

Creative School is a non-profit, morning pre-school program and a ministry of Lovers Lane United Methodist Church.



# **Creative School Parent Handbook**

## **2021-2022**

August 2021

**Our mission is to provide a  
developmentally age-appropriate  
preschool learning experience,  
in a nurturing, Christian, environment.**

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## **OUR PHILOSOPHY...**

We believe each child is a valuable, unique individual created in God’s image who benefits from a consistent, respectful, safe, loving and stimulating environment to encourage all aspects of child development.

We affirm each child’s worth and seek to nurture your child as an individual in a play-based and developmentally appropriate, educational, setting.

## **OUR GOAL...**

- Is to provide children a secure and loving Christian environment which encourages each child to grow and develop at his/her own pace.
- Is to offer a preschool curriculum which is thoughtfully planned and developmentally appropriate. Our curriculum addresses all areas of early childhood development and education including but not limited to literacy, math, science, art, music, fine and gross motor skills.
- Is to emphasize and encourage the creative nature of all young children through play and exploration, to learn and grow as independent and self-confident children of God.

**10066 Marsh Lane  
Dallas, Texas 75229**

**214-352-0732**  
**creativeschool.org**

Lyndel Doran  
Director  
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## ADMISSION

Creative School does not practice discrimination on the basis of race, religion, or creed.

## REGISTRATION

Incumbent families have priority for registration followed by members of Lovers Lane United Methodist Church and Walnut Hill Church. Registration is then opened to new families. The Registration fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.

## ENROLLMENT

Parents must complete the following parts of the enrollment process in order to be considered for placement:

- Paid **Registration fee** (non-refundable and non-transferable)
- Completed **Application Form** which includes contact and emergency release information.
- Signed **Financial Obligation Form** notating the manner in which tuition will be paid.
- Copy of most recent **Court Order (if applicable)** affecting the custody, possession and access to a child.
  
- **Completed Medical Form** with both the parent's and the Physician's signatures, including a current **Immunization record**, must be turned in no later than the last day of the first week of school.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Creative School office of any change to home address, telephone numbers (work, cell and/or home), e-mail addresses and/or emergency release information. Changes may be submitted to the school office by e-mail.

Parents will be notified no later than January 15<sup>th</sup> of the prior year, via written/email communication in the event registration criteria or enrollment policies change.

## CLASS PLACEMENT

When multiple classes meet for the same age group/days of the week, individual class placement is made by the Director with special consideration to the boy/girl ratios, birthdates and previous year teacher recommendations. Please trust that the class placement of each child is given careful consideration.

## SCHOLARSHIP

Due to the generosity of the Parent Club, Creative School Do-Dad's and the LLUMC/Walnut Hill Church Sunday School classes, partial tuition scholarships are offered on an individual need basis. A Scholarship

Application form is available from the school office upon request. Income verification, in the form of the prior year's tax return, or verified documentation detailing a change in employment/income status must accompany your application form. The Creative School Steering Committee reviews each scholarship application and awards partial scholarships based on financial need. Forms should be submitted no later than April 1st of the year prior to the school year requesting or upon new student application for a new family.

**All scholarship information is kept strictly confidential.**

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## **TUITION POLICIES**

- Creative School is a non-profit, self-supporting school. We depend on your prompt payment of tuition to meet our financial obligations.
- Acceptance of enrollment acknowledges your child is enrolled for the entire school year. As defined in the Financial Obligation contract, you are contracted to pay for the entire school year. The Financial Obligation contract is a pact between parents and the school.
- The Steering Committee has determined that a family may be released from the Financial Obligation contract if the family notifies the school office of a family move to a different city, farther than 25 miles away. No refunds of tuition paid will be made in the event of student withdrawal for any other reasons.
- Monthly tuition is due by the first of each month. Tuition is paid one month in advance. Payments received after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month will incur a \$25.00 late fee.
- Dismissal is from 11:45-12:00 pm for 3-year-old and 4-year-old classes, and 12:00-12:15 pm for 2-year-old classes. Dismissal is from 1:50-2:00 pm for all PM Extended Care. There is a \$15.00 charge, per child, for each 15 minutes you are late for pick up. This fee will be added to your account to be paid with the following month's tuition.
- Returned Checks will incur a \$30.00 NSF charge added on to the following month's tuition.
- Please contact the school office in the instance of a late tuition payment to make payment arrangements. If tuition becomes delinquent after two months, you will have ten days from written/emailed notification to meet your financial commitment. Failure to do so could result in the withdrawal of your child from school.
- If your child does not attend preschool because of a family trip, unexcused illness, or other personal reason, the contracted tuition fees still must be paid in full and on time.

## **EXTENDED CLOSURE DUE TO COVID-19 OR NATURAL DISASTER**

- In the event the Director closes the school campus for an extended closure, **longer than five**

**consecutive days per occurrence**, tuition will be prorated at the amount of one half the amount of the individual's full contracted tuition starting on the date of initial closure.

- In the event of an extended closure, as noted above, adjusted tuition amounts will be in place for the following month's payment. Notification will be sent from the school office detailing your new payment amount.
- Extended PM Care tuition will not be charged in the event of an extended closure, **longer than five consecutive day per occurrence**.
- All tuition and fees will be expected to be paid in full for any minor school closures, deemed as shorter than five consecutive days per occurrence.

### **PROGRAM TIMES**

Creative School operates on a nine-month school year, from early September to mid-May. We are a morning preschool program held Monday-Friday, with optional PM Extended Care available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

#### **Arrival Times:**

8:55 am – 9:15 am

#### **Dismissal Times:**

11:50 am – 12:15 pm

#### **Optional PM Extended Care Times:**

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Options for PM Extended Care are available to classes Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Consideration for Extended Care will be made for Monday and Friday if there is sufficient enrollment numbers to make the class.

### **PM EXTENDED CARE DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **LUNCH BUNCH**

- Begins the second week of school.
- Lunch Bunch will be offered to all classes Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
- A minimum of four children must be enrolled in a Lunch Bunch age offering for the class to be offered.
- Lunch Bunch is charged at \$50 per day, for the month.
- Children will need to bring a healthy lunch and beverage (preferably water). Creative School is a peanut-free facility.

- For 2-year-old classes, a mandatory “rest” time is required by Texas Childcare Licensing. Each child will have a cot provided by the school. Please provide a nap mat, labeled with your child’s name.
- Lunch Bunch curriculum includes child directed center-time, free art, story time, and outside play (weather permitting).

## **IMMUNIZATIONS and MEDICAL FORMS**

### IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE

The following chart details the CDC Vaccination Schedule for children from Birth through 6 years old.

