



# OPERATIONAL POLICIES

## *school Handbook*

[www.pandabearacademy.com](http://www.pandabearacademy.com)

### A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

We realize each child that enters our school is unique and has a different set of needs. It is our sincere desire to accept the challenge and work toward the goal of meeting those needs. The school's goals are to provide a secure environment, positive development of your child's physical growth, social and intellectual stimulation and encourage a positive self-image.

For some children it will be the first separation from mom and dad and a first time experience in school. For other children it will be change of childcare center and for some it will be the transition a pleasant experience for you and your child.

It is sometime more difficult for the parent to make the adjustment than it is for the child. You can expect tears, clinging and begging, "I want to go home" or "I want to go with you". This is perfectly normal and can last as long as 2 weeks, but usually less than one week. We are prepared, with your help, to handle these "transition anxieties" and help your child enjoy the balance of a loving, learning and happy experience at Panda Bear Academy. The following are suggestions that may make the transition easier for you and your child.

1. Let your child visit the school prior to their first day to meet the teacher and the children and to see the class room and the playground. Then, when you talk to your child about the new school there will be things he/she can relate to.
2. We encourage you to call and or come by to check on your children during the day. We are more than happy to go and check on your child when you call the center. We ask that parent do not call the school to talk to their child.
3. Let your child know that you love him/her and assure him/her that you will return. Remember children can not relate to specific time period, so say, "I will be back right after snack time". Then be sure that you are on time for at least the first couple of weeks.
4. If your child have favorite blanket, stuffed animal, etc., allow him/her to bring it until he/she has made the adjustment. Please be sure to label all items your child may bring to the center.
5. Be consistent, once the decision to leave for the day has been made, it is important that you follow through. Children need to know what to expect.

Remember, we too want the best for your child. Don't hesitate to share any special needs or concerns with your child's teacher, the director or the administrator. We are here to help in any way we can

## **Tuition and Other Fees**

A registration/supply fee is required upon enrollment. This fee is non-refundable and will hold a space for your child for up to two weeks. This is an annual registration/supply fee and will be charged at each anniversary of your enrollment.

Fees are based on enrollment, not attendance. No tuition adjustments will be made due to illness, holidays, school closings, or transfers. Days cannot be exchanged or made up for other days. Weekly tuition due on Monday a late fee of \$15.00 will be charged on accounts not paid by Tuesday at closing an additional \$10 will be charged on Thursday if the tuition is still unpaid. Pay NCI Monthly fee by the 10th of each month if not after this day late fee charge of \$15.00 will be added to your monthly fee. The monthly must be paid by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month or else will be denied entrance until your account has been paid in full.

When enroll in part-time program, full tuition is due each week in full. No credit will be given for day or weeks missed.

A two-week notice for withdrawal is required; otherwise for two week period is due.

## **Part-time**

We offer both full time and part time programs for families. For children ages two and older we offer a 3 day program scheduled on Monday/Wednesday/Friday or a 2 day program scheduled on Tuesday/Thursday. If your child is enrolled in a part time program, they may not attend on unscheduled days except on a space available basis only. There will be an extra charge for those days.

If you would like to change your enrollment status at any time (from full time to part time...etc.) you must notify the center in writing two weeks in advance. That enrollment change can only happen on a space available basis. For instance, if a full time student wishes to go part time Mon/Wed/Fri and the only space we have available part time is Tues/Thurs, we cannot accommodate you until that opening becomes available.

## **Enrollment/Paperwork Procedures**

Before enrollment, you will need to complete all forms provided by Panda Bear. Please keep us updated on all pertinent information. The following are especially important:

Current immunization records must be furnished before a child can attend (Please see the "Immunization Requirements" page in this handbook.) Anytime your child is given a new immunization, please bring the updated record to the school and we will make a new copy for our files.

