

Parent/Student Handbook

Welcome to Little Schoolhouse where loving care and creative learning experiences are offered to each child. The upcoming year is certain to be filled with many exciting opportunities for you and your child. We are very fortunate to have you and your family as a part of our community. Little Schoolhouse has been privately owned and operated since its inception. The owner, Tina Green, takes an active role in the daily supervision and operation of Little Schoolhouse.

Philosophy: Respect for children as individuals is the basis of our philosophy. This principle is reflected in the choice of curriculum, our choices in extra-curricular activities, and in the way we treat each other. A sincere love of learning is also shared among the Little Schoolhouse community. We seek to preserve the natural enthusiasm in each child. Our motto is: **Making A Difference Daily, One Child at A Time!**

Programs: Little Schoolhouse welcomes children ages six weeks through 4 years old (full-time only). We offer after school programs for school age children 4 to 12 years old. We also have full time Summer Camp during school break.

Curriculum: We use Leap Frog Curriculum! We take great pride teaching your children. We know that the first five years set the groundwork and are stepping stones for their learning for the rest of their lives. That is why we have chosen Leap Frog Curriculum! It is a very hands-on learning experience and is the same curriculum that is used by Red Oak Independent School District.

Special Extra-Curricular Activities: *Music* classes are included in all programs for children from birth to our Pre-K 4 class enrolled full-time. *Spanish* included beginning at two years of age. *Exercise class* is included for all children enrolled full time, beginning at 18months. *Science* is included for all children enrolled full-time beginning at age 2 years of age. *Social Studies* is included for all children enrolled full-time beginning at age 2 years of age.

Registration: Payment of a non-refundable registration fee, as well as completion of a registration packet to confirm a family's intention to enroll their child into Little Schoolhouse. Your registration fee will only hold your spot for 2 weeks. Tuition will be due after two weeks.

Supply fee: \$200.00 supply fee is due every September 1st. If you enroll in the middle of the year you will pay a prorated supply fee equivalent to \$17.00 per month until September 1st.

Enrollment: In order to enroll into Little Schoolhouse, you must turn in the following:

1. **Completed registration packet.** Within the packet, or as attachments, please make sure to provide the following required information:
 - a. **Current Immunization Records:** Immunizations must be kept current (according to standards set by the Texas Department of Health) while your child is attending Little Schoolhouse. Ellis County does not require TB testing.
 - b. **Hearing and Vision Screening Results:** For students who will be four years old by Sept 1, we must have results from a hearing/vision test within 120 of the child's fourth birthday. For new students who are currently four years old, we must have results within 120 days of enrollment.
 - c. **Statement of Participation:** For all children, a physician's examination statement must be provided within the first 30 days of enrollment and each year will need to be updated.
 - d. **Permission to transport in the event of an emergency.** In the event of an emergency, a child would be transported by emergency medical services.
 - e. **Signed Emergency Release.** This is needed in the event a child requires emergency medical treatment. All efforts will be made to contact the parents.
 - f. **At least one emergency contact is required.** Please specify their address, phone number and driver's license number. It is not required that this person have permission to pick-up the child. It should, however, be someone who will have additional ways of contacting you (the parent or guardian) in the event of an emergency. Examples are a work supervisor or administrative assistant, or a family member who may know your whereabouts.
 - g. **Water Activity Permission:** Little Schoolhouse does not provide on-site swimming activities. Splash days are held during the summer months, but do not involve wading pools or standing water.
 - h. **Signature to Acknowledge Receipt of Parent/Student Handbook.**
 - i. **Field trips:** Children enrolled in Summer Camp will attend field trips. They will be posted in advance for the parents. You will need to provide a field trip permission form for any transportation to and from field trips. This will be provided in the Summer Camp enrollment packet.