## REQUIRED STUDENT MEDICAL FORMS

All children need to be immunized in accordance with the Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child-Care Facilities. If for any reason (medical or religious) your child is not current on his/her immunizations, you must provide an original, notarized, **Affidavit Exemption Immunization for Reasons of Conscience** to the school office no later than the last day of the first week of school.

A current **Immunization Record** and a signed **Medical Form**, documenting your child's ability to safely and physically attend preschool as granted by your child's current physician, must be submitted no later than the last day of the first week of school. An updated copy of your child's Medical Form and Immunization Record must be provided to the school office when your child has his/her annual checkup.

The State of Texas has mandated laws requiring Vision and Hearing screening for children who have reached 4 years of age. Your physician may complete the Vision/Hearing portion of the Medical Form or you may provide additional documentation from a licensed vision/hearing screening professional to meet state law requirements. **Documentation of official Vision and Hearing screening, either by physician or licensed professional, must be provided to the school office for all children who have turned 4 years of age.**

Your child **may not attend** school unless these records are in file and up to date.

## IMMUNIZATIONS FOR STAFF

Creative School encourages all staff members to receive an annual influenza vaccination. If paying for the influenza vaccination causes financial hardship, Creative School will cover the cost of the vaccination for the staff member.

Staff will maintain a signed Immunization Form which documents the influenza vaccination information or the reason for exemption (medical or religious).



## HEALTH PROCEDURES

### ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICIES

We are unable to care for children who are ill. Children may not attend school if they have an illness that:

- Prevents the child from participating comfortably in the program's activities, as determined by his/her teacher.
- Makes the child have a greater need for care than the caregivers can manage without compromising the care of the other children in their group and/or
- Is likely to expose others to a communicable disease.

The following specific conditions require exclusion:

- Fever (over 100.4) accompanied by a behavior change.
- Symptoms of severe illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs (until a medical evaluation determines the child may remain in participation at preschool)
- Diarrhea, defined as watery, less-formed, more frequent stools not associated with a diet change or change in medication, or a stool not contained by the ability to use the toilet. Children who are in diapers who develop diarrhea must be excluded. Children who have learned to use the toilet but cannot make it to the toilet in time must also be excluded.
- Other Symptoms requiring exclusion:

Blood in stools not explained by diet change, medication or hard stools.

Vomiting and/or persistent abdominal pain

Purulent conjunctivitis (pink or red eye lining or whites of eyes with white or yellow pus coming from the eyes)

Chicken pox or shingles

Hepatitis A

Herpes

Impetigo

Lice

Measles

Mouth sores with drooling

Mumps

Rash with fever or behavioral change

Rubella

Scabies

Tuberculosis

Strep Throat

Whooping Cough

**Covid-19 ( separate operational policy will be provided to families )**

If any of these symptoms develop while at school, the child will be isolated from other children and every effort will be made to contact parents or individuals designated by parents. The child must be picked up within the hour of parent being notified.

If a child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, a doctor's note is required upon return indicating the child can participate comfortably in our program's activities, does not require extra care and is not contagious. It is the director's discretion to require a doctor's note or to require 24-hour rest for children with viral infections.

Staff members are encouraged to use good judgement when they need to stay home from work when sick (using the above criteria).

**Daily Health Checks will be conducted upon arrival in carpool and as a child enters his/her classroom.**

The classroom teacher will assess through observation, through touch and inquiries made of the child (when possible).

When a child exhibits:

- Breathing difficulties
- Severe Coughing
- Discharge from nose or eyes
- Skin temperature (warm or cold/clammy)
- Bruising/swelling
- Cuts, sores or rashes

Parents will be notified if the teacher has concerns about the child's well-being. If the child's symptoms fall under the Exclusion Reasons documented on Page 10, the child will need to be taken home. The child's return to school will need to follow the exclusion rules listed to ensure the well-being of the child and those they come in contact with at Creative School. **A child needs to be symptom-free for 24 hours from vomiting, diarrhea and fever before returning to school.**

**A parent or designated emergency contact** must always be available by phone during school hours. It is the parent's responsibility to have someone available who can come to the school for emergencies or for a sick child.

Please call or email the school office if your child has a diagnosed communicable illness or infection, such as Covid-19, strep throat, conjunctivitis, pin worms, fifth's disease, or head lice so we can exercise additional control methods and notify other parents. Your child's identify will remain anonymous.

Please notify the school office by phone or email if your child will be absent due to illness.

## COVID-19 HEALTH PROCEDURES

Parents are responsible for notifying the school office if it becomes known that his/her child was exposed to a family member or other member of the public with a confirmed case of Covid-19.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school office if they intend to travel outside of the state of Texas and/or travel by airplane or cruise ship.

If a case of Covid-19 is confirmed within a classroom at Creative School, parents within the ring of contagion will be notified and decontamination steps will be taken to ensure a safe return to the classroom.

## **HANDWASHING**

Handwashing is the best line of defense in preventing the spread of communicable diseases in the classroom and on the school campus.

Handwashing is required by all staff, volunteers, parents and children to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and or others. All children will wash their hands often, either independently or with staff assistance as necessary.

When to wash hands:

- Upon arriving for the day
- After diapering or using the toilet
- After handling bodily fluids (blowing/wiping nose, coughing into a hand or touching any mucus, blood or vomit).
- Before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving foods and after cooking.
- Before and after playing in water and other sensory material that is shared by two or more people.
- After handling pets or animals.
- After outdoor activities.

Adults must also wash their hands:

- Upon arriving for the day
- After diapering or using the toilet
- After handling bodily fluids (blowing/wiping nose, coughing into a hand or touching any mucus, blood or vomit).
- Cleaning up after any type of body fluids like blood, urine or vomit.
- Before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving foods and after cooking.
- After handling pets or animals.
- After outdoor activities.
- Before and after administering medication.
- After handling garbage.

Proper handwashing technique includes:

- Wet hands with clean running water and apply soap.
- Lather hands by rubbing hands together with soap. Be sure to get the backs of hands, the areas between the fingers, around the nail bed and under fingernails.
- Scrub for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse hands under warm water until free of soap and dirt.
- Dry hands with clean disposable paper towel.
- Turn off water using paper towel.

## HAND SANITIZER

The State of Texas Childcare Licensing does not recommend the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers in lieu of handwashing. Sanitizer will be used in the instance when soap and water is not available. Hands are kept wet with sanitizer for 15 seconds.

## SMOKING IS PROHIBITED

No smoking is allowed, including e-cigarettes, vaporizer or any other tobacco related products on the premises of the building or playground at any time.