- At the time of enrollment, we must have an updated doctor's health care statement for each child.
- Anytime there is a change of address, phone number, or email address, remember to inform the front desk so records can be updated. It is imperative we are able to reach you in case of an emergency. This includes all work, home and cell phone numbers for parents and any other emergency contacts.
- Inform us in writing if there is a change in who is authorized to pick your child up from the school.
- If there is a change in medical condition, we must be made aware of it.
- Newly discovered allergies should be reported as soon as they are identified.

## **Return Check Policy**

There will be a \$35.00 fee for all returned checks. When a check is returned it is recoded in your public file through "Scan" until the check is paid. If two checks are returned within a three-month period, money order or credit card payment will be required for the next three months.

## **School Supply Fee**

School supply annual fee is required for children 2yrs program and over. This fee is due on September 1st - 15th is 75\$ per year.

The fee cover a portion of the cost of materials used in the classroom by the children.

## **Late Pick Up Policy**

Because we are licensed only for our specific hours of operation, we cannot care for children any earlier than 6:00 am or later than 8:00 pm. Monday- Friday, Saturday 7:30am-7:00pm  
If someone is not here to pick your child up by 8:00 pm, each child will be charged a late pickup fee of \$10, +\$1.00 per minute. Please understand, our staff have their own appointments to keep after closing time. Your being late prevents them from keeping their schedules. You may rationalize that this is the only time I have been late, but if everyone thinks that way, that means our staff are probably staying late every day waiting on a late pick up. Fees incurred for late pick up are to be paid with cash upon arrival.

**If a child has not been picked up by 8:30 pm and all attempts to contact parents and emergency contacts have failed, we are obligated by state regulations to call Family and Children's Services and the police.**

## **Discontinuing Enrollment**

Parents may withdraw their child(ren) from Panda Bear by giving a 2-week written notice of intent to withdraw Panda Bear reserves the right to discontinue enrollment of a child. Reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Parents failing to cooperate reasonably with Panda Bear in the provision of educational services to their child, in the payment of tuition and fees, in picking up their child promptly when called to do so or routinely picking up late.
- The child representing a danger to himself or others
- The child being destructive of school property or disruptive in ways that impairs the education of other students.
- The child requiring another educational setting more appropriate to his/her needs.

## **Hours of Operation**

The school is open from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday through Friday, Saturday 7:30-7: pm twelve months a year.

The center will be closed on the following days;

New Year's Day and New Year's Eve at 3:30pm

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Wednesday before thanksgiving at 3:30pm

Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

Panda Bear Academy may elect to close additional days. We will post a notice in the lobby well in advance to notify all parent of any changes

## **Meals / Snacks**

The center complies with the nutritional requirement of the Child Care Food Program of the United States Department of Agriculture. All meals and snacks planned and prepared by the certified food handlers.

A nutritional meal and snacks are provided each day. Fruits, vegetables, dairy products, whole grains products are the part of our daily menu.

The food is served with milk or 100% fruit juice. There will be no food served that is high in sugar content and preservatives. High standards will be maintained in the kitchen at all times.

- 6:30 AM TO 8:00 AM BREAKFAST
- 11:00 AM TO 11:30 PM LUNCH TIME
- 2:45 PM TO 3:30 PM AFTERNOON SNACK
- 5:00 PM TO 6:00 PM DINNER TIME

The monthly menu will be posted on the bulletin board; please do not send your child to school with extra snacks, drinks, candy or gum.

Children are encouraged to eat but not forced. Children have opportunity and are encouraged to take "seconds".

## **Discipline- Handling Children's Behaviors**

Handling children's disruptive behaviors is primarily the responsibility of the parents even if the behavior is only displayed at the center. We consider it our job to coach our parents in effective management of such behavior.

There are times when children experience impulsive, negative behaviors. It is the policy of the school to use positive reinforcement and re-direction. Time out is used only when a child is out of control. Time out gives the child a quiet place to regain his/her composure before rejoining the group.

