will have the first opportunity of registering for the next school year, followed by siblings of current EEP students. Open enrollment is then available to the community at large. No priority is given during open enrollment.

To register for the next school year, the student's account for the current school year must be in good financial

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standing. All registration is on a first come/first served basis. Registrations will be recorded in the order of receipt of both the registration fee and a completed registration form. The registration fee is listed on the registration information sheet and is evaluated yearly. The registration fee does not apply toward tuition costs and is non-refundable for all admitted students, without regard to their actual enrollment. After enrollment is filled, a waiting list for each class will be kept in order of inquiry. Students will be accepted from the waiting list in order.

PAPERWORK, FORMS AND ANNUAL RENEWAL

We are required by the State to have current and updated information on each child. Completed enrollment packets and current immunization records along with the Health Statement letter must be returned prior to your child's first day. Registration forms are required to be completed at the start of each school year in August regardless of prior enrollment. Students will not be permitted to start until all forms are current and turned into the office.

ADMISSION INFORMATION SHEET

All persons authorized to pick a child up from EEP must be listed on the admission information sheet. To avoid confusion, it is the responsibility of the parent signing the child into EEP to properly fill out all forms. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell and work numbers, and the names of individuals authorized to pick up your child if the parent(s)/guardians cannot be reached.

CUSTODY INFORMATION

EEP must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child's file. In a custody situation the parent signing the child into EEP takes full responsibility to ensure that this is in accordance with their specific court agreement, which must be attached to the enrollment forms if any limitation of rights is suggested by the admission information sheet. If a parent who is not listed or who believes the information given to us was inaccurate contests the authorization details, they must first offer proof that they are indeed the legal parent or guardian and have legal rights to pick the child up. EEP will require lawyers for both sides to be contacted and both attorneys will be requested to give us documentation as to the individuals approved for pick-up. EEP reserves the right to not allow any individual onto our property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONSENT FORM

This form will give us your consent to call an ambulance or your child's doctor if he/she needs emergency care. Please list your child's doctor and the hospital you would prefer. Also, please list phone numbers, addresses, and additional emergency numbers of contacts. It is strongly suggested that all emergency contacts all be listed on your admission information sheet. If your child has any allergies or is on any medications, please include this information on the admission information sheet.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Current immunization information must be submitted to EEP upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. Immunization records need to be presented on or before the first day the child attends EEP. A copy of

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these will be kept on file. When your child receives additional immunizations, you are required to bring your immunization record back so we can update your file.

An exemption affidavit must be provided if your child is exempt from shots due to a medical reason. The exemption form must be notarized, and the physician must sign off on the form that the child is exempt from shots due to medical reasons. Parents wishing to take a religious exemption must contact the office to find out the proper procedure for providing an affidavit of such a religious opposition. If EEP is penalized or fined for non-compliance of immunization records due to a parent's neglect, that fine will be passed to the client responsible including an additional \$50 administration fee.

INFORMATION CHANGE

Parents are to notify EEP of any change in home or work phone numbers and addresses. This is for your safety so that we may reach you in an emergency. It is required that all changes to phone numbers, places of employment, residence changes or changes in pick-up information be submitted to the Director in writing as soon as possible.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Parents are responsible for their child's transportation to EEP and for arranging their own carpools.

DROP-OFF

It is recommended that parents drop their child/children off at the door; however, parents who wish may accompany their child(ren) into his/her child's classroom every morning and sign their child in immediately. Children will not be permitted in the building prior to opening hours. For safety and security purposes, children are not allowed to come into the EEP area alone or to sign themselves in.

PICK-UP

All children must be picked up and signed out by a parent or other adult approved by the parent and EEP. Students will be dismissed from the front door. All children must be signed out before being picked up from their classroom. Anyone, including all parents, who are to be allowed to pick the child up, ***must*** be listed on the admission information sheet or be approved in writing by a parent. In an emergency, parents may call EEP and give verbal approval of an alternate individual. However, this is strongly discouraged. Anyone not recognized by sight will be asked for a picture ID. In the event anyone out of the ordinary is to pick up the child, please alert the office prior to that time. This is in addition to them being on the admission information sheet or approval as stated above. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office and make changes to this form whenever necessary. This form is re-submitted annually.