## MEDICATIONS

When at all possible, medications should be administered by the parent before and/or after program hours. If a child must be given medication during program hours, state requirements must be followed.

- Parents must give written authorization on the **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form for any medication that must be administered to a child.
  - The **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form includes:
    - child's first and last name
    - medication name
    - physician name
    - prescription number if applicable
    - expiration date
    - dosage
    - when to administer
    - continue medication until date
    - parent signature
- Medication (prescription and over the counter) must be in the original container.
- Medication must have a visible expiration date.
- The medication, along with the completed **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form, must be given directly to the school office to be kept in the designated medication container or refrigerated container as needed. Medication may not be left in a child's school bag or sent to school in the child's possession.
- When medicine is administered, a staff member logs the date, time, dosage amount of the medicine given and the name of the staff member who administered the medicine on the **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form.
- Children may not self-administer any form of medication.

**Creative School does not administer sunscreen and bug spray. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen and bug spray on their child before they bring them to school.**

## FIRST AID AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

All Creative School staff are First Aid and Infant/Child/Adult CPR certified.

### MINOR PHYSICAL INJURY NOT REQUIRING THE INTERVENTION OF A PHYSICIAN

When a child receives a minor injury in the classroom or on the playground, the teacher tends to the child first and administers first aid. The child is then brought to the school office and an **Incident Report** is completed by the classroom teacher and a determination will be made by the school office and the classroom teacher whether the child's parent needs to be called. Parents will be called for all head and biting incidents. A copy of the **Incident Report**, signed by both the attending teacher and administrator, will be sent home in the child's school bag and a second copy will be kept in the child's file in the school office.

- An Incident Report form includes:
  - Description of incident, noting the type of injury received
  - First aid procedures administered
  - Name of person who administered the aid

If a parent is not called during the school day for a minor injury incurred, a teacher or designee (afternoon teacher or administrator) will inform the parent upon pick up either using the **Incident Report** (written) and/or verbal communication.

### MAJOR PHYSICAL INJURY REQUIRING MEDICAL TREATMENT

Anytime an injury occurs on the school campus which requires official medical intervention, Creative School staff will submit a full report with parent signature and a self-report as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (**DFPS 746.305**).

Steps to be followed by teacher in the event of a major physical injury:

- The teacher tends to the child first and administers first aid.
- For all head injuries or for additional first aid help, the teacher will bring the child to the office to be evaluated by an administrator.
- A decision will be made whether the parents (i.e. head injuries, broken bones) or EMS (i.e. time sensitive allergic reaction, lack of consciousness, etc...) needs to be called immediately. Parents will be called for all injuries to the head, broken bones, allergic reactions, or other severe injuries requiring immediate or suspected medical intervention.
- Severe injuries will be treated by Emergency Medical Technicians through the local authorities.
- The teacher completes the full report and self-report (DFPS Forms) depending on the severity of the injury and the school office submits to Childcare Licensing.

Creative School is not responsible for costs incurred as a result of medical and/or dental emergencies.

## FOOD ALLERGIES/FOOD ALLERGY EMERGENCY PLAN



**Creative School is a peanut-free school.** Please make sure all snacks and lunches sent to school are peanut-free. Since each classroom shares snack rotation amongst classroom students, the classroom teacher will inform parents of other classroom food allergies to be excluded from your snack selection. In the instance of severe food allergies, families may choose to have their child bring his/her own snack each day he/she attends school to prevent allergic reaction. A discrete list noting children with food allergies and the class they attend will be posted in each classroom, teacher supply room, and school office.

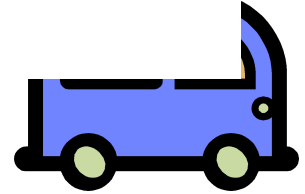
In circumstances when a child has a diagnosed food allergy, State Licensing mandates the following procedure:

- A **Medical Allergy Plan** form must be completed and signed by the physician and provided to the school office.
  - The **Medical Allergy Plan** form defines the allergen, the symptoms of the allergic reaction, the severity, how often it has occurred, and what course of action to take if a suspected allergic reaction occurs while at school. The plan must include what medication, if any, will need to be administered upon reaction and the dosage required.
- If medication is recommended by a physician on the **Medical Allergy Plan**, An **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form must also be included which lists the child's first and last name, physician name, medication name, prescription number if applicable, expiration date, dosage, when to administer, and a parent signature.
- Medication (prescription and over the counter) must be in the original container. Medication must have a visible expiration date.
- Both the **Medical Allergy Plan** for and the **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form, must accompany any medication given to the school office to be kept in the designated medication container or refrigerated container as needed. Medication may not be left in a child's school bag or sent to school in the child's possession.
- When medicine is administered, a staff member logs the date, time, dosage amount of the medicine given and the name of the staff member who administered the medicine on the **Authorization for Dispensing Medication** form.
- Children may not self-administer any form of medication.

## GENERAL POLICIES

### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURE

Parents may never leave their child unattended in the building or on the playground.



### MORNING ARRIVAL 3'S and 4'S

**Arrival Time: 8:55 am – 9:10 am**

- Please enter the parking lot through the Marsh Lane entrance and follow along nearest the playground to form a **lines of traffic under the porte-cochère of the Atrium entrance.**
- **Car seat Placement** – Please have your child's car seat on the **driver's** side of the car if possible. Parents please unbuckle your child when it is their turn to exit the car.
- **Health Screenings** – staff members will perform quick health screenings and/or temperature checks prior to allowing your child to exit the car. We will try our best to expediate the carpool process in a timely manner; thank you in advance for your patience.
- **Exit** – Once it is your turn in the carpool line, please unlock the car door for the staff member, assist in the health screening of your child as needed, and assist your child out of the car when directed by staff. **Do not place your child on the sidewalk without a staff member present.** The staff member will then escort your child into the building and into his/her classroom. The personal safety of your child is of the highest importance to us.
- Due to the recommendations of the CDC in regards to Covid-19 Health Screenings, **parents will not be allowed to walk-in their child for morning arrival.**

### MORNING ARRIVAL FOR 2'S

**Arrival Time: 8:55 am – 9:10 am**

- Please enter the parking lot through the Marsh Lane entrance and circle along the backside of the playground to form **one line at the South side entrance of the building**
- **Car seat Placement** – Please have your child's car seat on the **passenger** side of the car if possible. Parents please unbuckle your child when it is their turn to exit the car.
- **Health Screenings** – staff members will perform quick health screenings and/or temperature checks as we assist your child out of the car. We will try our best to expediate the carpool process in a timely manner; thank you in advance for your patience.
- **Exit** – Once it is your turn in the carpool line, please unlock the car door for the staff member, assist in the health screening of your child as needed, and assist your child out of the car when directed by staff. **Do not place your child on the sidewalk without a staff member present.** The staff member will then escort your child into the building and into his/her classroom. The personal safety of your child is of the highest importance to us.
- Due to the recommendations of the CDC in regards to Covid-19 Health Screenings, **parents will not be allowed to walk-in their child for morning arrival.**

