



The Tree House Parent & Student Handbook

Christ the King Episcopal Church
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“Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children:
Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach
them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior
Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Prayer book, page 829

Mission Statement

The Tree House and Christ the King Episcopal Church provide a Christian Montessori Environment that celebrates and empowers the genius of each child, cultivates a love of learning and fosters an appreciation for diversity.

We believe...

- *a child is a unique gift from God with limitless potential
- *children can be empowered to learn through developmentally appropriate activities
- *a warm loving environment cultivates a love of learning

The Montessori Method

The Tree House Montessori curriculum is based on a process developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. A respected Italian physician and educator, Dr. Montessori began her educational journey over one hundred years ago. She was convinced that with appropriate techniques she could make a real difference in the way we educate children. The Montessori Method is based on careful observation of what children revealed about their developmental needs. Through observation and study, Dr. Montessori recognized that children learn best through play and by developmentally appropriate activities which provide avenues for learning.

The Montessori Method aids the child’s development into a complete adult human being; comfortable with himself, and with humanity as a whole. In a Montessori environment the children are provided with the materials they need and the freedom to use them to manifest their tendencies to explore, to repeat, and to master.

The Montessori classroom is a ‘living room’ for children. This environment is set up as a bridge between the home and the wider world. Children choose their activities from the beautiful, self-correcting materials displayed on open shelves that allow the child to learn through their senses. This approach is focused on giving support to the natural development of the human child.

A child is a gift from God that learns best about his world through experimentation and exploration. A child’s own awakened love of discovery and learning will stimulate his or her own education. This foundation will enable children to acquire more specialized knowledge and skills throughout their school career.

Hours of Operation

School hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday following the school calendar.

The Primary Classrooms open to students at 8:00 a.m. and carpool pickup begins at 1:45 for dismissal by 2:00 p.m.

The Preprimary Classrooms open to students at 8:30 a.m. and classroom pickup begins at 1:30 for complete dismissal by 1:45 p.m.

An extended day option is available for an additional fee from 1:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Early drop-off may be arranged for an additional fee.

Entrance Requirements

Primary children must turn three by September 1st of the current calendar year and be fully toilet trained before entering the primary classroom. "Pull-up" diapers are not acceptable.

Preprimary children must turn two by September 1st of the current calendar year.

Registration and Tuition

- A \$100 application fee is paid at the time of application.
- A registration fee is paid within two weeks of acceptance into the program.

The annual application fee and annual registration fee are non-refundable and non-transferable.

The monthly tuition payment for each student is determined by the total tuition for the academic year divided into ten installments. The payment schedule is as follows:

- First installment is due by August 1st of the current calendar year or immediately if registration is after August 1st.
- Remaining installments are due the first of each month, September through May.

All monthly payments are due in the school office by 3:00 p.m. on the first of the month. Make checks payable to The Tree House and deliver or mail to 480 N. Hwy. 393, Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459. Please make every attempt to pay tuition on time. **A late fee of \$50.00 will be assessed after the 5th of each month. Failure to make prompt**

payments for two consecutive months may result in removal of the child from school.
A service fee will be applied on any checks returned by the bank.

No refund or deduction may be made from regular tuition due to illness, holidays, vacation, school closings due to weather or for any other reason. The school office must be notified thirty days prior to any student's withdrawal from enrollment.

Placement of Students

The preschool staff may conduct interviews with new students and their parents before students are accepted. The school places a great deal of importance on ensuring a good fit between the student and family and the school. Once all paperwork is submitted and information is obtained, the director will notify parents of acceptance.

The Tree House reserves the right to remove from enrollment any student due to student or parent conduct which is disruptive and or detrimental to the daily operations of the preschool.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms need to be completed and returned to the office for admission:

- Application
- Emergency Card
- Physical Examination Form 3040
- Immunization Record Form 680 or 681
- Photo Copy of Birth Certificate

Bringing Children to School

Please drive slowly while on the church property. Doors will be unlocked at 8:00 am. Parents should park in the gravel parking lot located next to the classroom and escort children to the classroom door. Both parents and children should walk on the sidewalk. Parents say their good-byes at the Good-Bye Spot. It is very important to create a good-bye ritual that is consistent every time the child comes to school. Most children separate more easily when the good-byes are short and sweet. Allow and expect your child to carry their own lunchbox and to hang up his or her coat without parental assistance. The teachers will be happy to help your family create a routine.

Parents sign the sign-in sheet and inform the teacher of the child's arrival.

After the first six weeks of school, parents are invited to come into the classroom and observe. When entering the room, please do so quietly. Montessori philosophy teaches

us that we must respect the children, their environment and their concentration. By speaking quietly, this concentration is protected.

