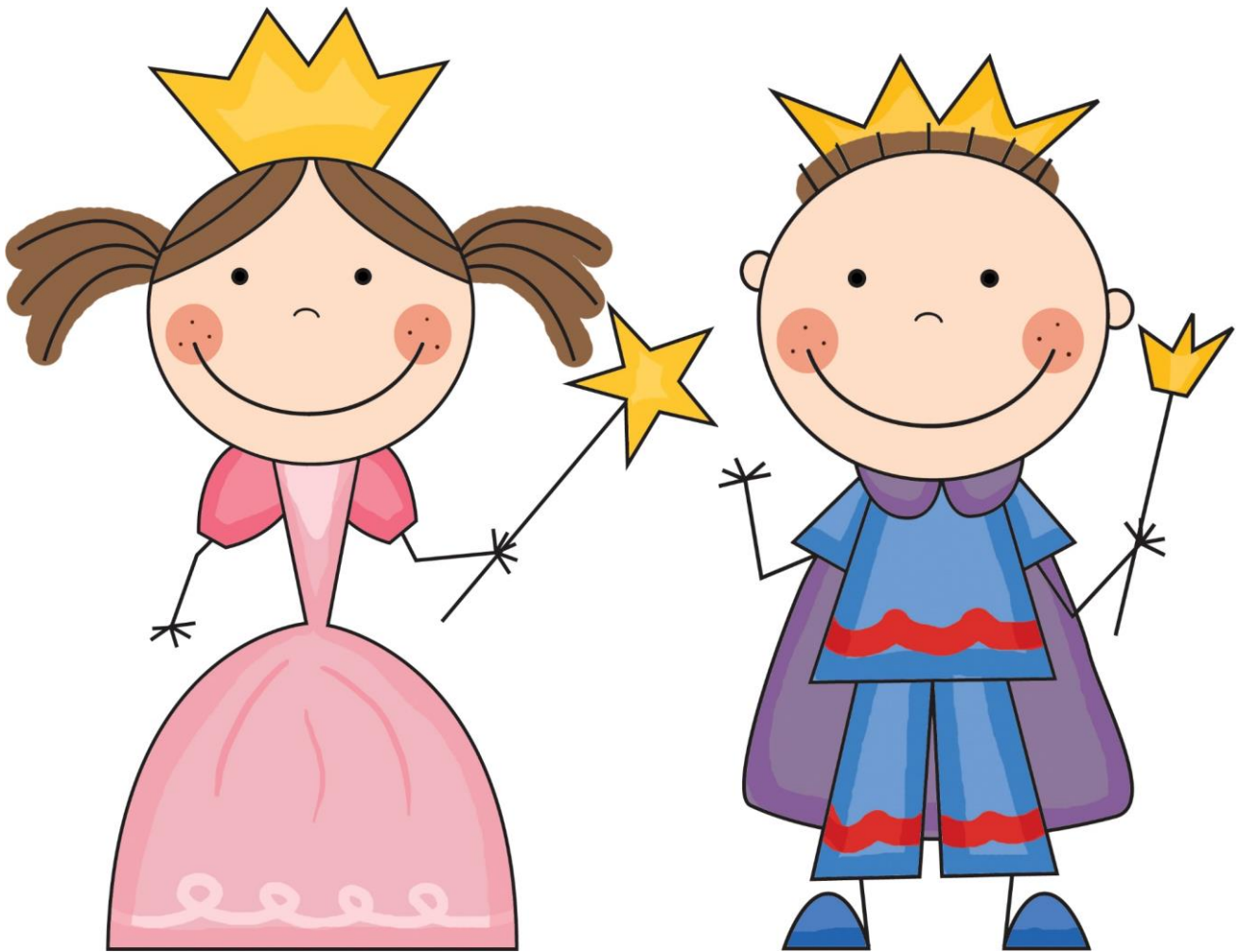


Enchanted Children's Academy

Parent Handbook



6229 Kostoryz Rd ★ Corpus Christi, TX 78415 ★ (361) 288-4563

Email: enchanted1268@yahoo.com

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Please keep this handbook for your records.