2. **Discipline and Guidance Policy:** Little Schoolhouse's policy concerning discipline and guidance is in accordance with Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Little Schoolhouse uses only positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. We believe discipline is teaching, not punishing. We strive to help your child learn positive and appropriate behavior patterns. Instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior, we will use praise and encouragement for good behavior. We will remind children of the behavior expectations daily and redirect behavior using positive statements. We believe that discipline should be individualized for each child. Children may be given a supervised time out / cooling off period, when appropriate for their age and development. We will never use corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment. By using only positive guidance, children will be taught skills, which will help them get along in their physical and social environment. If we have a persistent problem, we will discuss them with their parents to try to work out the undesirable behaviors. If they persist see the Suspension/Expulsion section.³

3. **Tuition Agreement:** The school does not accept children on a drop-in basis unless they are pre- registered and there happens to be space available that day. Drop in space is not guaranteed. Tuition is due on Monday of each week, or on the first of each month for monthly payments. Late fees are assessed at closing on the day it is

due. Enrollment in our program is for an indefinite period. The school engages staff for the number of children enrolled. Therefore, we cannot discount tuition for absences due to sickness, holidays or inclement weather days. The Vacation Policy allows for 1 week of unpaid absence per school year (see below).

Withdrawal: We hope each child will stay with us for a very long time, but if you choose to leave, **two-week written notice is required.** Families failing to provide two-week notice will still be responsible for payment of two weeks tuition.

Suspension / Expulsion Unfortunately there are times when your child's behavior will result in the need for suspension and or expulsion or termination of enrollment. If after continued instances of uncontrollable behavior your child may be asked to be picked up for the day. If we consistently have behavior issues and we have exhausted our ability to try to keep your child under control we will have no other choice but ask you to find other arrangements for your child's care. We strive to maintain high quality care for all students. If your child's behavior becomes dangerous for themselves and or the other children, we will have to insist on alternative care being made. Depending on each situation we will have parent meetings to try to alleviate the behavior problems. If the behavior continues, we will give you as much notice as possible (normally 2 weeks) to make other arrangements for care.

Hours of Operation: The school is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, twelve months a year, except holidays listed below. If you are late picking up your child by 6:00pm there will be a late pick up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child. After your child or children have been late being picked up for the third time your late fee will change to \$5.00 per child per minute. Late fees are due at time of pick up. *Children still at the center at 7:00pm will be turned over to Child Protective Services or the local Police Department for child abandonment.*

School Closings:

Holidays: Little Schoolhouse closes in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Weekend (Thursday & Friday)
- Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it will be observed either before or after the actual holiday. Please consult the school bulletin board for closings.

Inclement Weather: Little Schoolhouse will close if ROISD closes due to inclement weather. Please consult news and/or radio for information regarding ROISD closings. Remember there will not be any deduction of tuition for inclement weather days.

Vacation Policy: Little Schoolhouse allows one week of vacation credit per year, after 12 months of continuous enrollment. Vacation time must be taken in one-week increments (Monday through Friday). The child must be absent every day of the week for it to apply. To use your vacation week, you will need to give prior notification the week before you use it. If a child leaves the school, vacation time may not be used during the required two-week notice period.

Arrival and Departure

Open Door Policy: As a parent or guardian of a child in our facility, you are welcome anytime. We encourage you to take an active interest in your child's education and to participate as desired in our special events.

We also have an open-door policy to our director, and/or management. In the event that you have any problem, concern or compliments please do not hesitate to stop by the office immediately. Any comments, problems, or concerns will be addressed promptly and a solution to the issue will be resolved as soon as possible but not to exceed five working days.

Parking Lot Safety: Unfortunately, parking lot theft in childcare environments is a common occurrence. **Please turn off and lock your car.** Purses or other valuables should be brought into the school, to discourage theft. Please do not park in the fire lane. Do not allow your children to cross the parking lot without supervision. Never leave a child unattended.

Gang Free Zone: Little Schoolhouse is a Gang Free Zone. I am required by licensing to inform you of such.

Entering the School: Children must always be accompanied by an authorized person. Please do not allow your child to walk to his/her classroom unescorted. Children should be signed-in on the appropriate sign in sheet in his/her classroom. This is also an opportunity to remove jackets or leave personal belongings in the cubby. If a teacher is not in your child's classroom, please escort him/her to the age-appropriate group for that time of day. When arriving, please make sure that the teacher is aware of your child's presence before leaving the room. If a teacher is helping another child and does not recognize your child arriving, he/she is unable to greet your child appropriately or monitor him/her safety.