Attendance

Parents are reminded that late arrivals may result in a student missing important information and instruction. The first circle lesson begins at 8:30 a.m. The teachers want to share as much knowledge with the children as possible, so we ask that you bring them to school regularly and promptly.

Picking Children Up From School

Preprimary children are to be picked up in the classroom at 1:30 p.m. Please be prompt. A \$10.00 late fee will apply after 1:45 p.m. Please secure your preprimary child in his or her carseat prior to entering the carpool line if picking up a primary child at 1:45 p.m.

Primary Children are to be picked up no later than 2:00 unless enrolled in the extended day program. **Please drive slowly while on the church property.** The pickup carpool line will begin at 1:45 on the gravel drive besides the classroom building. Once your child is secured in a car seat, drive forward to turn around in the gravel parking lot. **Do not get out of your car and do not pass the carpool line.**

If you are picking up a child early, make sure the teacher or director is notified. Remember, we can release a child only to those persons authorized on the enrollment card, and if the person is not recognized by the staff, he/she will be asked to present identification. We must have any change in writing. Emergency last minute changes may be called into the office or for faster delivery, a text may be sent to the director.

If your child is not picked up by 2:00 p.m., he or she will be escorted to the extended day program and you will be billed \$6.00. If your child is picked up after 3:00 p.m., you will be billed a \$10.00 late fee.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

All of the information that is supplied to the school on the Emergency Card is extremely important. The telephone numbers for the emergency contacts are used when the child becomes ill or injured while at school. Our policy is to call the parents first. However, when the school is unable to reach either parent, the emergency person who is listed must be someone who will be able to pick up the child in the parent's absence.

School Calendar

The school calendar is published each year. The school follows the holiday schedule of the Walton County Public School System with a few exceptions.

Discipline

It has been proven to us through our many years of experience that children who know that they are genuinely loved will have very few discipline problems. Occasionally it may become necessary to discipline by bringing a child close to the teacher and having the child return to an activity when the child can regain control. The teacher will help the child to re-enter the group. The teacher will set clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior. The children will not be “subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest or toileting; spanking or any other form of physical punishment which is prohibited by all child care personnel.” All discipline shall conform to Ch 402, Florida Statutes and Ch 65C-22, Florida Administrative Code.

The Montessori Philosophy is such that each person within the environment has certain rights. Ground rules are set up by and for the class and must be followed for the social cohesion of the entire group. The aim is self-discipline through purposeful activities. The idea is to: “like what you do, but not to do as you like”. When the rights of an individual within the environment are infringed upon, the following measures shall be taken.

- Positive example by teacher
- Private counseling with the child
- Behavior modification techniques
- Sit by himself/herself in the classroom
- Removal from the classroom or playground
- Parents will be notified of behavior and asked to retrieve students who continue to disrupt the classroom or playground.

Religion

We welcome children and families of all faiths. Our prayers are in the Episcopal tradition but are applicable to all faiths. We feel that it is impossible to teach little children without reminding them that there is a God who loves all of us and by encouraging them to practice the faith of their parents. Chapel services are part of the weekly schedule. Parents are invited to participate.

Uniforms

The Tree House children enjoy a casual uniform every day.

- Tops: Polo style shirts in long or short sleeve in Forest Green or White with Logo.
- Bottoms: Comfortable khaki bottoms that allow the child to move freely and sit cross-legged on the floor. Elastic waistbands work well for young children and allow bathroom independence.
- Shoes: Rubber-soled, closed toe shoes that the child can put on and take off without help are the best shoes to encourage movement, independence and fun on the playground.
- Outdoor shoes are not worn inside the classroom. Slippers or “indoor”, soft-soled shoes are allowed if desired by the child.
- Clothing should be selected so that children can dress themselves.
- No cartoon characters or action figures are permitted on clothing, backpacks or lunch boxes.
- Please send children to school in weather appropriate clothing. Layers are a must in cold weather. We eat and play outside together as a class almost every day.
- Please provide a complete change of uniform clothing, including shoes, for the classroom.
- Label everything with your child’s name.

To purchase uniforms:

- Land’s End School Catalog:
Call 1-800-469-2222 or go to www.landsend.com/school
Name of account: The Tree House
Preferred School Number: 900141524
Logo Number: 1081597K

or

- Purchase polo style shirts at any retailer and call Tami Huston 850-419-1582 or email her at www.tamtamstitches.com for local logo embroidery.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Individual parent-teacher meetings are scheduled during the year. Close communication between parent and teacher is extremely beneficial to the learning environment and is welcomed by our staff. Student evaluations and progress will be discussed during a conference. Please set conference appointments with the director.