Welcome

Welcome to Enchanted Children's Academy! We are so happy to have your child join our family! This handbook is designed to give you most, if not all, of the information you will need throughout your child's journey with us. Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

If you have any questions about the information contained in this handbook, feel free to contact us at 361-288-4563.

Program Philosophy and Goal

Enchanted Children's Academy is a locally owned preschool facility for children 18 months to school age. Our motto is to "nurture, teach, and inspire" each child in our care, and our mission is to provide a safe, loving, learning environment. We want parents to breathe a sigh of relief when they leave their child with us in the morning, knowing they are in the best place they can be away from home.

Introduction to Texas Rising Star

The Texas Rising Star program is a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for childcare programs participating in Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Child Care Services program (CCS). Texas Rising Star certification is available to licensed centers and licensed and registered childcare home facilities that meet the certification criteria.

The Texas Rising Star program offers three levels of quality certification (Two-Star, Three-Star, and Four-Star) to encourage childcare and early learning programs to attain progressively higher levels of quality. These certification levels are tied to graduated enhanced reimbursement rates for children receiving childcare financial aid.

Numerous research studies have shown that children who attend higher quality childcare and early learning programs are more prepared for school entry than children who do not attend high-quality programs. Childcare and early learning programs that achieve Texas Rising Star certification offer quality care that exceeds the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Regulation (CCR) minimum health and safety standards and are in a better position to positively affect the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development of children. As programs advance through the levels of Texas Rising Star certification, they are increasingly able to positively affect the development of the children they serve daily.

Curriculum Goals

Toddler Curriculum Goals

Great developmental strides are made in our toddler program to prepare them for Prek3 and Prek4.

- Learning centers provide your child with imaginary play with blocks and puzzles, creative art, and lots of books. Toddlers work with numbers, colors, shapes, and letters.
- Thematic units offer the students the opportunity to learn about different kinds of animals, holidays, cultures, traditions, and environments.
- Social growth is emphasized each day through circle time by incorporating stories and songs that encourage language skills.
- Teachers guide students through activities that strengthen their gross motor skills and provide self-help skills such as hand washing, picking up toys and sharing with friends, putting on a coat; all in a safe and nurturing childcare setting.
- Parent and teacher work together to provide the best environment for success for potty training.

Prek3 and Prek4 Curriculum Goals

Watch your child flourish in our preschool learning program as we prepare them for kinder.

- Bright classrooms create a backdrop for your child's preschool educational success.
- Preschoolers are introduced to cognitive skills such as sequencing, matching, social skills in similarities and diversity, and language art skills of storytelling and writing.
- Your preschooler is encouraged to progress at his/her own pace according to individual needs and abilities.
- Learning centers are provided for your child to develop self-confidence and practice decision-making in each center with guidance.
- Your child becomes self-aware as a learner, beginning to develop strategies for expressing ideas in spoken and written forms.
- Your child develops multitasking skills, hand-eye coordination rhythm, and tempo through lots of singing, dancing, and rhyming.
- Books are a staple in our Pre-K 4 curriculum: Developing a love of reading at an early age is the key that unlocks the door to lifelong learning.

Hours of Operation

We are open Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. year-round with the exception of the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Good Friday
Memorial Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day & Black Friday
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the following Monday. (Holidays are also posted in the entrance of the center.)

Attendance

In order for our teachers to follow their schedule and complete the daily curriculum for your child, the children need to be in the center no later than 9:00 a.m. daily. This limits disruption to the classroom and helps the child receive the optimal amount of educational experience. It is understandable that events such as doctor appointments, unforeseen delays, and personal reasons will occur that will inhibit you from following the 9:00 a.m. rule.