Leaving the School: Sign-out the child from their designated classroom. Be sure to check cubbies for the day's work and any notes from the teacher. Friday is laundry day. Please remove all bedding and accumulated work from the cubby or folder. If your child

is in another classroom, please pick him/her up after signing out. Please make your presence known to the teacher before removing your child from the classroom. Once you are with your child, responsibility of the child transfers from Little Schoolhouse to you. **Children must be accompanied by an approved adult (over the age of 18) when leaving the building unless you have signed a release to do so.**

Release of Children: Only parents, guardians, and those listed as adults authorized for pick-up may remove your child from Little Schoolhouse. If someone who is not listed as an authorized adult must pick up your child, you must inform the office prior to their arrival. The individual who is picking up your child will be required to come to the office, furnish identification, and then sign the sign out sheet in the classroom.

Late Pick Up Fee: The school is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, twelve months a year, except holidays listed herein. If you are late picking up your child by 6:00pm there will be a late pick up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child. After your child or children have been late being picked up for the third time your late fee will change to \$5.00 per child per minute. Late fees are due at time of pick up. After the 5th time you are late picking up your children you will need to find alternate care within 2 weeks for your children. *Children still at the center at 6:30pm will be turned over to Child Protective Services for child abandonment or the local Police Dept.*

Tardiness/Late Attendance: We request that all children be dropped off no later than 10:00am if they are coming to school. If you have a doctor appointment or other reason you need to be late, please notify the office before 10:00am.

Absence: Please notify the school at your earliest possible convenience when your child will be absent from the school for any reason. Full tuition payment is still required, regardless of your child's absence or holidays observed by the school.

Transportation: Transportation is provided for emergency situations only for younger than 4 years of age. We do provide transportation from elementary schools after school only for school age children from age 4 years to 12 years old. Every child will need to provide a transportation authorization form for emergency situations.

Medication and Illness

Daily Health Checks: Our Staff will do daily health checks. We will look for general mood and changes in behavior, fever, skins rashes, unusual spots, swelling or bruises and other signs or symptoms of disease or illnesses.

Medication: If your child needs medication during the day, please sign it in on the appropriate form, provided at the office. All medications will be stored in the office, unless refrigeration is required. Medication that is not signed in at the office will not be administered. We only give Medication that is prescribed 3 times a day or more. If the

medication is to be given once a day or twice a day you will be required to give it at home. We will only give medications at 11:00am and 3:30 pm unless it's needed for an emergency asthma attack.

All medication must:

- Be in the original container.
- Be labeled with the child's name.
- Be labeled with the date (if prescription medicine) and not be expired.
- Include directions to administer the medication.
- If prescribed, be in the name of the child, and include the name of the physician prescribing the medication. School will not dispense medication that was **not** prescribed to the child.

Fever-reducing medications must be accompanied by a doctor's note stating that it is for treatment of pain. Children with fever must remain at home until 24 hours after they do not have a fever, without medication.

Parental Notification: In the event of an emergency, illness, etc., we will always attempt to notify you at the contact numbers you have listed in your child's file. Please remember to inform Little Schoolhouse of any changes regarding phone numbers, addresses, adults authorized to pick up your child, and/or etc. If there is a time you will be unreachable on the numbers you have provided, please leave an alternate number.
In case of a medical emergency: We will take care of the child and the situation first. As soon as possible we will contact the parents after we contact 911 if needed. If we are unable to contact either parent, we will contact the emergency contact. If the child needs emergency care someone from the school will go in the ambulance with the child until the parents can get there.

Illness: For the protection of all children, your child must be excluded from care when any of the following symptoms are present:

- armpit temperature greater than 100.4° F without medication, along with signs and symptoms of illness.
- diarrhea or vomiting
- yellow or green discharge from nose, eyes, or ears

If the child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, please notify the school so that we may inform other parents. Little Schoolhouse adheres to the Minimum Standards set forth by the Texas Department of Family Protective Services. These standards describe the conditions under which a child may return to school, depending on the type of illness he experiences. Please ask the office to view a complete list of the different requirements for different illnesses.

If a child becomes sick at school, the parent or guardian will be called. Children may not stay at school if they have more than one occurrence of vomiting, or two occurrences of diarrhea. The child must be picked up immediately, since the school does not have separate sick child facilities.

Teacher Requirements: All teachers are required to complete the following:

- High School Diploma
- CPR & First Aide
- FBI Finger Printing
- Clear Criminal History
- Clear Central Registry Check For Child Abuse History
- SIDS/Shaken Baby Training Annually
- 24 Child Development Training Annually
- Vaccines are encouraged but are not mandatory as we can not require them to get any vaccine, nor can we tell you if they are vaccinated or not due to HIPAA.
- Annual training is mandatory in Abuse & Neglect that include recognizing signs, symptoms, and warning signs of abused and neglected children. Our teachers are mandated reporters.