PARKING

For the convenience and safety of all, specific traffic and parking patterns have been established. Always park facing north under the canopy. Due to the limited number of vehicles that may be in this area, please park in one of the parking spaces if you anticipate you will be in the building longer than 5 minutes. If you intend to spend

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time in the building, park in the church lot (with exception of the three spots reserved for the First Presbyterian Church staff) or in the Knights of Columbus parking lot on the corner of 20th and Winnie. Do not park in the two parking slots closest to Winnie; these spots are reserved, and you could be towed. We strongly urge you to turn your car off and lock it when you come in to drop off or pick up your child. EEP is not responsible for items lost or stolen from cars or from the parking lot or facility.

HEALTH

MEDICATION

All medication to be given to children must be in the original bottle with the instructions clearly printed on it as provided by the doctor's prescription or by the pharmaceutical company. All medicine, including scripted and unscripted medications, must be in an up-to-date bottle and not be outdated or past-dated. All prescription medication must have that child's name on the script. All non-prescription medicine must have a permanent sticker with the child's name and the date the medication was left at EEP. A permission to give medication form needs to be filled out prior to the administration of any medication. All medicines must be personally handed to the teacher in charge at the time of arrival along with the permission to give medication form (filled out). Bug repellent and sunscreen can be applied to children through written parental consent. Parental consent forms are in the enrollment paperwork for EEP. EEP reserves the right not to give medicines if the dosage is questionable or not according to the label. EEP reserves the right to request a doctor's consent via handwritten prescription for any non-prescription medications. Any remaining medication will be returned to the parent upon completion of the course of medication. EEP does not use unassigned epi pins.

ALLERGIES

EEP must be aware of any food or other known allergies that affect your child. If your child has any known food allergies, you will need to list any such allergies on your admission information sheet. Each food allergy must have a food allergy emergency plan filled out. The food allergy emergency plan must be completed by the doctor and returned to EEP. Food allergy emergency plans will be kept where food is being stored, in the classrooms where the children are present, and in the office. Food allergies must be confirmed by a doctor to be considered a true food allergy. This allows EEP to alert all staff to be on guard of their allergy. The admission information sheet must be updated soon as any allergy has been identified. You will also need to fill out an authorization to give medication form if your child requires an epi-pen or other emergency treatment.

ILLNESS

To provide a safe and healthy environment for all children, EEP relies on parents to monitor their child for signs of illness. **A child that is ill or has a temperature over 101 degrees orally/ tympanic (ear) 100 degrees, or axillary (armpit) 100 degrees, infrared temporal (forehead) 100 should be kept home for 24 hours.** All children shall have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior. A child that is too ill to remain in EEP shall be supervised and cared for until the child can be cared for elsewhere. **The child will be sent home if he/she is running a temperature of \over 100 degrees, if he/she is vomiting or has diarrhea, or if it is suspected that he/she has a contagious disease.**

EEP requires that someone listed on the admission information sheet of each child be available within thirty (30) minutes notice to pick up a sick child or a child that EEP has determined needs to go home. There will be a \$5.00 charge for every minute the child is picked up after 30 minutes. If a child needs to be sent home and their parents are unreachable, we will call the emergency contacts listed on the admission information sheet.

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The child must be symptom free and fever free without medication for 24 hours before they may return. EEP reserves the right to request the child to see a physician or have a physician's note prior to returning. If your child tests positive for Covid- 19 they must stay home for 5 days. Your child may return on day 6 if they are symptom free and fever free for 24 hours.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENS

Children who are four years of age by September 1 of each year must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems. Prior to completion of the first 90 days of enrollment, parents must submit documentation from a healthcare professional for the screening. Hearing and vision forms will be provided by the EEP office.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS

Safety is a top priority of EEP, yet there are times when a child will have an accident, or an incident may occur between your child and another child. If the accident/incident requires more than a hug, our teachers will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. A copy of this accident report, signed by the teacher in charge at the time of the accident, will be provided to you and a copy filed with the Director's office. We ask that you sign the copy provided to you and return it to the Director's office to confirm that you were notified of your child's injury. If your child happens to be injured by another child, we ask you to please respect the child's privacy by not asking us to reveal the name of the child. We will handle all behavior problems in a professional and appropriate way. Any non-routine event that could pose harm to a child must be reported to parents and CCR. An incident/accident report will be filed.

CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

EEP complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable regulations pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. We desire to provide special accommodation for children who require such, provided it is within our power and authority to do so. If your child has special care needs such as limitations or restrictions on activities, medical equipment such as a nebulizer, or other adaptive equipment we must have documentation on file by a health-care professional requiring what equipment is needed and instruction for its use. Accommodation can also be a specific treatment prescribed by a professional or a parent, a modification of equipment, or removal of physical barriers. The accommodation shall be recorded in the child's file. All staff will follow the reasonable accommodation we have provided for that child. Any questions about the accommodation for the child should be directed to the director.

DISCIPLINE

EEP staff are trained in using positive reinforcement as a means of discipline. Our goal is to find solutions and to provide the very best environment for your child. Types of discipline and guidance that are prohibited are:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
2. Punishment is associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
3. Grabbing or pulling on a child.
4. Putting anything in their mouth.

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5. Humiliating, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
6. Subjecting the child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
7. Placing a child in a dark room.
8. Placing a child in a restrictive device for time out.
9. Withholding active play
10. Requiring a child to remain silent.
11. Pinching, biting, or shaking a child.

Parents may not discipline their children at EEP using any of the prohibited techniques. If this occurs the staff member will file an incident/accident report and notify CCR. Parents will be required to sign the report.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is best accomplished with the cooperation of teachers, parents, and children. Children learn toileting skills through consistent positive encouragement from adults at home and at EEP.

Toilet training usually begins around 2 years of age. When a child shows an interest in toilet training, the parents and teachers should meet to discuss the consistency of potty training at home and school. Food may not be used as a reward system for potty training at school.

Each child will begin at a different time and progress at a different rate. The staff will provide documentation of your child's progress each day. The director and staff are available as a resource to answer any questions about your child's toilet training progress at EEP. Several complete changes of clothes should be kept in the child's class during this process.

TOYS

EEP has a wide variety of toys, games, and other resources to offer children during center time. Preschool classes may have show-and-tell related to the week's lesson. Personal toys are not permitted in EEP as they can cause disputes and can be broken or lost. The exception to this is show-and-tell or sleep-toys which should be labeled with the child's name. EEP is not responsible for stolen, lost, or broken toys or clothing. Do not bring toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction.

SUPPLIES

CLOTHING

We encourage children to dress for play and comfort as the seasons change. Because our program is based on play and exploration, your child may get dirty. Children will have opportunities for outdoor play twice a day when the weather permits. Children will go outside if the temperature is above 32 degrees or below 100 degrees with the wind chill and heat index taken into consideration. It is required that you bring at least one set of extra clothes for your child in case of a spill or accident. Clothing used for outdoor play should be lightweight and

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breathable and protect them from the sun. Shoes should be sturdy and durable to prevent injury from playing on the playground. We have some extra clothes available, but we may not have the item your child needs in his/her size. If your child comes home in EEP's clothes, please wash the clothes, and return them within one week. **It is strongly suggested that all clothing brought or worn to EEP have the child's name on it.**

NAPTIME BEDDING

Children who remain in care longer than 5 hours will be required to nap. Children are required to have individual sleep mats or cribs. Sleep mats and cribs cannot be shared. Children will be required to bring in their own bedding from home. Children who do not fall asleep within an hour will be given an alternate activity to do for the remainder of the naptime. All children will be supervised during naptime.

DIAPERS

Please provide diapers, wipes, and diaper ointment (if needed) for non-potty-trained children. All items must be labeled with the child's first and last name. You can bring a package of diapers to leave at EEP. You will be notified when your child is running low on diapers. If you have any questions, please check with the office.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Parents will be provided with a list of required supplies for their child as part of their enrollment packet.

CURRICULUM

Children learn by doing. They learn through play, experimentation, exploration, and testing. Learning should be a joyful, natural experience. The program at EEP is based on developmentally appropriate practices that encompass a philosophy of "learning by doing". The classroom curriculum is organized around themes. Teachers will send home a calendar at the beginning of each month highlighting themes and some of the month's activities. Each class's lesson plans, and class schedule are posted on the parent's board in your child's room. We incorporate current trends in early childhood and school age education and then structure this curriculum to meet the needs of most of the children in the group. Our curriculum, although it will vary depending on age, is guided by the following underlying principles:

- Children learn through dynamic investigation.
- Children instigate their own learning.
- Learning comes from open-ended experiences.
- Adults are facilitators of children's learning.