If that is the case, a courtesy call is appreciated and required no later than 10:00 a.m. to ensure that we have an accurate lunch count. The children are authorized to be in our care for a maximum of 11 hours a day. If the child is in our care after 5:30 p.m. a late pick-up fee will be assessed.

Enrollment Procedures

In order to begin care, parents must provide a signed form from the child's physician stating he/she is physically able to attend daycare, provide a copy of the child's current immunization record and complete our enrollment package. Parents will be notified immediately via written communication if there are any changes in information regarding our Parent Handbook. Parents are responsible for updating enrollment forms once per year.

Tuition & Fees

We offer full time, Monday through Friday childcare services.

Registration Fee:

Non-refundable \$40.00 (1 Child) \$60.00 (2 Children)

The registration fee will only hold your spot for the week that you agreed to start your child.

Tuition:

18months-2years \$175.00 3-5years \$160.00

Tuition pays for your child's spot & includes breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack & weekly curriculum. Tuition will not be reduced as a result of absences, illnesses, or holidays.

Workforce families will follow the absentee policy as per your TWC agreement. Switching to Workforce prior to notifying administration does not guarantee you a spot at this facility.

Due:

Tuition is prepaid every Friday before services are given for the following week. Payment may be made in cash with the envelopes provided by the drop box in the office, by check, by ACH or credit card withdrawal (scheduled every Monday mid-morning), or through your own personal portal by logging in to myprocare.com through a computer's browser using the email you have on file at ECA. *This portal may also be utilized to change your contact information.*

Late Payment Fees:

An \$8.00 late fee per day will be assessed starting on Tuesday morning through Friday. If tuition/late fees are not paid in full by Tuesday afternoon, care will be terminated on Wednesday morning. In order to reestablish care, all tuition and late fees must be paid in full. Parents who are habitually late with tuition payments will be required to pay tuition using our ACH payment process.

Late Pick Up Fees:

A \$5.00 fee will be charged at 5:31 p.m. and an additional \$2.00 for every minute thereafter. For example, a child who is picked up at 5:40 p.m. will be assessed a total late fee of \$23.00.

Vacations:

After a child has completed one full year of continuous private pay care, parents may ask for a tuition free vacation week. (Must be pre-approved and must be taken as a Mon - Fri vacation). If child is present for any of their pre-approved vacation week, the full-weeks tuition will be charged. Subsequent vacations must not be within a year of the previous vacation week.

Workforce:

Parent Co-pay amounts are due the 1st of every month. If not received by the third, it will be reported to TWC. If you pay a full month Copayment but withdraw your child before the month is out, you will receive a refund once TWC prorates the balance. However, remember to give two weeks' notice in order to fill the spot.

Families whose tuition is subsidized through TWC will follow Workforce guidelines for vacation days.

Please let us know if there is any element of your TWC enrollment that we may be able to help with.

Health

Immunizations:

Parents must provide a copy of the child's current shot record at the time enrollment. They are also required to obtain any additional immunizations on time and provide the school with the documentation. Tuberculin testing is required only if mandated by Health Dept. or if there is an epidemic.

Hearing & Vision:

Hearing and Vision screens are required for 4- and 5-year-old children unless another school has done one, and the parent must provide documentation. If a child turns 4 while in our care, you will be given a notice reminding you to set up your child's screening appointment.

Employee Vaccines:

Because we do not have children younger than 12 months of age and based on the low level of risk our employees present to our children through their daily routines and direct exposure, we have determined that our employees do not require additional vaccines at this time.

Health and Nutrition Practices:

ECA participates in the Food Program developed by the Department of Agriculture. We follow strict guidelines in order to serve nutritionally balanced meals. A copy of our menu is posted in our foyer on the information board. We receive annual training regarding the importance of children's nutrition in their growth and development, as well as receiving ongoing support from CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program). If your child is on a special diet or has a food allergy the office must have a copy of the doctor's diagnosis, as well as a plan of action for allergic reaction.