Tuition and Fees

All tuition fees are **due in advance**. We are happy to accommodate any payment frequency that you prefer: weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, but all payments must be received no later than the day it is due to avoid a late charge. All tuition is paid in advance of services rendered. There is never any deduction for your child's absence for any reason. You are paying for the space and not for attendance. Please refer to the Tuition Agreement for further information regarding fees and payment. You must sign up for the auto pay system with your checking account or a debit card or credit card. Please know that if you sign up for auto pay with a credit card or debit card there will be 2.7% fee additional charge. If you sign up with your checking account information you will only be charged 0.75 cents.

Non-Payment of Fees: Non-payment of fees for more than two weeks may result in your child(ren) being declined admittance into Little Schoolhouse until all fees have been paid in full.

Returned Auto Payment Fee: A \$35 NSF fee is assessed for any payment returned by the bank for any reason. We do not accept checks. We will accept cash at initial enrollment only. All normal tuition payments must be done with reoccurring auto pay.

Life at the School

Meals: Little Schoolhouse serves breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack during the day. The menu for each week is posted on the Parent's Information Board. We ask that you do not send any additional food or snacks with your child. You are welcome to pick up a personal snack to be eaten after departure, but exceptional foods during normal mealtimes are reserved for those with special dietary needs. If your child requires a special diet, please provide a written doctor's note. We will need a doctor's statement concerning the requirements to put on file for the food program. The food program

requires us to meet their guidelines therefore we can not serve them differently without a doctor note.

Breastfeeding: We encourage all infant parents to breastfeed. Infant classrooms have an adult sized chair to use while breastfeeding. We will also assist parents who choose to breastfeed their infant by using expressed breast milk in a bottle. Please be sure the milk and or bottles are labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed.

Animals: Little Schoolhouse does not have any animals on sight. If this changes you will be notified in advance.

Infant Care Policies: Please see the DFPS Operational Policy on Infant Safe Sleep attached and sign and return it if you're 12 months old or younger.

Physical Activity: Little Schoolhouse is required by licensing to ensure that your child receives allotted amount of time every day in vigorous activity. Children under 18 months of age do not have any requirements. Children over 18 months to 2 years old must have 60 minutes per day of vigorous activity indoors and outdoors when weather permits. All children 3 and older must have 90 minutes of vigorous activity per day indoors or outdoors if weather permits. After Schoolers must have 90 minutes daily during holidays and summer camp.

Outdoor Time: Children go outdoors twice a day as the weather permits. On days of inclement weather or red ozone warnings they will provided activities in the classroom. Please note that Minimum Standards states that children in attendance must be well enough to participate in all activities, therefore, we require a doctor's note if your child cannot go outside. Please dress your child according to the weather, sending a jacket when needed, especially during the cooler months. We will be glad to apply any sunscreen and or bug spray if you provide it and label it with your child's full name. Your child's teachers will apply it before going outside. If your child is fair skinned, you may also provide a hat also.

Rest Periods: The school provides for each child to receive a nap/rest period after lunch each day. Older children are allowed to read after a shorter rest period if they are not sleeping. For your child's comfort, please provide a small blanket and/or pillow that fit in your child's cubby. A small soft toy, stuffed animal or comfort item is allowed, to help your child feel comfortable during this time. Please limit the size of pillows and blankets to one cubic foot (the size of the cubby). The Department of Health requires that children's bedding not be in contact with that of other children. On Fridays, please take all blankets and pillowcases home for laundering. The State requires that all children not enrolled in public school have a rest period therefore we cannot accommodate your requests for your child not to nap. We will provide a rest period. We do not force children to go to sleep.

Personal Items: Toys, candy, money, and other accessories are not compatible with a group environment. Many of these things create jealousy, become lost or broken and create disappointment. For these reasons, we ask that you limit items from home to those requested by the teacher for "Show and Tell". We cannot accept responsibility for any lost or broken items. Please check with your child's teacher for more information regarding Show and Tell opportunities.