AGES AND STAGES

EEP has partnered with Smart Family Literacy to incorporate the Ages and Stages assessment. Parents will be asked to complete these in-home assessments and return them to the teacher twice a year. Teachers and families work in cooperation as a team to establish individual goals for each child.

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OUTDOOR PLAY

All children enrolled at EEP must participate in outdoor play. Outdoor play promotes health benefits such as improved muscle strength, endurance, and self-esteem and reduced chronic disease risk factors, stress, and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

Children will be provided 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous play for every 3 hours in care. Physical activity may take place in the classroom or on the playground when the weather permits. All children will participate in two occasions of active physical play if in care for longer than 3.5 hours. Active physical play will be a combination of teacher-led activities and child-led activities. All activities will be age appropriate. In the event the children are not allowed to be outside, the children will receive vigorous, physical play indoors in the classroom or in the Fellowship Hall. If your child is too ill to participate in outdoor physical play, please keep them home.

CLASS DIVISIONS AND CLASS SIZE

We endeavor to have a challenging and appropriate atmosphere for children of all ages. Class divisions are based upon the individual developmental needs of each child, student-to-teacher ratios set by the State, and the overall enrolment of EEP. Children are generally divided into classes by age since this usually keeps them with children in their own developmental level and keeps our age-based student-to-teacher ratios easy to calculate. In most cases it is our target to have children together with others with whom they will be attending kindergarten.

SCREEN TIME

Screen time may be used for up to 1 hour a day for children ages 2 and above. Screen time shall not be used with children younger than 2. Screen time activities should not be used during mealtimes and naptimes. Screen time activities will not replace educational activities for students. Screen time activities shall not promote violence of any kind and must be age appropriate for the children in the group. Screen time activities will not be used 1 hour before naptime. Screen time activities must have an educational goal in place.

SUMMER CAMP

A summer camp program is offered during the summer months for children 6 weeks to 3rd grade. Activities include various art projects, music, water fun, sports, stories, cooking, theatre, and field trips.

TODDLER AND PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

The toddler preschool curriculum will cover the following areas:

Movement and coordination

- Physical attention and relaxation
- Gross motor skills
- Eye-hand and eye-foot coordination
- Group games
- Creative movement
- 40 min of vigorous to moderate

physical play

Autonomy and social skills

- Sense of self and personal responsibility
- Working in group settings
- Promoting self-help skills like toileting, handwashing, and mealtime

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Work habits

- Memory skills
- Following directions
- Task persistence and completion

Language

- Oral language
- Nursery rhymes, poems, finger plays/songs
- Emerging literacy skills

Mathematics

- Patters and classifications
- Geometry

- Measurement
- Numbers and numbers sense
- Basic addition and subtraction
- Money

Orientation in time and space

- Vocabulary
- Measure of time

- Passage of time (past, present, future)
- Actual and represented space
- Simple maps
- Basic geographical concepts

Science

- Human, animal, and plant characteristics
- Physical elements (water, air, and light)
- Tools

Music

- Attend to different sounds
- Imitate and produce sounds
- Listen and sing
- Listen and move

Visual arts

- Attend to visual detail
- Creating art
- Looking at and talking about art

INFANT CURRICULUM

We will keep your child on his/her daily schedule as much as possible. During the day, we will do activities with your child to help them develop their social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical skills. These activities will include playing with toys, art, pretending, enjoying stories and books, discovering sand and water, music, and exploring outdoors, and documented tummy time. Texas childcare minimum standards (746.2426,746.2427,746.2428) require childcare operations to place all infants on their backs to sleep in a crib and to ensure that infants do not sleep in restrictive devices and are not laid down to sleep swaddled. Cribs shall be free from stuffed animals and bedding shall fit tightly around the mattress. If an infant has documentation from a health-care professional that alternative methods should be used such as sleep positions or restrictive devices parents must fill out form j-800-2710 infant- sleep exception. This form shall be posted in the classroom for easy review and a copy shall be kept in the child's enrollment packet.