In case of continued behavior that is potentially harmful to your child, or other children on the property, you will be notified. Panda Bear Academy reserves the right to dismiss any student from school for continued behavior problems

IF A CHILD IS BITING, HITTING OR BEHAVING IN SUCH A WAY THAT PLACE CLASSMATES AT SIGNIFICANT HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK, WE WILL DISMISS THE CHILD FROM THE CENTER IMMEDIATELY. IF THE PARENTS WISH TO KEEP, A CHILD ENROLLED IN THE CENTER WHILE BEHAVIOR IS BEING MONITORED WE WILL BE WILLING TO PUT TOGETHER A PLAN TO HELP CORRECT THE BEHAVIOR, you will be notified. When a child's demonstrates behavior such as biting, hitting, throwing objects, and using inappropriate language, the parents will be notified by the teacher. If the child continuously repeats the behavior, the Director may call the parents and invite them to a parent conference.

## **Absence and Illness**

When a child become ill at school, the welfare of the child and the consideration of the others are our first concerns. A child cannot attend school with a fever, rash, diarrhea or a harsh cough. State guidelines require that a child who has not been attendance due to fever or diarrhea will be excluded from attendance until he/she has been free of their symptoms for 24 hours. Please keep in mind that if your child is sent home due to illness, your child may not return the next day, as the 24-hour period will not have elapsed. If your child is absent more than one day, please call the office to discuss the nature of illness so we may be alerted to exposure of the illness. Any communicable disease must be reported immediately. In some cases of absence we may request a doctor's written permission to return to school.

IT IS PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP THE EMERGENCY INFORMATION UPDATED WITH YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS AND HOME PHONE NUMBERS, AS WELL AS YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR'S NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER

## **Ill or Injured Child Policies**

If your child becomes seriously ill or injured the staff will contact you and-or call 911 or transport the child to the nearest medical facility.

If your child does not need to be brought to a medical facility, we the staff will manage your ill or injured child at the child-care facility until you arrive. The staff will inform you of your child's symptoms and we will ask you if you would like your child taken to the emergency room, although if the staff feels it is in the best interest of the child, we can make the decision to transport your child to a medical facility.

## **Medication**

Please understand that Panda Bear is NOT required to administer medicine. However, as a convenience to parents, *under certain conditions*, we will give medications to children while at school. Please understand that these medication policies are in place for the protection and well-being of your child while he/she is in our care.

A physician's prescription must accompany all medications, prescribed and over the counter, and clearly state the child's name and dosage.

All medications must be left at the front desk with the person in charge. (No medications can be left in the classroom or in diaper bags.)

Parents must sign-in any needed medications by filling out the Medication Authorization Form at the front desk. (This must be filled out completely before medications can be administered).

All medications must be taken home after they are no longer being administered. (If not picked up after a certain amount of time, medication will be thrown away.)

- Medications must be in the original container. We cannot give a medication that is not in an original container or is prescribed for someone other than the child.
- Medications will only be given according to the directions.
- Medicine must not be expired.

### **Nebulizer Treatments**

If your child needs a nebulizer treatment, we need a signed note from your physician stating:

- The type of medication to be given
- The amount to be given
- The time it should be given
- Any other specific instructions

### **Epipens**

If your child has severe allergic reactions, you may leave a prescribed Epipen at the school. Written instructions from a physician on administering it must be provided, as well as written permission from the parent for us to administer it in an emergency situation.

### **Immunization Requirements**

Each child enrolled at Panda Bear Academy must meet applicable immunization and tuberculin testing requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health. This applies to children in early care from birth through school age. The documentation must be validated by a physician or other health care professional and include:

- A signature or rubber stamp
- Child's first and last name
- Child's birth date
- The vaccine type and number of doses
- The month, day, and year the child received each vaccination

This documentation may be the original record or a photocopy.

Any exemptions from the immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of Health. For more information, check out [www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize).

For school age children, the immunization record may be on file at the child's school. However, parents must fill out and sign the "School Age Immunization Verification" form.