Shoes and Clothing: At least one complete change of clothes must always be maintained in your child's cubby. If you know your child is prone to "accidents", we appreciate you providing more than one set of replacement clothing. As your child soils the change of clothes, please bring replacements the next day. The school maintains a very limited amount of additional clothes, if any at all. We welcome donations to our backup stock as your child grows.

Please take into consideration the weather and daily activity of the children. Plan for the coldest part of the day during the Fall and Winter months. Light jackets or winter coats are often needed for morning outside play. Clothing must be comfortable and allow for movement. Please mark all your child's belongings: bedding, sleeping toy, change of clothes, etc. with their full name.

Shoes must be appropriate for outdoor play. Flip-Flops are dangerous. For your child's safety, all shoes must attach to the back of the foot.

Birthdays and Special Occasions: Parents are welcome to send goodies, such as cupcakes, cookies, or cake for their child's class to share on birthdays or special occasions. Please let your child's teacher know in advance. If you do choose to send any type of treat, please provide enough for the entire class. Invitations to private parties must include the whole class if they are distributed in the class. If the whole class is not invited, please leave invitations at the office for distribution, or mail them to the individual children.

Emergency Relocation: In case of an emergency due to hazardous conditions, Little Schoolhouse will relocate to: Fire House Kids Daycare 3325 Ovilla Rd. Red Oak, TX 75154. If for any reason this site is unavailable our back up location will be Shields Elementary 223 W. Ovilla Rd. Red Oak, TX 75154. Once we have relocated, all parents will be called or notified to pick up their child(ren). Our Emergency Evacuation Plan is available for your review upon request. We will provide emergency booster seats for the older children that do not get picked up by their parents quickly after being notified to do so.

Non-Hiring of Little Schoolhouse staff: In order to maintain the school's confidentiality and professionalism, persons employed as Staff at or by Little Schoolhouse is not recommended to be hired by any parent for babysitting or transportation or for any other reason that you see fit. If you choose to employ any of our staff outside of Little Schoolhouse operating hours, it will be done at your own will

and risk. Little Schoolhouse will not be held responsible for anything that happens during the outside services.

Non-Discrimination: Little Schoolhouse is following Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352), The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-135), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112). This is an equal opportunity program.

No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, political beliefs, or religion, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination. If Little Schoolhouse is unable to meet the requirements of certain children with special needs, we reserve the right to refer them to another school.

If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, a disability, political beliefs, or religion, you may lodge a complaint against Fair Oaks Day School by immediately writing and/or calling the Civil Rights Department, Texas Department of Human Services, P.O. Box 149030, Austin, Texas 78714-9030. Phone: 512-450-3630.

General: A Parent's Information Board is located near the front doors. This is a sharing place for menus, school events and articles of interest. Please take time to read and feel free to share information with the school and other parents. If you would like to post an item, please present it to the office for approval. Little Schoolhouse does not endorse or recommend items posted on the parent's bulletin board, but we hope to foster a sense of community among families and children. Any updates on information will be sent out in letters to parents as well as posted on the parent board.

Licensing: We are licensed by the Texas Department of Family Protective Services. We are required to comply with the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. A copy of these Standards is available for your review in the office. A copy of the most recent Licensing Report is posted near the Parent Information Board. If you have any questions or concerns you would like to direct to the local licensing department, you can reach them at 1-800-862-5252. You may also visit www.tdprs.state.tx.us.

Preventing & Responding To Abuse & Neglect: All employees are required to take training in child abuse and neglect awareness and prevention annually. If you suspect your child or someone you know has been abused or neglected, please contact Child Protective Services hotline number at 1-800-252-5400. Please find the information from D.F.P.S. on recognizing and preventing child abuse are in your enrollment packet. We make every effort to keep updated with CPS and CCL to ensure that all staff and parents are updated as necessary with any new information that they may have available. We will also post the information in the hall of the school for your convenience.

Disclosure: Little Schoolhouse reserves the right to amend, change, modify, rearrange, or delete any policies, procedures, practices, and statements contained in this

manual at any time. Any changes will be noted in writing and by bright wheel notification as well as notices will be posted on the parent board.

Thank You!

We would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU for allowing us to share in the love, growth, and guidance of your child. We plan on Making a Difference Daily, One Child at a Time! If you have any questions, or if we may be of service in any way, please do not hesitate to ask.