

THE LEARNING TREE CHILDREN'S CENTER

Introduction

Welcome to the Learning Tree. Preschool can be a very exciting and worthwhile experience for your child, especially if you, as parents, make an effort to be supportive of your child and follow school policies and procedures.

This handbook has been prepared to help acquaint you with these policies and procedures.

Goals and Philosophies

Our main concern is your child. We are interested in helping your child develop his/her full potential in all areas of growth: cognitive, emotional, social, and physical.

Our program will provide opportunities for the child to develop in these areas through:

1. First-hand experiences in social relationships
2. Physical development of large and small muscles
3. Finding acceptable outlets for their emotions
4. Stimulating experiences which encourage him/her to think, analyze problems, and develop the basic skills necessary for his/her future educational experiences.

It is essential for the young child to acquire a desire for knowledge. At the same time, the child should develop a strong self-image and independence necessary to function in today's society. The child must also learn to practice consideration for those around him/her.

We have made a commitment to ourselves to offer the children a happy and loving environment in which they may grow and be challenged, yet still feel a strong sense of security.

Newsletters & Calendars

A monthly newsletter we be distributed during the first week of each month. Please be sure to read it with your child so that you will know when special activities will be occurring. We don't want your child to miss out on any special events.

Our Policies

Children must be at least two and one-half years of age, and completely potty trained.

Operating hours are from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The School is open year round, with the exception of legal holidays and the entire first full week of June for the Church's Vacation Bible School.

We offer the following:

A morning session beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 12 p.m. A child may arrive any time from 6:45 until 8:30 a.m. The child must arrive at school by 8:30 to receive the full benefits of our program. This is considered a half day session.

(or)

A full day session is offered for parents who work or desire a longer period of pre-school exposure for their child. A child must be enrolled in at least two half day sessions per week. This is necessary for the child to establish a

routine of attending school.

Please observe the ending time for your child's contracted schedule. It is necessary for us to charge an overtime fee if your child is not called for at the appropriate time.

We strongly urge parents to send pre-kindergarten children three days per week to help ready them for kindergarten.

Tentative Schedule of Daily Activities

6:45 - Children's choice: Table activities, blocks, drawing, playhouse; preparation for morning session.
8:30 - Clean up time. Children are responsible for putting away their own toys, etc.
9:00 - Opening activities: Discuss calendar, weather, day's special activities.
9:30 - Morning projects, including perceptual motor activities, art, cooking, creative play, role playing, and puppetry.
10:00 - Morning snack time.
10:30 - Outdoor activities (weather permitting) or vigorous indoor games.
10:45 - Learning activities, including reading and math skills readiness, science projects, simple Spanish words, special units or study, and self-sufficiency.
11:30 - Music and creative movement.
11:50 - Morning session ends. Lunch preparation.
12:00 - Lunch. After lunch children go outside if weather permits.
12:40 - Short story.
1:00 - Quiet rest or nap.
3:15 - Afternoon snack.
3:30 - Outdoor play or vigorous indoor games.
4:15 - Afternoon projects: Learning activities, stories, music, and circle games.
5:30 - Clean up, calming activities, preparation for going home.
6:00 - Close. All children must be called for by 6:00 p.m. Being left until late at preschool may cause a child to feel neglected.

Financial Policy

A non-refundable registration fee of \$50 is payable prior to your child's first day of enrollment.

Each July a re-registration fee will be charged to students attending all year.

All tuition is required in advance. Tuition is payable on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis.

Any account which is not paid within two days of the due date will be charged a 10% late fee on the unpaid balance. Failure to pay tuition may result in termination of enrollment.

A late fee will be charged if your child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. The fee is charged for every 15 minutes or part thereof.

The tuition is based on a full year operating budget. It is anticipated that there will be periodic holidays, vacations, and illnesses. In no case can credits or rebates be allowed. We have a limited enrollment with a constant waiting list. Since our expenses are consistent from month to month, it is unfair to expect us to suffer loss of income from our regular students when this could be made up by new enrollees. The tuition payment assures your child's place in school.

If you are planning on pulling your child out for the summer, there will be a holding fee in addition to the re-registration fee, to hold their spot for fall.

Illness Policy

In case of illness, tuition is charged as usual. In case of prolonged illness (i.e. a serious illness which requires hospitalization, or as specified by a physician) each case will be taken into consideration. In such case, please speak to the directors.

Exposing the children to illness is a risk we will not take. State regulations prohibit children from attending school when ill. Please help us keep communicable diseases under control by keeping your child home if:

1. He/she has a heavy nasal discharge.
2. He/she has diarrhea.
3. He/she has a fever or has had one during the *previous 24 hour period*.
4. He/she has a constant cough.
5. He/she had a cold for less than three days, in which it may be contagious.
6. He/she is fussy, cranky, or generally not himself/herself, and you feel he/she is “coming down with something”.
7. He/she has any illness or disease which is communicable, including skin and eye problems and head lice.
 - a. For pink eye, the child must be on medication for 48 hrs. before returning to school and must continue to receive treatment for the entire prescribed time as per Doctor’s orders.

If the child has a communicable illness, the parent should call the pre-school to inform us of the illness so that we can notify other parents to watch for symptoms.

The child *may* attend school if:

1. His/her cold is over, but he/she is left with a *minor* nasal drip or cough.
2. His/her cold or illness is past the communicable stage.
3. He/she is well but still on medication prescribed by the doctor.

Vacation Policy

A two week vacation, paying no tuition, is allowed after your child has been attending The Learning Tree for one full year. If your child does not attend during the vacation period the vacation policy does not apply.

School-Age Care

School-age care is available for children through 3rd grade. Morning care is available for kindergarten students. Transportation is provided for a nominal fee, which is included in our kindergarten rate/

Health and Safety

Your child’s health is of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, you must complete a health form signed by a physician. These forms must be returned to us within two weeks of enrollment.