We serve breakfast, lunch, and a p.m. snack. Breakfast is served between 8:00-9:00, Lunch is served between 11:00-12:00 and P.M. snack is at 2:00. Your child may not bring outside food into the center. If you bring your child to school after our designated breakfast time, please make sure you feed them before they come to school. Staff does not reward good behavior with food of any kind. During special occasions such as birthdays and holidays, only commercially packaged foods are allowed.

Medications:

Parents must fill out the designated medication form for every day medication is to be dispensed. Once the medication has been dispensed a staff person will log the time of day on the form and sign it.

Illness:

Fever: If your child has fever (armpit temperature of 100.4) he/she must be picked up and cannot return until fever free without pain reliever for 24 hours.

Unexplained rash: Parents will be notified by phone and a decision will be made based on the conversation. If we are unduly alarmed parents will be asked to pick the child up for observation and possible medical care.

Lice: A child will be sent home immediately for lice and will not be admitted back into the school until they have been treated and found clear of lice and nits.

Vomiting and Diarrhea: Parent will be called to pick up your child if they have vomited twice or had two episodes of diarrhea. You may receive a courtesy call after one episode if your child has been acting out of character that day, followed by vomiting or diarrhea. This will allow you to prepare, as this is usually an illness coming on.

Licensing defines diarrhea as:

Diapered child-not contained in the diaper, and /or exceeds two or more stools above the normal for that child.

Toilet trained child-Diarrhea is causing soiled pants and clothing. A parent has up to 1 hour 30 minutes to pick up a sick child from the time of notification. If a parent does not respond within 1 hour the emergency contact will be called.

A child needs to be fever free, and symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning to school or have a doctor's excuse.

Breastfeeding:

A comfortable place with a seat will be provided in the center that will enable a mother to breastfeed her child. Parents have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care.

Special Accommodations:

Enchanted Children's Academy will make every effort to accommodate children with special needs, to the best of our ability. Therapists and specialists are welcome to visit the children at the center to work with them on a one-on-one basis. We meet each child where they are at culturally and accommodate English as a second language children.

Parent Provided Items & Prohibited Items

Parents will provide an extra change of clothing to be always kept in your child's cubby in the event your child's clothes get soiled. If we send soiled clothing home, please replace it immediately. Parents will provide a clean blanket and small pillow for nap time every Monday morning. We will send it home for laundering every Friday. Please write your child's name on the inside of their extra clothes and winter jackets. We are not responsible for lost clothes, jackets, or jewelry. Boot and thong sandals are prohibited. Toys and electronics from home are not allowed to be brought in. Please do not use these items to coax your child into the center.

Insect Repellant & Sunscreen:

Parents are required to provide sunscreen and insect repellant if you want it applied to your child for outdoor activities.

Childcare Supplies:

18 months - 2 years old

Disposable diapers (non-potty-training children)
Pullups w/Velcro sides (potty training children)
Wipes
Diaper ointment if needed
2 changes of clothing
Small blanket & pillow

Potty trained preschoolers

Extra change of clothing
Small blanket & pillow

Pick-up

In order for your children to be released to an individual, the person's name must be listed in the child's file. Please always bring identification for staff who may not recognize you. This will be compared to the list of approved individuals you include on your child's admission form. If none of the authorized people are available, in a special circumstance you may call and authorize someone else to pick up your child on a one-time basis. That individual must show proper ID at the time of pick-up.

Emergency

In case of a medical emergency parent must provide the child's doctors name, address, and phone number. If it is an emergency situation, the director of the center will call 911 to have EMS respond, and then the director or owner will contact the parents or emergency contact person. Parents will be notified by phone if a child receives a bump on the head or an accident that results in bleeding but doesn't require outside medical attention. If the child experiences a minor accident, such as a scrape, bruise or bite the parent will be notified at the time of pick-up and a written accident report will be provided.