Classroom Visits

All parents are invited and encouraged to schedule a classroom observation during the school year. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule such a visit.

Parent Involvement

Parent Volunteers are welcome and appreciated. Please see your child's teacher for opportunities in and out of the classroom.

School-to-Parent Information

A weekly folder will be sent home with the children on Thursday of each week. This folder includes information on school news and activities. Please return all folders on Friday and include any written communication desired.

Class Roster

You will receive a contact list of the children enrolled in your child's classroom soon after the start of the school year. This list includes the students' name, address, home phone number and parent/guardian's name, email addresses and cell phone numbers. If you do not wish for your information to be included on this list, please notify the director.

Meals

Children will bring their own sack lunches. Include a cold-pack and a cloth napkin. Children enjoy opening their own containers. It is important to select easy to open lids and packaging. We encourage recyclable containers whenever possible.

It is our philosophy to teach your child how to establish healthy eating habits and to learn to be respectful of their own bodies both inside and out. We as teachers, do this not only by teaching about health and nutrition in the classroom, but by consistently modeling these healthy eating habits. As a Montessori parent, please keep this in mind when packing your child's lunch.

A healthy balanced meal includes proper portions of protein, vegetables, fruits and whole grain carbohydrates. Healthy eating habits start early and your support is crucial to the nutritional education of your child.

Snacks

The classroom will have a snack schedule in place where each family is responsible on a rotational basis for supplying the children with healthy nutritious snacks and fresh flowers. Our healthy snack includes: **fresh fruit, vegetables, Triscuits, and natural cheese**. It is important that you notify the teacher of any dietary restrictions or allergies your child may have.

Sharing

The “Leader of the Day” has the privilege of sharing something brought from home. We ask that your child bring one real item, not a toy, to share. Items shared in the past include: photos from vacation, trophies, something pertaining to a unit study such as rocks, feathers, binoculars and the like.

Photographs

Individual and group photographs are taken during the school year. Photographs are taken in the classroom for various learning purposes and for occasional media release to local newspapers, marketing materials and website development. If you do not wish your child’s photograph released, please notify the office.

Health/Illness

Parents and the preschool share the responsibility for maintaining health and preventing the spread of contagious diseases. In spite of our best efforts, children do get sick. Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill at school and they are expected to pick up the child within one hour of notification.

Please do not bring your child to school if he or she has had any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours:

- **Diarrhea**
- **Unidentified rash**
- **Fever**
- **Vomiting**

Your child will need to be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. We will call you if your child has a fever 100 degrees or greater or if they are vomiting or have diarrhea.

In the event of an outbreak of communicable disease, all parents will be notified by an Illness Alert. Parents should report all illnesses to the director as soon as possible. To maintain confidentiality, the name of the child who is ill will not be given out to other parents.

Children may not attend school during the contagious period of a disease.

Guidelines are as follows:

- **Strep Throat:** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **Chicken Pox:** 7 days from onset of rash or until lesions are crusted
- **Influenza:** until all symptoms are resolved
- **Impetigo:** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:** after fever and blisters are gone
- **Conjunctivitis:** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
- **Lice:** 24 hours after treatment begins and all nits are removed
- **Colds: after contagious cough ends and there is no purulent discharge from eyes and nose.**

Medication

The administering of medication to a child outside the doctor's office is a parental responsibility and should not be delegated to school personnel except under unusual circumstances. Only when absolutely necessary is the school willing to accept responsibility for administering medications. Medications to be dispensed by the school must be labeled with the child's name and exact dosages. The school must have written authorization from the child's parent and licensed physician. All medications will remain in a secure locked location.

Handbook Agreement

The last official act of enrollment and acceptance of each student of The Tree House is the signing of a contract that states this handbook has been read and accepted as the governing vehicle between home and school. Both parents/legal guardians are to sign this agreement and return it to school prior to admission.

Thank you!

Thank you for entrusting your most precious treasure to us. The staff has the training, empathy and love necessary to help the children feel secure and provide the basis for a solid foundation for their further education. We look forward to experiencing these magical preschool and kindergarten years with your family.

Parent/Student Handbook

I/We have read the The Tree House Parent/Student Handbook, and am/are in agreement with the handbook and agree to be governed by it.

I/We understand that according to Florida State Law (Section 65c-22.006(2)) each child is required to have a physical examination (form 3040) and an immunization record (form 680 or 681) on file with the preschool before being allowed to attend class.

I/We have read and understand the disciplinary practices used by this child care facility and contained in this handbook as prescribed by Florida State Law (Section 65c-22.006(4)(c)2).

Student's Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Student's Teacher

Date

All parents and guardians need sign and return this form to the school.