We reserve the right to send a child home if he/she is ill. Parents must make arrangements to pick up a sick child as soon as possible. Also, arrangements need to be made if a parent cannot pick up a sick child. Prior arrangements must be made as to who will be responsible for the child in case the parent cannot be reached.

Food and Nutrition

The Oakdale Learning Tree offers your child a nutritious morning and afternoon snack. Lunch needs to be provided by parents. Your child must be picked up by 11:55 a.m. if they don’t bring a lunch to school. If the child brings a lunch on the half day program, they must be picked up by 12:30 p.m. If the child is attending the full day program, they will be heading to the nap room by 12:45 p.m.

As a convenience for parents who must leave for work early, we will allow breakfast to be brought to and eaten at school. This will only be allowed until 7:15. Anyone arriving at school after 7:15 must have already eaten breakfast. Containers in which this food is brought must be labeled. Doughnuts, cookies, sugared cereals, etc. will not be served to your child for breakfast at school. Acceptable foods are: eggs, toast, oatmeal, fruit, etc.

If your child is on a special diet, please bring a sack lunch and a snack to school for them.

Good nutrition plays a vital part of any child's growth and may influence behavior patterns. We do not serve sugary treats or snacks to the children with the occasional exception of birthday and special days.

Birthdays are very special days for children. Please remind us of your child's birthday a week prior to the big day. Many of our parents choose to bring a special treat for snack on their child's birthday. Please keep the treats as sugar free as possible.

On special occasions such as Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day, parental help with snacks would be greatly appreciated. If you would like to help, speak to one of the directors.

Holidays

Once again, we are open year round with the exception of legal holidays.

New Years Day
Presidents Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Fourth Of July
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day & the day after
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

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Leaving a Child at School

After you decide to enroll your child in school, a short visit to acquaint him/her with the school can be a helpful step. Usually, if a child knows what to expect, separation from a parent or guardian will not be such a frightening experience.

Until a child becomes accustomed to pre-school, being left all by himself/herself with the school can be a traumatic experience for both the child and the parent.

We highly suggest following these procedures when leaving your child:

1. Tell the child it is now time for you to leave.
2. Explain to the child what time he/she will be picked up and who will pick him/her up.
3. Give the child a brief hug and kiss.
4. Then leave the child with one of the staff members. If the child begins to cry or cling, ***do not*** try to stay until he/she has calmed. In most cases, the child will cease to cry within minutes after the parent leaves.
5. ***Never*** sneak out without saying good-bye to your child.
6. Please read daily, "staff notes to parents", "parents' notes to staff".
7. We post an "Activity Schedule" which is an overview of the activities planned for the month. Please read it and take note of any special days or supplies needed for projects.
8. We will administer medication if it is needed during school hours. It is necessary that the parents register the medicine each day. Please check with a staff member for the correct procedure.

We realize it is very difficult to leave your child when he/she is crying, but it is necessary for him/her to become involved with friends and activities as soon as possible. As long as the parent is near, the child will probably not become a participating member of the group. We try to provide a very warm and loving environment that your child will soon come to trust and accept.

Picking Up Your Child

Always be prompt when picking up your child, so he/she does not become worried or frightened. Call the school if you can foresee that you will be late. Once a departure time has been established, the child's inner rhythm is easily upset if there is a deviation from the norm.

As previously mentioned, a late fee will be charged if your child is not picked up at the appropriate time.

No child will be released to a person not authorized to pick him/her up from school. If it is necessary that someone not on your list pick up your child, be sure to tell one of the directors.

What to Wear

We prefer that children wear casual clothes to school. When choosing appropriate school attire, remember that your child be participating in messy art projects. Also consider that your child will be physically active (i.e. climbing, jumping, running, etc.).

Jewelry and hats (except stocking hats in cold weather) are discouraged, as the children take such items off and lose them.

Flip flops and sandals without straps are not allowed.

Please label all jackets, sweaters, mittens, stocking hats, etc. with your child's name.

Please put shorts on your child under their dresses.

Toys and Books from Home

The first day each week that your child attends school will be his/her sharing day. Except on these days, we ask that your child's toys stay at home or in your car. Items can be no smaller than your child's fist and no larger than will fit into the "sharing box". You may allow your child to bring something to share on this day only. An item may be shared **one** time. If an item is brought to school, we cannot be responsible for it. Be sure books, etc. have your child's name in them. No make-up is to be brought to school. **Guns** are not permitted at school. Please label all sharing items brought to school.

Rest Time (Full-Day Students Only)

The children must have an afternoon rest period. Please send a blanket, a crib size sheet, and a stuffed animal if needed, with your child for rest time. These may help to make your child feel more secure and rest more comfortably. The blanket must be taken home and washed on a weekly basis.

Children's Progress

We try to keep our parents informed of their children's progress on a continual basis, however due to busy schedules this is sometimes not possible. If you have a question concerning your child's progress, please speak to one of the directors. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Parental Help

During the day, the children will be learning about many things, including the following which can be worked on at home:

Colors
Shapes
Birthdays
Alphabet
Addresses
Numbers and Counting
Donning and Doffing Jackets
Writing Names
Tying Shoes
Telephone Numbers

Motor skills are very important in the development of your child. Please take time to watch your child run, skip, jump, catch and toss balls.

Also, any parents with a special talent, or who would like to help, please feel free to discuss this with the directors.

If there any questions you may have after reading the handbook, please do not hesitate to ask.

We may be reached at school at 847-4050 (Oakdale) or 838-3955 (Escalon), and our home numbers (emergencies only) are as follows:

Jonyce: 404-0924
Nancy: 521-0598, and Val: 848-1648.