FIELD TRIPS

Children in the three-year-old and four-year-old classrooms may go on field trips. Trips will vary by age and by class. Activities will be selected on an age-appropriate basis. Advance notice of field trips will be posted and will appear on the monthly calendar. Parent chaperones are needed for field trips. Parents will be notified about field trips in advance and written permission will be obtained.

OUR STAFF

STAFF REQUIREMENTS

At EEP we strive to provide nurturing, quality care in a highly interactive learning environment. Our friendly, qualified staff are an integral part of providing this environment. All staff:

- Undergo a detailed interview and screening process
- Complete 1 hour or more of annual child abuse and neglect training focusing on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including (1) factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect, (2) warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect, (3) internal procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect, and (4) community organizations that have training programs available to child-care center staff members, children, and parents (see “Child Abuse Reporting Policy” below for more detail).
- Must receive approval by the State of Texas through a background analysis that cross references state and federal criminal records as well as child abuse reporting records to ensure that each employee has a background that is clear.
- Fulfill State CPR and first aid training requirements.
- Are required to keep their immunizations up to date.

We believe firmly in training and continued education for all our employees and staff. Each has qualified themselves to work with your children by attending specific training classes and often college level courses to learn about early education and the needs of children. We emphasize training and encourage all of our employees to exceed the state minimum number of clock hours of training required to be qualified to continue to work in an early education setting.

STAFF AND CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

EEP is not legally or financially liable for our employees or any of their actions when they are off the clock or no longer employed by EEP. It is suggested that parents do not solicit any employee for any type of work.

COMMUNICATION

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Open and frequent communication between parents and staff will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We will endeavor to keep you informed concerning your child’s day and overall development through several written means:

- Monthly parent newsletters and class calendars to keep you informed as to the overall program.
- Board of Directors meeting and minutes are sent monthly.
- Regular written communication and photos sent via online platforms (Remind, ClassDojo)
- “incident/ouch” forms

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- Classroom memos, daily reports, and/or behavior charts placed in the child's take-home folder or backpack.
- You may also e-mail the Director at info@eastendpreschool.org

Messages to your child's teacher should be sent via the class's online communication app/platform (e.g., Class Dojo). You will receive information on how to access and create an account for the app prior to the first day of school. **Please do not send text messages to your child's teacher at their personal phone number.**

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

We will endeavor to be communicative during drop-off and pick-up times; however, extended conversations. Furthermore, the person caring for your child at the pick-up time may not be the individual who has spent most of the day with your child. We suggest that you go to your child's "lead" or "primary" teacher to obtain detailed information on your child's general growth and development. Parents always have the option of requesting parent/teacher interaction to aid in the child's development. There are many avenues for verbal communication:

- You may call the office during school hours at (409) 762-8638 to see how you may speak to your child's teacher for more detailed conversation.
- Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year.
- You may call the office at (409) 762-8638 to schedule an in-person meeting with your child's teacher.

Please do not call your child's teacher on their personal phone number.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We believe that parental participation is key to any successful childcare program. Because EEP is a parent cooperative, we rely on parents and guardians to support the school and be involved throughout the year. Here is a sample list of some of the opportunities for involvement; however, parents are in no way limited to the ideas listed below. Any parent wishing to be involved in another area is strongly encouraged to contact the EEP Director or a Board member with their suggestion. The Director and Board will strive to find an opportunity that fits your individual interests and time such as:

- Planning and volunteering at Special events (social gatherings, holiday programs/events, fundraisers)
- Participation in scheduled workdays (classroom set up at the beginning of the year, mulch day, garden day, supply room organizing, clean up end of the year, and etc.)
- Public relations (e.g., volunteering at EEP booths at public outreach events like Da Vinci Day or Grand Kids Festival).
- Help organize class holiday parties.
- Supply and equipment acquisitions.
- Grant writing or identifying appropriate grant opportunities.
- Committee participation (fundraising, communications, outreach).
- Field trip participation.
- Read a story to your child's class.
- Classroom needs (purchasing special supplies, helping prepare crafts, other tasks as identified by the teacher).
- Serve on the Board of Directors.
- Attend bi-annual parent meetings (twice per year).