**\*\*Covid-19 Update: If arriving after 9:30 am, please park in the front Atrium parking lot and ring the doorbell to reach the school office. Staff will meet parent outside and escort child into the building.**

### **CARPOOL SAFETY:**

- **NO CELL PHONE USE DURING CARPOOL.**
- **NO PASSING IN CARPOOL LINE WHEN CHILDREN ARE BEING LOADED OR UNLOADED.**
- **NO CHILD CAN ENTER OR EXIT SCHOOL UNESCORTED.** This rule is mandated by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

### **NOON AND PM EXTENDED DISMISSAL 3's and 4's**

**Noon Dismissal Time: 11:50 – 12:10 pm**

**PM Extended Time: 1:50 – 2:00 pm**

- **Dismissal for Noon and PM Extended for the 3's and 4's is by walk-up or drive through carpool at the EAST Education Wing double doors.**
- Please enter the parking lot through the Marsh Lane entrance and either circle around the rear of the playground to form **one line at the edge of the Education Wing sidewalk** or park in a designated parking spot located at the rear of the playground for walk-up.
- If choosing to walk-up, a parent or designated emergency contact would then walk-up to the East Education Wing double doors to form one line for child pickup at the marked location.
- If choosing carpool, the parent or designated emergency pickup **must have a visible Carpool sign in the car passenger window displaying child's first and last name.** Two carpool signs will be provided at the beginning of the year. Please contact the school office if additional signs are needed.
- If choosing carpool, a teacher will assist the child into the car, but it is the parent's responsibility to pull forward and buckle the child into the car seat.

### **NOON AND PM EXTENDED DISMISSAL 2's**

**Noon Dismissal Time: 11:50 – 12:10 pm**

**PM Extended Time: 1:50 – 2:00 pm**

- **Dismissal for Noon and PM Extended for the 2's is by drive through carpool at the South side entrance doors.**
- Please enter the parking lot through the Marsh Lane entrance and circle around the rear of the playground to form **one line at the South side entrance doors.**
- The parent or designated emergency pickup **must have a visible Carpool sign in the car passenger window displaying child's first and last name.** Two carpool signs will be provided at the beginning of the year. Please contact the school office if additional signs are needed.
- A teacher will assist the child into the car, but it is the parent's responsibility to pull forward and buckle the child into the car seat.

### **AUTHORIZED CHILD PICK UP**

If your child is going home with another child to play, please inform your child's teacher and the school office by a written note or email communication.



Only parents and designated emergency pickup persons, as listed on the Authorized Pickup List in your child's file may pick up your child at dismissal unless proper documentation is provided **prior to 11:30 am on the date of assumed pickup**. Proper documentation includes alternate pickup's first and last name, driver's license number, and make/model/color of car. Identity will be verified by staff before releasing child.

If you need to pick up your child early, prior to 11:30 am, please check in with the school office to sign your child out accordingly.

## CAR SEATS

All children are required by law to be placed in a child safety seat. **If a child safety seat is not with the child or in the vehicle at dismissal, by law, we cannot place the child in the vehicle.**

## PROMPT PICK UP

It is important and necessary for you to arrive to carpool and pick up your child on time. A child whose ride is late experiences great anxiety and worry. We understand that emergencies happen. If an emergency occurs, take time to give us a call, (214) 352-0732. There is a \$15.00 late pickup fee per child for each 15 minutes you are late. This fee will be added onto your account to be paid with the following month's tuition.

## ALTERNATE CARPOOL

When church functions, inclement weather, or other reasons necessitate the use of the Atrium, the carpool for the 3's and 4's will use an alternate location for drop-off/pick-up. Notice will be sent to parents via email as to the alternate carpool route.

## PARENT/CHILD SEPARATION

We understand no matter how well prepared and excited a family may be, the newness of preschool or returning to preschool after an extended break, may be a little frightening for everyone. It is not unusual for a child to become teary when separating from a parent in an unfamiliar situation. Remember, this is a new environment with new faces.

Sometimes saying goodbye isn't easy. We recommend you keep it reassuring, short, and sweet. Your smile, eyes and body language communicate a lot. If a child senses any type of apprehension on your part, this enhances their own feeling of uncertainty. Separation is often harder on the parents than the child.

It is not unusual for our Teacher Aides and office staff to check up on children at the beginning of the school year. If your child is having a difficult time, we will check on him/her and provide the parent an update.

## ATTENDANCE/LATE ARRIVAL

- Please have your child to school on-time. Children may miss a lesson or instruction from their teacher if they arrive late.
- Teachers take daily attendance. If your child is going to be absent, please notify the school office.
- Children who arrive through carpool are signed in by their teacher. Parents who walk their child in as a late arrival, must sign their child with school staff at entry to school.

- If a family arrives after 9:10 am, the parent must park his/her car and walk in the child through the front atrium entrance. Please ring the doorbell for assistance and sign your child in with the school office.
- All children picked up early must be signed out through the school office on the student sign-out sheet.

### SCHOOL INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSURE

In the event of inclement weather, Creative School will close at the discretion of the Director. Creative school will notify WFAA – Channel 8 News to list our school in the event of a school closing both on the newscast and on their website, <http://www.wfaa.com/closings>, no later than 7:00 a.m. The school will be listed as Creative School of Walnut Hill Church. A school wide email will also be sent. To ensure timely notification, please make sure the school office has a current copy of your email address.

### OTHER SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of a Director/government sanctioned school closure due to Covid-19 or other contagious disease requiring the use of deep cleaning and decontamination, parents will be notified by email at the earliest ability. Updates will be provided to families as needed via email to keep parents informed of changes and updates regarding the closure and reopening of the school.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to participate with activities and functions at Creative School.

**Parent Club** - Every parent is automatically a member of the Parent Club. Monthly meetings are held to inform families of the activities of the school. There are opportunities to share your talent and time to support family functions, parties and fundraisers.

**Do-Dads**- Our Dads' Club recruits fathers to join their organization to help support school functions and build camaraderie between Creative School dads. The Do-Dads' organize a playground cleanup prior to the start of the year and assist with school projects throughout the year.