Emergency Preparedness:

Fire drills will be practiced monthly. The children will exit the building and we will meet 50 feet behind the daycare center. If the building is not a safe place to return to, we will relocate at Galvan Elementary. Severe weather and lockdown drills will be practiced every three months. For severe weather drills, the children will relocate to the hallway and the room in the back of the building where there are no windows. For lockdown drills, children will barricade themselves inside their classrooms in their safe zones and be as quiet as possible. During a chemical spill or drill, the children will remain in their classrooms, air conditioners will be shut off, any air leakage around windows and doors will be taped up and there will be no one allowed in or out of the building.

Parents will be notified either by text, email, or phone call with instructions on pick up should we need to evacuate.

Family Participation

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the center anytime during hours of operation to observe their child, operations, or activities without prior notification or approval, as well as participate in activities if desired.

Opportunities for parent involvement include:

- 1) Class parties and activities for special holidays, such as Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- 2) Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 3) Pre-K 4 Graduation.

Family involvement at ECA is very important to the success of not only our program, but also your child.

***Please do not request your child's teachers personal phone number. All phone communication must go through office staff.**

You will be offered a scheduled conference twice per year in order to exchange information regarding your child. During conference time, each parent will receive information on their child's development and have the opportunity to set goals with teachers based on the results from the developmental assessments conducted by the teacher. Our facility implements the Smith Early Care and Education Developmental Stages of children as well as the CDC Milestone Tracker to assess your child. We are available at any time to meet with you and discuss your child's progress and overall development, and any concerns you might have.

Screen Time

ECA follows the Texas Health and Human Services minimum standards guidelines for screen time, which is one hour per day for children over the age of two. Children in our toddler program watch small snippets of a program during diaper changing times, for learning times, and at the end of the day. Preschool children at times watch learning programs or enjoy a movie at the beginning or end of the day.

The Problems with Screens:

Too much screen time and regular exposure to poor-quality programming has been linked to:

- Obesity
- Inadequate sleep schedules and insufficient sleep
- Behavior problems
- Delays in language and social skills development
- Violence
- Attention problems
- Less time learning

Keep in mind that unstructured playtime is more valuable for a young child's developing brain than is electronic media. Children younger than age 2 are more likely to learn when they interact and play with parents, siblings, and other children and adults.

By age 2, children may benefit from some types of screen time, such as programming with music, movement, and stories. By watching together, you can help your child understand what he or she is seeing and apply it in real life. However, passive screen time shouldn't replace reading, playing or problem-solving.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/screen-time/art-20047952>

Please do not use cell phones inside the school, as this could interfere with proper drop off/pick up protocol.

Outdoor & Active Play

Research has shown that outdoor play and physical activity is imperative to the growth and development of preschool children. There are so many benefits to outdoor play including the following:

- It invites the children to learn science
- It creates opportunities for social interaction and collaboration
- It promotes physical health
- It invites new contexts for learning
- It promotes better sleep
- It gives children a chance to take appropriate risks
- It supports Stem skills

ECA will schedule a minimum of 60 minutes per day, per classroom for outdoor play. All children are required to go outside unless it is raining, or temperatures fall below 45 degrees. They will participate in free play as well as group play. Please dress children in comfortable clothing that allows them to move freely, and a well-fitting pair of tennis shoes. Sandals are hazardous at school, especially on the playground.

Children will be given daily opportunities for physical activity inside as well. They will have ample opportunities to learn social/emotional skills through home center, block center, and games played as a group. Children 3-5 years old will be given a minimum of 90 minutes per day physical activity. This includes both structured and unstructured play.

In the event of severe weather, teachers may utilize mats for tumbling, stepping stones and logs for balancing, Parachute, or safe indoor activities such as marching, jumping, or dancing. These will take place inside the classroom or hallways of ECA.