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- Attend monthly Board of Director meetings.
- Manage social media content/post for the school.
- Keeping the school's website up to date.
- Soliciting sponsorships from local business for fundraising events.
- Organizing special guests to visit EEP.

We also expect parental involvement in discipline and behavior interventions as outlined in these policies.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

We have an open-door policy that allows parents access to EEP during operating hours. You are welcome to visit your child at EEP at any time. Parents are encouraged to pre-arrange opportunities to visit the class or share lunch with their child. Parents are welcome to observe and/or participate in the classroom at any time. Parents are encouraged to share interests, cultures, hobbies, and careers with their child's class.

VISITATION PROCESS

We ask that you check in with the office before going to your child's room. It is the responsibility of each employee to make sure any visitor for a child or employee has first checked in with the office. Parents will sign in at the office and receive a visitor identification badge. For security purposes, anyone without proper identification will not be allowed in the classroom.

Persons not listed on the admission information sheet will not be allowed to visit your child. In a custody situation, please note that the same procedure will be followed as listed in the pick-up section. Extended family members such as grandparents and aunts are also welcome to visit in certain pre-arranged situations. Feel free to contact the Director if you wish to set up a visit from an extended family member.

CLASSIFICATIONS

Due to strict licensing guidelines and safety issues, we require that all individuals on our property be categorized as one of the following:

- 1) A scheduled employee during the regular course of their workday
- 2) A child who is in our care (all paperwork has been filled-out)
- 3) Parents or others during regular drop-off or pick-up (this to be approximately fifteen (15) minutes)
- 4) Delivery personnel – from a regular or expected company delivering items to EEP (should be always in eyesight of an employee and arriving at an expected time)
- 5) Visitors – must be approved by the office and should always be accompanied by an employee not to exceed twice per month and limited to a maximum of 2 hours.
- 6) Volunteers – anyone who is helping with a class party or in any other capacity or anyone who has been a “visitor” for more than once a month or for over 2 hours
- 7) An intruder – action will be taken by the staff to notify the proper authorities.

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Therefore, any adult who is in the building or on the property for an extended period must be considered either a “visitor” a “volunteer” or an “intruder”, including parents and employees who are off the clock.

SCREENING PROCESS

Any visitor wishing to help chaperone an event or is visiting for longer than the timeframes stated above will be considered a volunteer and be required to go through a screening and training process which includes, but is not limited to: 1) a signed statement indicating whether or not they have had a conviction of any law in any state, or any record of founded child or dependent abuse in any state; 2) a signed statement indicating whether or not they have a communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety or well-being of the children; 3) undergoing a fingerprinting and background check; 4) a signed statement regarding child abuse; 5) going through new teacher orientation.

Since we cannot attest to the background of anyone that has not gone through our screening process, we cannot allow parents to spend extended periods of time in our facility without requiring them to fulfill these screening and training requirements which are set by state law.

Any individual who does not submit to our safety policies concerning “visitors” and “volunteers” must be considered an intruder and steps will be taken according to the “intruder” portion of our “safety and evacuation” policies.

FOOD

MEALS AND SNACKS

Each child brings his/her lunch to school, so please ensure that your child has a nutritious lunch every day. Good nutrition plays a very important role in the growth and development of a child. Lunch time is an opportunity for learning and developing social and motor skills. Infant food, bottles, and toddler food must be labeled. EEP is not responsible for the nutritional value of lunch or for meeting the child’s daily food needs.

Children in the tiny tot and toddler classrooms need to bring a mid-morning snack and drink. Please label and date all containers with the child’s first name and last initial. Children staying for stay & play need to bring an afternoon snack and drink.

FOOD FOR INFANTS AND CRAWLERS

Parents must provide food/ formula/ liquid/ milk for children in the tiny tot’s room. The tiny tot room is equipped with a microwave and refrigerator. All bottles are required to have a sticker with the child’s name and the date the bottle was made. Please be certain to inform staff in the classroom of the type of formula your child is using, and any other facts regarding diet. Do not bring open baby food jars as licensing requirements restrict us from serving prepared baby food from previously opened jars. Any unused baby food will be sent home or thrown away each evening. Breast milk may be brought in for the infant. Breast milk must be handled in a sanitary manner. All breast milk must be clearly labeled with the child’s name and date. Comfortable adult sized chairs are available in the infant room for nursing moms.