**School wide information** - A virtual monthly newsletter is sent to families to advise on upcoming events.

**Class Parties** – Creative School classes hold class parties for Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Room mothers, in conjunction with parent volunteers, provide the food, activities and festivities. Classroom teachers will coordinate with Room Mothers and parent volunteers to decide what is need per class.

**Open Door Policy** – Due to current policies to keep children safe from potential spread of Covid-19, parents will be screened when entering the building. Parents are asked to check in with the school office before proceeding to their child's classroom. If child is leaving school ( pick-up for Doctor appointment) parent must sign out and indicate their child is leaving for the day. Policies for entering building may change as necessitated by safety /health protocols provided by the CDC, and Dallas County Health and Human Services.

## **BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT**

All mothers have the right to breastfeed their child or provide breastmilk for their child while in our care. Likewise, if a mother is visiting school and needs to breastfeed her accompanying infant, but would like added privacy, there are several accommodations available to support her:

- An unoccupied classroom with an adult sized chair will be made available for the duration of the mother and child's needs. This classroom will have a working full door which may be kept closed for privacy.
- Or,
- The Director's office with an adult sized armchair, will be provided for the duration of the mother and child's needs. The Director's office has a working full door which may be kept closed for privacy.

All mothers have the right to breastfeed their infant whenever and wherever they deem necessary. Please do not hesitate to let staff know how we can support you while you are at our school.

## DRESS

Please dress your child in comfortable, practical clothing for painting or playing outdoors. Send your child each day dressed for outside play. Children's clothing should be uncomplicated so that they can easily use the restroom by themselves. Long dresses, tights and difficult to manage clothing (snaps, hooks or excessive buttons) prohibit children from being able to manage independently and participate fully in active play.



**Spare Clothing** – Please send a weather appropriate spare set of clothing including underwear, shirt, shorts/pants, and socks in a labeled Ziploc bag in your child's school bag every day. Children will not be allowed to share clothing or borrow from a spare set of clothing. **All children must have their own spare set of clothing with them at all times in the case of an accident or other instance of bodily fluid transmission.**

**Label** - Please label all sweaters, jackets, coats, school bags, etc. with your child's name. Often a child will have a garment identical to someone else's in the classroom.

**Shoes** – Rubber soled shoes that cover the whole foot, like tennis shoes are required. Dress-up shoes, sandals, Crocs, flip-flops and all types of boots can be dangerous and inappropriate for active play. Socks are recommended to keep sand from getting inside shoes.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

### OUTDOOR PLAY

Unless there is inclement weather, children will go outside to play daily. Teachers encourage and monitor the gross motor development for their class. Outside play offers the opportunity to practice and master age appropriate skills. To ensure the safety of the children while outdoors the following procedures are required:

- **Clothing** – During cold weather months, children should wear layers of clothing that may be added or taken off depending on the temperature. All children should keep a weather-appropriate, labeled, change of clothing in their school bag.
- **Sunscreen** – While there are many shady parts of the playground, parents are encouraged to dress their children in sun-protective clothing and/or apply sunscreen with UVA and UVB protections of SPF 15 or higher. **Creative School staff cannot apply sunscreen.**
- **Insect repellent** – Based on recommendations from the Texas Department of State Health Services, parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent containing DEET on their children before arriving at preschool. **Creative School cannot not apply insect repellent.** For more information go [to http://www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us) and search for insect repellent.

### PLAYGROUND USE

- The Creative School playground is reserved for school use during the school day, from 9 am until 2 pm.
- Families are welcome to use the playground **after** school hours or on weekends.

## **RESTROOM POLICY**

- Children in the three-year-old classes and older **MUST BE POTTY TRAINED.**
- Children in the **three-year-old class and older should not be in disposable diapers or disposable under garments of any kind.**
- Please help your child work on the personal hygiene skills of wiping themselves and pulling up their own pants. Working on these self- help skills at home ensures that your child will not encounter problems while at school.
- Accidents can occur at school, please make sure your child has a complete change of clothes in his/her bag. Please make sure the clothing is labeled and weather appropriate.
- Although many classrooms have shared restrooms located between two classrooms, children are expected to respect each other's privacy. Only one child will be allowed in the restroom at a time.
- **If your child is having difficulty mastering using the toilet, please ensure your child has used the restroom prior to arriving at school for the day.**
- If a child has an accident while at school, we will help them change into clean clothing. Wet/soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home for cleaning.
- We realize children may have occasional accidents, however, if a child continues to have "accidents" on a daily or more frequent basis we will call the parent to come to school and assist in the changing and cleaning of the child. On rare occasions, a child may need to stay home a few days to master toilet training before returning to school.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

During the school year, you may feel your child is ready for potty-training. Some of the common signs of readiness include:

- The child can tell you in simple language that he/she recognizes they need to use the potty, **before** they begin to go.
- Stays dry for long periods (can hold his/her urine and bowel movement).
- Can recognize when diaper is soiled or wet.
- Initiates interest in using the potty and asks for underwear.
- Wants to be independent and is open to learning the process.

We ask you begin teaching your child at home during a weekend or break from school. Please discuss with your child's teacher before coming to school with the change from diaper to pull-up or underwear. We recommend waiting until potty training has been successful at home for 2-3 weeks.

During the school day, your child:

- Will need to tell us he/she needs to go potty **before** they begin to go.
- Can undress and pull up their own pant/shorts. Teacher will assist, but your child should be working on being able to pull up underwear and clothing independently.
- Be able to wipe themselves.
- Be able to postpone going potty in case someone is using the bathroom.
- Be able to wash and dry hands.

## **CLOTH UNDERWEAR**

We realize using cloth underwear is recommended for potty training since a child can feel when they are wet or soiled. We will be supportive of families who use them. **HOWEVER**, if your child has potty accidents for two school days in a row (keeping in mind your child attends either a MWF or a T/Th schedule), we will ask you to provide pull-ups. This ensures we keep the classroom sanitary and safe for the other children attending school.

## **CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS**

**PLEASE dress your child in clothing that is easy to take on and remove.** Elastic waists, like sweatpants are easiest to manage. Please do not dress your child in long dresses or tights that are difficult to manage and keep dry. Likewise, overalls, bib type clothing, one-piece outfits and clothing with snaps and zippers should not be worn as your child learns to use the potty.

### **SNACK GUIDELINES**



Snack time is an exciting and important part of the day for your child and teaches patience, manners, independence, language development and nutrition.

**Snack Assignment-** Parents will be assigned snack rotations within your classroom throughout the year. Please involve your child when choosing the snack to provide. **All snacks must be pre-packaged, single serve, and ready to eat. Homemade or family style snacks will not be allowed due to our need to contain the spread of germs as much as possible.**

**Water Bottles** – Children need to have access to water during the day. Please send a labeled, filled, water bottle for your child every day. The school provides additional water at snack time. Please do not send juice boxes or milk in place of water as we will not be able to serve it.

