

# Oak Leaf Kids Academy

## Parent Handbook



## WELCOME

Welcome and thank you for choosing Oak Leaf Kids Academy! We are honored that you have entrusted us with the care and education of your precious little one. We are dedicated to fulfilling your family's child care and early childhood education needs.

Please take a few minutes to read this Parent Handbook. It provides helpful information to better acquaint you with Oak Leaf Kids Academy and serves as the operational policies for our school. Please speak with the Director if you have any questions regarding this handbook.

Our friendly, knowledgeable and professional staff members are always available to address your child care needs.

### **Our Mission**

*"Planting seeds to GROW child care services  
from the norm to best;  
to instill creative, educational and well-rounded mind  
sets  
in a fun nurturing environment."*

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## **1 ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

We are pleased to offer year round enrollment for children age 6 weeks to 12 years and excited to have your children join us as soon as possible. You can secure your child's place in the classroom by paying the Registration Fee and first week's tuition. A completed enrollment packet is required before your child's first day of attendance. Some of the forms must be notarized and some will come from your child's doctor, so please allow yourself plenty of time. You are welcome to bring your child in to meet the teachers any morning between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. or in the afternoon between 3:30 and 5:00 p.m. You can also use this time to drop off supplies such as extra clothes, diapers, formula, etc. so there are fewer things to remember on the first day.

On the first day, it is not uncommon for children to experience "separation anxiety." This is an important milestone in your child's life and is as important to your child's emotional and intellectual development as crawling is to physical development. You can celebrate this milestone together by developing a routine for saying good-bye. Smile confidently as you leave and say, "Mommy and Daddy will be back." Give a reassuring hug and leave promptly. Please do not sneak away, for that only heightens anxiety.

Mommies and Daddies who are experiencing separation anxiety are encouraged to call and check on their little ones anytime.

Oak Leaf Kids Academy reserves the right to refuse service or to dis-enroll a child at any time for any reason without advance notice.

## **2 OPERATING HOURS**

Oak Leaf Kids Academy is open 6:00am to 6:30pm Monday through Friday. We are open year round except for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If the holiday falls on

Saturday or Sunday, Oak Leaf Kids Academy reserves the right to close on an alternate day.

## **3 OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Parents of children currently enrolled at Oak Leaf Kids Academy are welcome to visit at any time. As an extra security measure and to promptly meet the needs of our customers, all visitors, including parents, are required to check in at the office before proceeding to the classroom areas. We appreciate your cooperation.

## **4 COMPLIMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

We want to know about your satisfaction, questions and concerns regarding any issue about our program, including policies and procedures. You can call or stop by the office anytime. A manager is always available to speak with you.

If you have a question or concern that you would like to discuss with your child's teacher, please remember that the teachers must focus their attention on the children at all times and the classroom is not the best place for even a brief conference. Please speak with a manager so that your questions and concerns can be addressed promptly or so that arrangements can be made for another teacher to take the class while you and the teacher chat. We can also schedule a mutually convenient time for a telephone conference.

## **5 STAFF**

Your peace of mind regarding your child's safety is important to us. Our teachers and staff members undergo criminal background checks including fingerprinting, pre-screening and ongoing training in child development. Training and certification in CPR, First Aid, and SIDS prevention are also required.

## **6 INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSING**

While closing due to inclement weather is extremely rare, Oak Leaf Kids Academy reserves the right to close at any time. Oak Leaf does follow Garland Independent School District's schedule when it comes to inclement weather closing and opening. When in doubt, please follow local news channels during business closed hours to see if Oak Leaf will be closed next business day.

Should bad weather begin mid-day, please make arrangements to pick up your child as soon as possible so that your family, your child's teachers and their families and everyone at Oak Leaf Kids Academy can get home quickly and safely before traveling becomes hazardous.

Oak Leaf Kids Academy does not provide transportation from public school during icy road conditions, so parents of public school children will need to make other transportation arrangements for their children during icy weather.

## **7 SECURITY**

Your child's safety is ensured through detailed security measures affecting every aspect of your child's day. Beginning in the front office where everyone entering the facility is required to check in, detailed procedures regarding pick up time at the end of the day and everything in between!

## **8 ARRIVAL**

Upon arrival, please take your child to the assigned classroom and ensure that s/he is greeted by the teacher. Children should arrive no later than 10:00 a.m. each day unless detained due to a medical appointment. Arriving by 10:00 keeps your child "in sync" with the daily schedule in the classroom.

If your child will be late, please call the office so that we can notify your child's teachers to include your child in the counts for the day's activities.

Children must arrive and depart through the front door of the school only. (Example: Children cannot be delivered to the teacher while the class is on a field trip.)

## **9 PICK UP**

We take our responsibility to children very seriously and reserve the right to ask anyone for a photo ID before releasing a child. Anyone who does not regularly pick up a child from Oak Leaf Kids Academy should bring photo ID in hand.