### **Hearing and Vision Screening**

In compliance with the special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, Panda Bear Academy TX requires children to have a screening or professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems. Children who are enrolled for the first time (4 years of age or older), must be screened within the first 120 days of enrollment. All children already enrolled at our school (who are 4 years of age by September 1), will need to provide documentation of screening.

### **Naps and Rest Period**

All children are required to take a rest period from 12:00 to 2:30pm. Sleeping mats are provided by the School. If you have any questions or concerns, talk to the Director.

**PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD DURING THIS TIME**

### **Birthday and Holiday Parties**

Before scheduling a birthday party, please notify the teacher and the office of your plans. Holiday Parties schedule will be posted at the bulleting board and on each class. Please send food that does not require a great deal of teacher preparations time. Parents can bring special treats such as cookies, cake, ice cream and favors. (Be sure to keep the age of the children in mind when you bring favors). The parent are always welcome to attend the party, however, it is not necessary. All birthday parties are held in the afternoon around 3:00pm. Gifts cannot exchanged at these parties, all parties must be store purchased.

### **Playground**

The playground is used daily as weather permits. Each class has two outside activities a day. When the weather does not permit and the children are confined to indoors, we offer a large area for indoor play.

## **Transportation (To and From Public School)**

Schools serviced may change depending on demand. Transportation is never provided to residential homes. Transportation Agreements are signed once for each school year. Emergency Forms must be completed and information kept up-to-date.

If your child is to be transported to an area school in the morning, he/she must be at Panda Bear by 7:00 am. If your child will not be picked up from school at the end of the school day, you must notify us by 2:00 pm, before our buses leave Panda Bear to pick up the children. If we are not notified, buses become delayed while we attempt to locate your child. This makes the bus late in picking up children on the remaining route and late getting children back to Panda Bear. A fee may be applied for failure to notify us due to the disruption this causes.

## **Transportation (Field Trips)**

Field Trip Permission Forms must be signed and dated for each field trip. The form will advise you as to where children will be going, the departure time and expected time to arrive back to Panda Bear. The form will be available for your signature at least 2 days prior to the planned trip date. Vehicle Emergency Forms must be completed and information kept up-to-date. This form is part of the enrollment packet. Please advise us when information on this form needs to be updated.

Children going on field trips must wear a Panda Bear t-shirt. A t-shirt will be provided and will be available for your child on the day of the trip. The t-shirt is the property of the school and will be washed, kept at the school, ready for the next trip.

## **Water Play Activity**

A water splash area is available for hot summer play for children who have permission to play on it. Children are required to wear water shoes while playing. A designated time and day will be assigned to each class and will be posted as Splash Day. In order to participate on Splash Day, children will need a swimsuit, towel and water shoes, plus a dry set of clothes to change in to. Sunscreen is recommended, but we ask you apply it at home if possible. A permission form along with the sunscreen will be needed if it is to be applied at school.

## **Animals**

Animals are not allowed in the child-care center for the children's well-being as well as the staff protection. While we understand the need for children to be exposed to animals, we choose to not do it in the child-care facility. Fish tanks are a nice way for children to observe and feed the fish. If you would like you can leave your name and number after hours and I will get back with you as soon as I am available. Your concerns, are of great importance, and I will do my best to be available at a convenient time, where you don't feel rushed and I can give you the best possible answers concerning your child-care needs

## **Dropping off or Picking up your Child from the Center**

At Panda Bear, Parents must sign their children in and out each day using the computer at the front desk. This is very important, because state regulations require that we know who is in the building at all times. If you forget to check your child in or out, please let a manager know immediately. Please do not give those you have authorized to pick up your child your password. Rather, have them identify themselves with a picture ID at the front desk before picking up your child. If another person will regularly pick up your child, we will be happy to assign them their own password to use. You may use this computer to check your tuition account balance, and from time to time, you will receive important messages here such as policy or procedure changes.