**Allergies** – Your teacher will advise of any food allergies within the classroom. Please avoid those food allergy inducing foods when providing snacks for your child’s rotation. **Creative School is a PEANUT-FREE school.** Please read the labels carefully on any item you might be considering.

### **Snack suggestions are as follows:**

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Cheese Sticks        | Pretzels                  |
| Graham Crackers      | Cheez-its                 |
| Goldfish             | Ritz Crackers             |
| Granola Bars         | Raisin Boxes              |
| Wheat Thins          | Rice Cakes                |
| Pre-Popped Popcorn   | Bags of Apple Slices      |
| Bags of Baby Carrots | Individual Hummus Packets |
| Go-Gurts             | Yogurt Smoothie Drinks    |

Since children provide their own water bottles and we provide additional water at snack time, please do not send any juice boxes or milk cartons. Juice boxes are served for special classroom parties or Lunch Bunch occasions only.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Every child's birthday is celebrated during our school year. Summer birthdays may be celebrated at half-year or before the end of the school year.

**Birthday Book** -One tradition we encourage is the donation of a Birthday book to the school library in honor of your child’s birthday. A bookplate inscribed with your child’s name will be placed in the book. A



selection of books is kept in the school office. Information regarding birthday books will be sent home by your child's teacher closer to his/her birthday celebration.

**Birthday Snack** – If interested, you may provide individually pre-packaged birthday snacks to celebrate your child's big day. Individually pre-packaged cookies, ice cream, muffins, fruit slices, or even special birthday stickers, bubbles, or other fun treats/favors are welcome. Due to the potential for the spread of germs, we kindly request that homemade treats, or treats without original packaging, not be provided.

## **DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE PRACTICES**

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- Using brief supervised separation from the group activity or task, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Withholding active play or keeping a child inside as a consequence for behavior
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods for the child's age

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

Teachers, staff members and parents are all required to read, review and sign the **Discipline and Guidance Policy** at the start of each school year.

## **BITING**

Biting is a natural developmental stage which is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children is our primary concern. The center's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers have poor



verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The teachers and staff will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain close and constant supervision of the children in their class.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs.

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people!"
- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be given something to do that is satisfying.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and ice applied.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident.
- An **Incident Report** will be filled out and sent home in both child's bags as well as a second copy kept in each child's folder within the school office. Note: If a bite requires medical treatment, notification will be made via the requirements of the State of Texas Child Care Licensing within 24 hours.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.

## BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS

One important part of the developing child centers around their social and emotional growth. The preschool classroom provides the opportunity to test the world around them and to practice social skills and self-control. While some are able to master these skills and milestones easily, others may struggle. At times a child's behavior can be aggressive and might include hitting, biting or pushing friends.

Redirecting a child into appropriate activities and modeling acceptable behavior and communication is the role of the teacher. Children are shown how to deal with confrontation or frustration in an acceptable manner. The class ratios, the expectations and goals of the class, the emotional environment, and the schedule of the day all contribute to children being successful.

As defined in the **Disciplines and Guidance Policy**, staff and teachers will use reminders, redirection, choices, loss of privilege, time away from activity and supervised removal from the situation to address behavioral concerns. Any undesirable behavior will be addressed with compassion, with age appropriate methodology and with the goal to "teach" and not punish.

- Teachers address persistent challenging behavior by assessing the intent or drive behind the behavior, developing alternative choices for the child, gathering data from observation of the child, conferring with the family, possibly meeting with a qualified professional for insight and using positive communication and expectations to positively support the child.
- If necessary, the parents will be contacted to discuss with the teacher and Director how to approach and resolve any situation.
- Our goal would be to create a team approach for success. Each classroom teacher will determine when contact with a parent needs to be made. In most cases, it will be when the behavior has been repeated multiple times, the behavior becomes a distraction in the learning environment, harm is inflicted upon other children or adults (physically or verbally) and we are not seeing internal measures developing to gain self-control and reduce the occurrence of the negative behavior.

## DISMISSAL



In the unlikely event that Creative School cannot adequately meet the needs of the child due to safety of the child or the safety of the other children in the class, the Director will determine if the child will be asked to leave temporarily or permanently.

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## PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and school is important for a positive school experience for your family. Communication may be accomplished during face-to-face conversations, phone calls or written correspondence. Parents are encouraged to schedule a time to speak to their child's teacher, outside of arrival and dismissal, as they deem necessary and appropriate. Information from parents is beneficial and relevant when a big change is occurring in a child's life, such as a new baby, illness in the family, or parent separation. Please be sure to inform your child's teacher if something has happened that may affect your child during his or her school day.

Listed below are several forms of additional communication available between parent and school that occur throughout the year.

- **TELL-ME Form** is to be completed by the parents at the beginning of the school year. This information is shared with your child's teachers to assist in getting to know your child and includes family background, overview of your child's development, and any current or historical information that might assist the teacher in learning about your child.
  - Events such as a relative visiting, a new baby expected, an impending move, etc., can change a child's behavior at school. If the teachers are aware of significant events in your child's life, they can better understand your child and the changes in his/her behavior.
  - It is also important that you communicate to teachers any special fears your child may have, such as animals, clowns, etc., because of the variety of things that may be encountered in the classroom. If the teachers have been alerted to special fears they can avoid the encounter or prepare the child for the event.
- **Announcements** of general interest during the school year are posted on the website or noted in the virtual monthly newsletter. Upcoming calendar dates, special sign-up and general reminders will be included.
- **Classroom Calendars** are sent home in your child's school bag each month. Teachers may also email a copy to their class. Calendars include weekly/monthly themes and learning objectives, special events, snack leaders, show and tell date (if applicable), and other important items pertaining to your child's day. We encourage you to review your child's calendar each month and post in a visible location at home for your reference.
- **Classroom Snack** is assigned on a rotating basis during the school year. Your classroom calendar will note snack assignments and your teacher will provide advance notice. Please advise the teacher if your child has a food allergy and alert the school office accordingly. Our school is peanut-free.
- **School-Wide newsletters** will be sent via email at the start of each month. Please read each newsletter in full for details pertaining to special events, signs-ups, general reminders and other important items from the Director.
- **School-Wide emails** are sent when the announcement is to be made to the entire school population. School-wide email, via Constant Contact, may be used to notify or remind families of school events, communicate changes in carpool locations, or to communicate Parent Club activities. **WE ASK PARENTS TO NOT UNSUBSCRIBE TO CONSTANT CONTACT** to ensure they are included in email messages.
- **Parent Club and Creative School Facebook Page** provide updates and reminders, post glimpses into the school day and are available as a communication outlet for families between different classes.