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TREATS

Please notify your child's teacher in advance of plans to bring a food treat for special occasions or birthdays. Modest refreshments are appropriate, but no gifts are to be exchanged. Hard or chewy candy and balloons are not permitted because they pose a choking risk. Additionally, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the teacher if your child has any dietary or other restrictions which would exclude him/her from receiving certain foods (see Allergies section above).

To ensure that the children are eating safe food, the following guidelines will be met: 1) If this food is considered a supplement to what the child brings from home, it meets nutritional guidelines; 2) Perishable food brought from home should be contained to avoid contamination; 3) Prepackaged snacks may be brought from home for birthdays and parties that do not meet nutritional guidelines.

TUITION AND FEES

MONTHLY TUITION

It is our philosophy that clients are paying for the spot their child will take in our center. This is not based upon attendance but rather on a set monthly fee that is due regardless of the attendance habits of the child who has the spot. Our tuition structure is based upon a monthly fee that is set by the registration form which is signed by the parent upon enrolling the child in the program. Enrollment may be adjusted with a two-week notice of intent to change services (add or reduce the number of days/weeks in attendance; add or reduce early drop-off or stay & play services). This is to be allowed at the discretion of the management based on space availability. Contracts are re-submitted annually prior to the first of March. Even though the monthly set fees remain the same, a bill will be given to remind you of these fees. Tuition for early morning/stay & play for children services is additional. In the case of summer break, a new contract will be entered into by the parent specifying the tuition for this period. **In the event of a school closure due to inclement weather all tuition and fees will still be required.** In the event of a major natural disaster for which EEP is required to close for more than 30 days, it will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors and Director on how to structure tuition.

REGISTRATION AND MATERIALS FEES

As stated in the *registration* section of this policy, there is a registration fee and supply fee that are due prior to the child's first day at EEP. The registration fee is due upon initial enrollment annually each March. Children who pull out of the program for a specified or un-specified length of time will be required to pay a re-registration fee as well as an additional materials fee upon returning. The exception to this will be children who physically pull out of the program but whose parents continue to pay their full weekly fees to retain the spot in our program.

Prior to the first day of school in August/September there is also a materials fee (priced according to total days per week child will be in attendance when registering). This fee shall suffice for that school year's materials fee provided the child remains continuously enrolled in the program. This fee will not be pro-rated.

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MEMBERSHIP FEE

A membership fee of \$150 per semester (Fall and Spring) will be charged to each family, regardless of how many children are enrolled or the number of days/hours enrolled each week. This fee replaces a former requirement of mandatory fundraiser participation which included purchasing tickets, raising a minimum of \$150 in both Spring and Fall, and volunteering with event planning/set up. This fee was established by vote of the parent body with the acknowledgement that supplemental income beyond tuition is necessary to meet EEP's operating budget while also respecting the busy schedules and existing time commitments of many of our parents. Membership fees will be added to monthly tuition bills in November and April of each year.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

There will be a \$5.00 fee added per minute if pick-up takes place after the children's dismissal time. This fee is non-negotiable and is the responsibility of all clients. Parents, or those picking the children up, are required to call ahead if they feel they are going to be more than 5 minutes late. If a child is ill and needs to leave EEP for the day and no parent or emergency contact can be located within 30 minutes of trying to contact the parent, the "late pick-up fee" will also apply. An attempt will be made to contact individuals on the emergency contact list after children have been left 15 minutes past closing.

PAYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Monthly fees are due and payable on the first day of school each month. **Payments may be given directly to the Director or Assistant Director or may be placed in the office.** Payment should be made by cash, check (please make a notation on the bottom of the check indicating the child's name and the purpose of the payment, e.g., Tom's tuition and early morning fees), through auto draft or online through myprocare.com. **Parents may view and pay their bill online at www.myprocare.com. All checks should be made payable to East End Preschool.**

LATE PAYMENTS, NON-PAYMENT

There will be a \$25.00 late payment convenience fee added if the account is not paid by the close of business on 10th. An additional \$5 maintenance and collection fee will be added each day the account is not paid in full.