Children will be released only to adults age 18 and older whose names appear on the enrollment application and who also provide proper photo identification.

If there are custody issues, the parent should discuss the situation with the director, as it will probably be necessary for the custodial parent to provide a legal document which defines the custody agreement.

If you need someone whose name is not on the enrollment application to pick up your child, please inform the office. This allows that individual access to your child for that day only. You can also permanently add the name to the enrollment application.

For all school-age children please call 5-10 minutes prior to arrival so we can have your child(ren) up front and ready for their departure.

All parents needing to come inside for any reason please make sure your vehicle is parked; as this allows for no traffic and back up onto Chaha Road. Please no parking under

awning (fines can/will be accrued on to your account for not complying).

All lanes marked red are Oak Leaf's Rowlett Fire Department's appointed fire lanes, therefore no parking upon the entrance to the school can take place.

Oak Leaf Kids Academy operating hours is 6:00am to 6:30pm. There is a \$1 per minute late fee to any family who exceeds this time. This allows your child's teachers to spend quality time with their own children and families as well.

### 10 NAPTIME

Children enrolled in the preschool or pre-kindergarten programs rest every day. Oak Leaf Kids Academy provides a comfortable crib or nap mat as appropriate for each child. We ask that parents provide a small (crib size) blanket for nap time. We do not have storage space for regular blankets, pillows or sleeping bags. The small blanket must be labeled with your child's first and last name and should be laundered at home as needed.

Please avoid picking up your child during naptime, as it can be disruptive to the sleeping children. If you do need to pick up your child during naptime, a courtesy call to the front office prior to naptime is appreciated so that we can have your child and his belongings ready and waiting when you arrive.

### 11 ABSENCES

Everyone at Oak Leaf Kids Academy genuinely cares about your child and we ask that you please call if your child will be absent for any reason.

This is also true for children who ride our bus after public school. You must call us at least one hour prior to dismissal time if your child will not be on the bus after school. Failure

to do so will result in a \$10 service charge billed to your account. We must spend time calling and searching until your child is accounted for.

### 12 ILLNESS

Sick children should not attend school. Illness requiring pick up includes but is not limited to: fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, rash, open sores, conjunctivitis/pink eye, diarrhea or vomiting. Children who become ill at school must be picked up within 45 minutes after the parent or other authorized person is notified. Children must be fever and vomit free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school. (This also applies to children that have been exposed to live head Lice and/or Nits.) Oak Leaf Kids Academy reserves the right to require a doctor's release particularly in the event of surgery, rashes, prolonged illness or communicable disease before returning to school. If your child experiences a contagious illness, please notify the director at your earliest convenience. Confidentiality is guaranteed.

### 13 TUITION

Summer registration fee is \$40 per child. Fall registration is \$50.00 per child. These fees are non-refundable.

Tuition is due in advance on Monday each week and is late after close of business on Tuesday. A late fee of \$25 per week will be added to your tuition for late payments. The NSF charge for returned checks is \$35. After two returned checks from any family, tuition will have to be paid by credit/debit card, money order, or cash. **TUITION, WHETHER PAID WEEKLY, BI-WEEKLY, OR MONTHLY IS NON-REFUNDABLE.**

There is no reduction in tuition due to absences or closings. If your child will be absent for one full week we will only charge you half to hold their spot.

Should it become necessary for your child to withdraw from Oak Leaf Kids Academy, please speak to the director right away. A two week notice would be appreciated.

All field trips are optional and are paid for separately.

#### 14 VACATIONS

We do not offer vacation weeks, however families may take as many half weeks a year as they would like. Tuition is still due to hold child's spot at Oak Leaf Kids Academy. Tuition is 50% off during vacation weeks.

#### 15 EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We are happy to offer many exciting extracurricular activities such as dance, soccer and more to children at Oak Leaf. Please ask for more information regarding the activities and ages offered at this time.

Fees and supplies for these activities are not included in tuition or any other Oak Leaf Kids Academy fees and are usually payable to each provider directly.

#### 16 REFERRALS

If you're happy and you know it - tell a friend! Families of children currently enrolled at Oak Leaf Kids Academy, can receive Oak Leaf Bucks towards tuition for referring other families to our school. Refer a family to Oak Leaf Kids Academy both parties will receive Oak Leaf Bucks toward tuition. (Please note: both accounts must be current and in good standing for the credit to be applied.)

#### 17 MEDICATIONS

All medicines must be signed in on the Medication Log located in the office.

Do not leave medication in your child's backpack, diaper bag, classroom, etc.

Medicine must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the child's first and last name.