## **ASSESSMENTS AND CONFERENCES**

Assessments are an important part of your child's preschool experience. Our school curriculum is based on developmentally appropriate lessons, activities and skills for each age group. All children develop at their own level, at their own rate and developmental growth varies from child to child. Assessments are an important tool for the teacher to alter curriculum to meet the needs and the interests of the class.

- An initial observation and informal assessment will be made at the beginning of the school year. Teachers will observe and assess their class to determine the developmental needs of each student, the interest of the children, and their aptitudes. Observations will include assessment in development of cognitive, language, physical and socioemotional growth.
- Two parent conferences are held; one in September and one in January. As part of the January conference, teachers will provide a written assessment, a snapshot of the child's progress, to share and discuss with parents. A copy will be provided for parents and a copy will be kept in the child's file in the school office.
- Each assessment of a child is based upon what is appropriate for a child individually, developmentally and culturally. Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) provides effective classroom practices and methods and engages children from all different learning styles.
- At the request of a parent, teachers will schedule additional conferences.

Our teachers urge you to discuss any special concerns or questions that you may have about the preschool or your child.

Note: Current law ([Texas Family Code, Chapter 261, 261.101](#)) requires that professionals such as teachers, doctors, nurses, or child daycare workers must make a report to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services when, in their professional capacity they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 has been abused or neglected.

## **CELL PHONE USE AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY**

- Teachers who are actively supervising children are not allowed personal use of their cell phones, computers or other technology that interferes with their ability to actively monitor their class.
- During school hours, parents should call the school office to leave a message for their child's teacher.
- If your child's teacher uses a cell phone to communicate with the parents in her class, it will be after class dismisses or during a scheduled break when the teacher is not considered in ratio.
- If a parent reaches out to a teacher during school hours, please provide adequate time for her to respond to communications. Please contact the office if an immediate response is needed.

## **CHILD SAFETY**

### **CHILD CARE LICENSING**

Creative School is licensed by the Texas Health and Human Services. As such, it meets and follows the regulations established by the State of Texas for early childhood settings.

If parents have any questions or concerns about Creative School programs or childcare policies in the State of Texas, they may contact:

State of Texas Child Care Licensing office

Phone: 214 -583-4253

Website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us/child\\_care/](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/)

You may review a copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services standards at any time during the school's hours of operation or access it online at:

<https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

Creative School's most recent licensing report is posted in the school office.

### **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS/FINGERPRINTING**

- Upon hiring, all staff members must undergo a criminal background check that is administered by the Texas Health and Human Services.
- Upon hiring, all staff members must complete an FBI fingerprint check.
- Once the background check is cleared and fingerprinting verified, staff is cleared to work directly with children.
- Every 5 years, each staff member must have the criminal background check renewed.

## **CHILD MALTREATMENT – ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

### **DEFINITION**

Any suspicion of child abuse or neglect of a child is to be reported to the Director immediately. Documentation will be made and a phone call will be made to appropriate authorities. Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse can be very difficult to detect.

- Symptoms, warning signs or factors indicating abuse could include (745.1309. C.1-4):
  - unusual bruises
  - welts or recurring bruises
  - welts, burns, or unexplained injuries
  - unusual clothing for time of year, unusual shyness, avoidance, anxiousness to please
  - very knowledgeable (beyond age level) with facts/information regarding actions, language or behavior of a sexual nature
  - frequent urination, itching or discomfort
  - very poor relationships with peers, unusually “adult” in actions, language, or behavior, regression in behavior when redirected

These are just a few external behaviors observable. Always discuss with the Director if a concern is present.

The members of LLUMC, Walnut Hill Church and Creative School are committed to the safety, welfare and protection of all children participating in our program. This commitment includes protecting each child from abuse or harassment of any form, whether physical, mental or sexual and from any individual (i.e., parent, peer, or staff member).

Internal procedures for reporting any suspicion of child abuse on a child are to be made immediately by the adult making the report, to the Director. Documentation will be completed and a phone call will be made to licensing by the adult reporting the abuse. Confidentiality is the highest priority. There will be no discussions with fellow staff members or other families at the school or outside the school by the staff member. All communication is directed between the Director and employee only.

### **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

One of the best ways to protect children from the harmful effects of maltreatment is by staying informed about resources which provide information to childcare providers, administrators, and parents about abuse and neglect. Many organizations operate on the local, state and national levels to distribute information, and connect concerned parties to resources including the ones listed below:

#### **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services**

##### **Child Protective Service**

[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Protection/](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/)

In addition to having information about reporting suspected cases of maltreatment this site has information about preventing and recognizing abuse and neglect for adults who want to protect children.

##### **Prevent Child Abuse Texas**

<https://www.texprotects.org/about/PCAT/>

This organization provides fact sheets about different issues related to abuse and neglect that can be used for training for caregivers, parents or individuals concerned with a child’s well-being. They promote services that improve child well-being and develop programs that help to prevent all types of abuse and neglect.

##### **Childhelp**

<https://www.childhelp.org/childhelp-approach/?a=prevention-programs>

The first step of Childhelp’s approach to ending child abuse is to prevent the cycle of child abuse from continuing. Childhelp’s prevention programs work with children, families, and communities to provide long-term education and increase awareness of abuse and neglect.

## CHILD MALTREATMENT AWARENESS, PREVENTION, AND RESPONSE

Notwithstanding Section 261.001, in Minimum Standards:

1. “Abuse” means an intentional, knowing, or reckless act or omission by an employee, volunteer, or other individual working under the auspices of a facility or program that causes or may cause emotional harm or physical injury to, or the death of, a child served by the facility or program as further described by rule or policy.
  2. “Exploitation” means the illegal or improper use of a child or of the resources of a child for monetary or personal benefit, profit, or gain by an employee, volunteer, or other individual working under the auspices of a facility or program as further described by rule or policy.
  3. “Neglect” means a negligent act or omission by an employee, volunteer, or other individual working under the auspices of a facility or program, including failure to comply with an individual treatment plan, plan of care, or individualized service plan, that causes or may cause substantial emotional harm or physical injury to, or the death of, a child served by the facility or program as further described by rule or policy
- a) Except as provided by Section 261.404, a state agency that operates, licenses, certifies, registers, or lists a facility in which children are located or provides oversight of a program that serves children shall make a prompt, thorough investigation of a report that a child has been or may be abused, neglected, or exploited in the facility or program. The primary purpose of the investigation shall be the protection of the child.