When you leave your child at the center, be sure you leave him/her in the presence of a staff member. When you leave your child in the presence of staff person, we become responsible; when we turn your child over to you at the end of the day, you become responsible. When someone other than those listed on your enrollment form is picking up your child, all arrangements must be made through the office. We will not release a child to a stranger or anyone that is not "cleared" by the parent. ID will be requested. Your child safety is our first concern

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Panda Bear Academy shall be open to any child provided that school has an opening and can meet the needs of that child. Enrollment in the school shall be granted to all children regardless of ethnic background, race, color or religious beliefs, are equal and participate in our non-discriminating environment.

### **Daily Reports and Lesson Plans**

Each day in most classrooms, you will receive a Daily Report that has details about your child's day, including how they ate, slept, played, and what they learned. For younger children, the report includes information about diaper changes. Since everything about your child's day cannot be put on paper, we encourage you to contact your child's teacher if you have any specific questions. Each classroom also has specific weekly lesson plans posted for parent review. These plans detail the classroom activities for the week

### **Family Information Board**

This bulletin board in the lobby contains current information about the school and other topics of general interest. Our latest inspection from Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is posted here. The Family Information Boards in the classrooms post menus, lesson plans, daily schedules and other resources. Please refer to these weekly.

### **Parent Teacher Conferences**

Conferences may be scheduled to discuss concerns and children's progress. We are flexible and will work with you to accommodate you at a convenient time.

### **Clothing \* Blankets \* Toys**

Children should wear comfortable play shoes to the center. Your child will engage in active play and many "messy" art projects. Children will participate more freely if there is little concern about getting their clothes dirty. Each child must at all times have a second set of clothing (shirt, undershirt, underpants and socks) at the center. Please remember to make sure the clothing is weather appropriate. Please mark each piece of clothing with your child's name. These clothes will be used for your child if the clothes he/she is wearing become wet, soiled or excessively dirty. The clothes he/she was wearing will be returned to you in a plastic bag.

Make sure you mark the clothes - the center is not responsible for unlabeled clothing, toys, blankets or shoes lost.

**NO FLIP FLOPS, NO SANDALS, NO LONG DRESSES, NO JEWELRY - ONLY STUD EARRINGS, DUE TO THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD.**

For infant, the parents are responsible for bottles, diapers, wipes, diaper cream, pacifiers, blankets, baby food, formula, juice. Once your child has reached the stage of eating table food, the meal will be provided by the center.

The center accepts two's who are not potty trained: parents are responsible for diapers, pull-ups and wipes. We will help in potty training.

**PARENTS MUST ALSO SEND A SMALL CLEAN BLANKET TO THE CENTER EACH WEEK FOR USE AT NAP TIME. THE BLANKET IS REQUIRED ALL YEAR AROUND.**

Panda Bear Academy is not responsible for loss or stolen items. Students should not bring valuables such as ipods, games, laptops, mp3 players, etc..., Students will be responsible for their own belongings.

**DO NOT BRING ANY TOYS FROM HOME UNLESS REQUESTED TO DO SO BY THE TEACHER**

### **Policies and Provisions for Breast Feeding**

Parents that wish to breast feed their infants may do so in an empty infant room. There is a chair and doors to close for privacy reasons. Panda Bear Academy welcomes parents to interact and bond with their babies and will meet your needs accordingly.

**Child Custody Issues** It is the school's intent to meet the needs of children, especially when parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation or re-marriage. Sharing information about such situations may be helpful to the teachers. The school cannot legally restrict non-custodial parents from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records or picking up the child from the school, unless the school has been furnished with legally filed, executed and current documents. Copies of

all court documents must be submitted to the school. In case of conflict, the proper authorities will be contacted

### **Program Visitation**

At our child-care center, we have an open door policy. I would like you to feel free to come and visit, or observe your child anytime during the operational hours. There is not a need to call for an appointment. Although we would like for you to keep in mind, curriculums are going on in the early part of the day, and we want the children to learn with as little distraction as possible. This only means early morning visitations, they should be kept to a minimum of 30 minutes or less

### **Our Staff**

All staff members are trained in CPR and FIRST AID. The center offers structure and self-discipline, love and a true feeling of caring for each child as an individual. We are licensed by the State of Texas and the staff is required to meet all qualifications for the Department of Protective and Regulatory Service. Each staff member must obtain a minimum of 15 hours per year in professional training. All staff members are also required to attend monthly staff meetings where we do additional training and on how to improve the center and the curriculum instruction. We take pride in our staff and look forward to your participation as a member of school.