Water Activities:

Occasionally Enchanted Children's Academy will host a water play day to help beat the summertime heat. On those days you will send your child to the center in their swimsuit, with a towel, and a change of clothes. Please apply sunscreen in the morning before you drop your child off. Our water activities are limited to sprinklers, hoses, buckets, water soakers, small wading pools with no more than two feet of water and slip and slides.

Discipline

Discipline and guidance practices begin with positive redirection. Example: If the child is standing on a chair, we say, "We sit on the chair." At times, a child in the classroom may be asked to "take a break" for no more than 1 minute per year of age. If the child continues to not take direction and disrupts the learning process in the classroom, he/she may be taken out for a few minutes to visit with the acting director. We reserve the right to send a child home for disciplinary reasons if he/she is not taking direction and is acting out in an unsafe manner. If your child is sent home for disciplinary reasons, we require that the child be excluded from attendance the following day.

Our disciplinary action is as follows:

1. Verbal
2. Written
3. Parent Conference
4. Expulsion

*Note: We need support from parents and grandparents dealing with challenges such as potty training and behavioral issues, such as biting, hitting, or yelling "no" when given a direction. Teachers may send your child home with a note requesting support on a skill that needs developing. We request that you not allow your child to hit you or any other adult or child, because they will then think it is okay to hit their teacher and friends.

Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Outside of School:

Enchanted Children's Academy has a responsibility to prevent the abuse and neglect of the children enrolled in our school. Teachers are informed of and are required to know signs of suspected abuse. Each childcare provider receives at least one clock hour of annual training focused on the prevention, recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is working diligently to increase awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect and have set up a website at www.helpandhope.org. If you'd like to report child abuse, you may call 1-800-252-5400 or online at www.txabusehotline.org.

According to the American Red Cross, teachers may suspect abuse when:

- The child shows sudden behavior changes or erratic behavior.
- The child becomes withdrawn.
- The child is hostile or extremely aggressive.
- The child is suspicious or watchful of others actions, as if fearing them.

Given our adherence to a Zero Tolerance Policy with abuse and neglect, it is our plan to ensure that the staff is aware of the signs of abuse or neglect. The staff at Enchanted must take immediate action to help the child whom they suspect is being abused or neglected. As mandated reporters, the director and teachers of Enchanted must report actual or suspected abuse or neglect or the imminent risk of serious harm of any child.

Questions

If there are any questions or concerns regarding any of the policies or procedures in the center, parents are free to speak with the Director and/or owners at their discretion as we have an "open door" policy.

Notifications

If we need to notify the parent/guardian of the child, we will either do this verbally or via written communication through email, text, and/or notification on sign in/out tablet. Parents may update contact information at any time by accessing myprocare.com from a browser using the email we have on file and the password you create.

Withdrawal

If you need to withdraw your child, we require two weeks written notice prior to your leaving. Sometimes children or families may not adjust to the center environment. In these cases, we may ask the parents and guardians to withdraw their child. If we make that decision, we usually give the family one week's notice to find alternative care.

Certain instances may require an immediate withdrawal. Please see your center Director for more information.

Workforce funds will be refunded according to the date of withdrawal and the new parent copay amount figured by TWC for the final month.

Termination of Services

Because we provide childcare and education in a group setting, we must be concerned for the welfare and safety of all children and staff. When a particular child or parent's behavior threatens the safety of or becomes abusive toward other children or staff in the center, we may disenroll the child immediately. If a child bites any other child three times we reserve the right to disenroll that child. We reserve the right to disenroll any child or terminate services as deemed necessary or appropriate at our sole discretion, with or without notice.

Childcare Licensing

If you should need to contact Child Care Licensing, their phone number is 361-878-3451. Child-Care Licensing also has a website at www.txchildcaresearch.org. This site enables you to research any Texas licensed childcare center.

Standards

State set minimum standards and last inspection reports are posted throughout the center if the parent would like to review them at any time.

Gang-Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