## STAFF CHILD MALTREATMENT/ABUSE RECOGNITION TRAINING

All Creative Staff receive annual training on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child maltreatment including abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), exploitation and neglect. This includes individuals who are employees, volunteers, administration, shared responsibility for children, regularly with children within the program or who assumes responsibility for children within the program. This training aligns with the Texas Family Code including definitions, awareness, prevention and reporting.

- The training includes:
  - Identifying factors that indicate a child is at risk for abuse or neglect.
  - Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect.
  - Internal procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect
  - Community organizations that have training programs.
- In the instance of suspected child abuse, the teacher or staff is required to make a report to the proper authorities within 48 hours of the time that the abuse or neglect is suspected.
- The teacher or staff who has taken the report from the child or seen evidence of abuse must be the one making the report.
- The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is the appropriate agency if the suspected abuse involves a person responsible for the care, custody or welfare of a child (such as a child’s parent or guardian, or school personnel). The report may be made by calling the Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline at (800) 252-5400, or online at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org).
- The Director will also be notified by the staff member who is reporting the suspected abuse of the child. A report will also be made to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and to Child-care Licensing Department.

The Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400.

The Texas Abuse/Neglect website is [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org).

Texas Health and Human Services,  
Child Care Licensing office:

Phone: 214-583-4253

Website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us/child\\_care/](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/)

### **PARENT NOTIFICATIONS (EMERGENCY)**

Parents will be notified immediately via phone call and email if an allegation that their child has been abused, neglected or exploited while in the care of Creative School.

In the instance of an injury or severe illness necessitating immediate treatment by a health-care professional or hospitalization, Creative School staff will notify the parent by phone call and email immediately after securing care for the child.

If Child Care Licensing finds Creative School deficient in a standard related to safe sleeping, abuse, neglect or exploitation all parents will be notified. Creative School will notify all families who attend Creative School of the at the time of the deficiency including those not present at the time.

### **GUN-FREE ZONE**

Open Carry Law 84th Session effective January 1, 2016. Per our Licensing standards, 746.3707

- Law enforcement officials who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty may have firearms or ammunition on the premises of the child-care center.
- For all other persons, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of the child-care center.
- Gun-free zone includes the church and school buildings, and school campus including the sidewalks, playgrounds, and parking lots.

### **GANG-FREE ZONE**

- As required by the Texas Protective and Regulatory Services standards, parents are to be notified that the area within 1000 feet of any school is considered to be 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 schools and child care centers.
- Certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.
- For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

## **SECURITY**

### **BUILDING ACCESS**

The front (Atrium) door of the building will only be unlocked for morning/afternoon carpool to allow teachers to assist students to class. Once carpool is over, the doors will be locked and parents will need to ring the intercom bell for access. It is recommended that each parent have the school telephone number accessible to call in the event they are unable to gain access.

All other building access doors will be kept locked at all times, even when a church receptionist is present. Please ring the intercom bell at the front atrium door to request access to the building during school hours.

### **SECURITY THREAT**

Our staff is trained to handle any situation, which poses a threat to the safety of the child, with calm demeanor and protection of the child at all times.

In the event of actual emergency, all parents and guardians identified in their child's admission file will be notified via school-wide email of the emergency status, the anticipated duration of the emergency, when you will be able to pick-up your child and the alternate location address, if applicable. Teachers will remain with their class until each parent or guardian comes to pick up their child. Please ensure changes to contact information are immediately communicated to the school office to ensure timely receipt of important information.

Fire and Evacuation Drills are practiced on a monthly basis. Children are taught how to quietly and quickly exit their classroom and building.

Natural or Catastrophic Disaster – With the safety of the children our highest priority, based on the situation at hand, the school would make the decision to either stay onsite or relocate to our evacuation location. Parents are notified via email or phone call immediately once the decision is made.

In the event when staff and children must be moved to an alternate location, arrangements have been made with:

The Village at Northway Campus  
3877 Walnut Hill Lane  
Dallas, Texas 75229

Severe Weather Drills are practiced so the children understand how to safely transition to our sheltering location, Walnut Hill Church basement Fellowship Hall, in the event of a storm or tornado. Children learn how to move to the basement or hallway and use a “duck and cover” routine. Severe Weather drills are practiced 4 times per year.

Lockdown Procedures – If a lockdown code is called, teachers lock themselves and their children in their own individual classroom until all security concerns are cleared. Parents are notified via email if this procedure is ever necessary. The staff practices this procedure 4 times annually and we use the language “safety practice” to not alarm any child.

Utility Failure – Children are kept safe, calm, and in their classroom with their teacher while parents are contacted via email or phone and dismissal transpires in a calm manner.

A comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan detailing the specific evacuation process and details is located in the school office and can be provided to parents upon request.



Missing Child – Safety of children is one of the highest priorities. All staff is oriented and trained in the policy of the school in regard to every child's safety and security at all times. The school has a policy in place to address this issue. Parents are notified along with the Police and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing is a child ever goes missing from care.

## **CREATIVE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

Creative School of Walnut Hill Church, a ministry of Lover Lane UMC is licensed by the State of Texas, Child Care Licensing. It is a non-profit organization and is governed by the Early Childhood Steering Committee under the authority of the Council on Ministries and the Administrative Board of WHC. The Board consists of a minimum of the following persons: Pastor, Director of Creative School, Chairperson, Associate Director of Children's Ministries, Teacher Representative, two Parent Representatives, 2 Members at-large, and Parent Club Representatives. The Steering Committee approves all routine policy, program, and staffing decisions of the school. It refers matters of finance to the Finance Committee and building-usage matters to the Trustees and Grounds Committee. Major policy and program decisions are approved by the WHC Administrative Board.

## **PARENT HANDBOOK POLICY AND PROCEDURE REVIEW**

Parents are required to read and review the school policies and procedures contained in the above read Parent Handbook, at a minimum, annually.

Signed Handbook Page: Upon review, each family will sign and return their **Parent Handbook Policy Review** page to the school office. It is retained in each child's file to record parental review of the school policies and procedures.

Update - In the event an update is needed, an electronic version of the updated Parent Handbook, with a revision date, will be provided for each family on our website [www.creativeschool.org](http://www.creativeschool.org).

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY AMONG FAMILIES, STAFF AND DIRECTOR**

If, at any time, a parent has reviewed these policies and procedures and would like to discuss questions or concerns with the Director, please contact the school office to schedule an appointment (214) 352-0732.

If a question or concern is of a time sensitive manner, please let us know the immediacy of your problem and we will be available to meet with you.