### **Flood policy, Hazardous Weather, and Program Cancellation due to Weather**

If an emergency situation develops such as severe weather, fire, physical damage to the building, or any other situation that poses a threat, the safety of the children is our first concern.

The school is equipped with a weather band radio, a fire alarm system and fire extinguishers. Fire drills are conducted monthly and severe weather drills are conducted quarterly.

If there is an emergency situation and it becomes necessary to close the school, parents will be notified to make arrangements for early pickup.

If there is inclement weather and it is determined that the school will not open, parents will be notified through various local media providing closing information. We will also post this information on our website.

If an emergency situation develops and it is determined that the building or premises are unsafe, your child(ren) will be transported to a safe location.

Parents will be notified of the situation and you will be required to pick up your child(ren) as soon as possible.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

We have monthly fire drills, 3months emergency drills and the staff is well trained in event of an emergency

In the event of an emergency which is caused by natural disasters, such as a tornado, hurricane, bad weather disasters, the center is prepared to relocate to the nearest school which is Piney Point Elementary.

The school is located at 8921 Pagewood, Houston,Tx 77063. The phone number of Piney Point Elementary is 713-917-3610.

All staff have been instructed to direct children in a safe and orderly manner. Staff has also been instructed to have attendance sheets as well as an accurate account of all children in their care. The director or person in charge will also ensure all children are accounted and present.

The director or person in charge will make sure all contact numbers for parents of children are taken and parents are contacted as soon as possible. The safety of the children comes first, and parents will be informed on where their children are located.

This emergency preparedness plan has been updated and effective as of March 01, 2012.

### **The Parent's Role**

The relationship between parents and staff is vital to the success of a child's experience. A partnership must be formed the first day with open communication and understanding that the development and growth of the child is our top priority.

Parents can assist and help ensure a smooth transition by doing the following:



Sign children in and out at the front desk and then escort them to their designated class.  
Have all forms completed promptly.  
Update forms, as needed, when changes occur (i.e. new phone number, address, immunizations, allergies, etc.).  
Keep staff informed of special needs or changes that might affect your child's behavior.  
Notify the school if your child is ill.  
Do not bring an ill child to the school .  
Notify the school if your child will be absent.  
Notify the school if you will be later than usual picking up your child.  
Provide a change of clothes marked with your child's name (we are not responsible for lost clothing).  
Children should be dressed properly for the weather and play .  
Do not allow children to bring toys.  
Do not bring food items containing peanut products .  
Participate in the school's special activities.  
Attend scheduled parent meetings and conferences .  
Ask questions and address concerns as they arise.  
**Panda Bear reserves the right to change or revise any policies, procedures, or tuition/fee schedules when deemed necessary. Written notification will be provided to parents.**

## **GANG-FREE ZONE**

### **What is a 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 child care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of child care centers. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

### **How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends?**

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.

### **What is the purpose of gang-free zones?**

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.

\*Whenever these operational policies are changed or updated, you will receive notification either through a letter placed by the sign-in screen at the front desk or via the sign in screen itself. We can supply you with a hard copy of this School Handbook or you can reference it on the website at [www.pandabearacademy.com](http://www.pandabearacademy.com) where the latest version will always be posted.

## **Policies and procedures Review and Grievances**

If you wish to review OR discuss any question or concern regarding the policies and/or procedures of the school, please make an appointment with the director or the administrator. A copy of the Texas Minimum Standards is available in the school office for all parent to view. You can also view the minimum standards online at <http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/>. Their phone number is 713-940-5282 and the child abuse hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.