Failure to pay on time will result in termination of services after the 15th of the month. No account will ever be allowed to carry a balance unless arrangements have been approved by the Director. There will be a \$25.00 fee added on all returned checks. After two non-sufficient fund checks are received by EEP, payment will be required by cashier's check or money order.

EEP may seek collection of fees due, and clients will be required to pay a two-week termination fee should services be terminated for non-payment as well as any collection costs and attorney's fees incurred by EEP to collect this amount. If EEP elects, it may immediately terminate all services provided including but not limited to the immediate dismissal of the children from its facility.

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REFUNDS

All tuition is non-refundable except for prepaid tuition that is over-and-above any additional charges. Registration fees are non-refundable.

In the event you have overpaid, the credit will be applied to your next month's tuition. In the event you have a positive balance after your child's last day, all applicable fees including the two weeks' notice required will be subtracted from any balance prior to a final refund being issued. Checks for this are cut monthly and will be mailed according to our monthly bill payment schedule.

RECEIPTS AND STATEMENTS

Receipts are written for all cash payments. Receipts are available upon request for all other transactions. Annual statements for tax and accounting purposes will be mailed to parents in January of each year and are available upon request for all accounts with a zero balance.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY

The State of Texas requires that EEP and all members of childcare institutions be on the lookout for and report to the State and appropriate authorities all suspected cases of abuse of a child. A teacher does not have to report that they have made a report to the director. It is strictly confidential.

At EEP, reporting any incidents of or suspected child abuse is mandatory for all staff. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to Child Protective Services (CPS) for investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. It is advised that clients make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or other visible injury to minimize suspicion of possible child abuse or endangerment.

If you become aware of or suspect child abuse or neglect, there are two ways it may be reported: Call the Texas abuse and neglect hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or make a report through the secure website (www.txabusehotline.org). The abuse hotline toll free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nationwide. You will receive a response within 24 hours. If this is a life threatening or emergency or emergency, call your local law enforcement agency or 911 immediately.

STAFF SUSPECTED OF ABUSE

The following steps are taken if a staff member is suspected of child abuse:

- A staff member who has a situation or investigation pending should immediately notify the Director or most senior leadership staff member in the building
- The person who suspects abuse should bring it to the attention of the Director or most senior leadership staff member in the building.
- The Director will check on the complaint and if they agree that there may be abuse, the Director will report the incident to CPS and our state licensing authority.
- We will then follow their advice regarding whether to suspend the staff member.

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If a staff member is founded in a case of child abuse, we will take the following steps:

- We will allow the staff members to appeal against the decision.
- The Director or an appointed member of the leadership staff will meet with the individual to go over the incident and form an opinion as to its validity and/or consequences to EEP and the individual.
- Based on the advice of our licensing agent, we will either suspend the staff member or allow them to continue their job until the appeal is completed
- The staff member will meet with the Director or an assigned member of the leadership staff during this time and steps will be taken to ensure that there won't be any problems.

After the appeal the decision is still founded, we will take one of the following steps based on the advice of our licensing agent:

- The staff member will be terminated from their position at EEP and
- We will inform the parents that we have a staff member who has a found child abuse on record. We will also let the parents know what the charge was.

STAFF TRAINING ON CHILD ABUSE

Staff training on child abuse and neglect includes the following:

- Issues regarding child abuse and neglect including types of abuse and neglect, causes of abuse and neglect, the warning signs of abuse and neglect and other related information.
- Primary methods of prevention include the general distribution of information related to child abuse, including how to recognize and report abuse and what resources are available for the prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse.
- Strategies to coordinate with community organizations who offer service for high-risk families. Resources such as (adequate shelter, childcare for working families, appropriate nutrition, health and mental care, transportation, and education).
- Identify organizations that provide aid such as (emergency services, parent education, domestic violence shelters, and health and mental health treatment for victims).

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

East End Preschool complies with the insurance coverage as suggested by our independent Agent. More information concerning policies and liability can be furnished by the director upon request.

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES

East End Preschool reserves the right to edit or adapt the policies in this handbook as the needs arise. Clients and customers will be notified of these changes through the normal written communication system of EEP at the time they are made effective.