Medicine is dispensed according to label instructions only. This includes age and/or weight dosage instructions. Oak Leaf Kids Academy dispenses medications at 11:30 a.m. If the instructions read "once or twice daily" the medication should be given at home; three times per day = 11:30 only, 4 times per day or every 4 hours = 11:30 and 3:30. Oak Leaf Kids Academy can make an exception and give a medication at 3:30 in extreme situations such as breathing treatments prescribed 4 times per day.

Oak Leaf Kids Academy administers medicines as a courtesy to our customers and reserves the right to deny this courtesy at any time. No medication will be administered for longer than two weeks without written authorization from the child's physician.

#### 18 MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

***IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT PARENTS KEEP CONTACT NUMBERS CURRENT AT ALL TIMES.*** In the unlikely event that your child requires emergency medical attention, Oak Leaf Kids Academy will contact paramedics, administer CPR/First Aid if needed, and you or your designated emergency contact person will be notified as soon as the situation allows. (Any expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the child's family.) Other children in the center will be removed from the situation and supervised by other staff members.

If a minor injury occurs at school, first aid will be administered and Oak Leaf Kids Academy staff will complete an Accident Report. The situation will be discussed with the person who picks up the child at the end of the day. S/he

will be asked to sign the report so that it can be placed in the child's file here at school.

### **19 ALLERGIES/MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

If your child is allergic to certain foods, insects, soaps, etc. and/or if s/he has certain medical conditions such as asthma, please provide written notification to a Oak Leaf Kids Academy manager so the information can be included in your child's file and all teachers can be made aware.

When your child moves to a new classroom, please be sure that the new teacher is also aware of the allergy/condition. Look for the information to be posted in your child's classroom. We must work together to ensure your child's safety and good health. Additionally, please send food from home if your child is allergic to the lunch being served. The same policy is true for children whose religion prohibits certain foods.

### **20 PARENTAL NOTIFICATION**

Please see the Parent Information Board, or Facebook page for important general notifications for parents.

### **21 DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE**

We believe in a positive approach to discipline. Teaching children what to do more often than what not to do develops problem-solving skills and a generous and kind attitude while guiding them toward acceptable behavior and self-discipline. Parents can show support by teaching their children to value and respect teachers and friends.

Our trained and caring staff implement positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include 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; and offering appropriate choices to replace inappropriate behavior.

At Oak Leaf Kids Academy we believe that discipline should be individualized and consistent for each child and appropriate to the child's level of understanding. Corporal punishment, embarrassment, and shaming will never be used. Young children are developing social and emotional skills along with intellectual and physical abilities. Trust that we will let you know if your child's behavior is outside acceptable boundaries.

### **22 ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Because children need to know that Oak Leaf Kids Academy is a safe, nurturing environment for them, parents and other adults who come to Oak Leaf Kids Academy are asked to abide by the following guidelines while in the building, parking lots and playgrounds:

- No cell phones;
- No smoking;
- Use appropriate language;
- Discuss disagreements privately and calmly away from the children and with appropriate management staff only;
- Report concerns about children other than their own to a manager and never address concerns directly with other parents or the children.

### **23 BITING**

Biting is a normal part of development for many young children. Our teachers are trained in various strategies to help deter biting in the classroom. Because we recognize that this behavior can be frustrating to everyone involved, please be assured that we will maintain confidentiality and speak with both families when a biting incident occurs. Appropriate steps will be taken to discourage future incidents and to meet the needs of each child.

## **24 MEALS**

Tuition includes a hot lunch, an afternoon snack, and dinner at specified times for children who are old enough to eat table food. Copies of the school menu are located in the office.

If your child is a “picky eater” and you would like to send food for your child, it will be served along with whatever we are serving that day so that your child will may taste it if he desires to do so. We have had great success utilizing this strategy.

If your child is allergic to certain foods, please speak with the director or cook so that necessary substitutions can be made. A note from your child’s physician is required and your child may need to bring a lunch from home on those days.

Parents may choose to provide all meals and snacks from home if notation is made on the enrollment agreement stating that Oak Leaf Kids Academy is not responsible for its nutritional content or for meeting the child’s daily food needs. Information regarding a special diet as prescribed by a doctor must be provided by the parent and included in the child’s file. Reminder- Oak Leaf is a peanut free school (i.e. - No peanut butter/jelly sandwiches, cookies etc.)

## **25 BIRTHDAYS/TREATS FROM HOME**

Birthdays and other special occasions are great times to send treats from home for your child’s class. Treats from home to celebrate various holidays can also provide real and meaningful opportunities to teach young children about cultural diversity.

If you would like to send treats for your child’s class, please let the teacher or someone in the office know ahead of time. We also need to know if you (or grandma and grandpa) will be joining the celebration in the classroom.

Please do not send peanut products to Oak Leaf Kids Academy.

Items in “goody bags” should be age appropriate and safe enough not to cause a choking hazard.

Confidentiality restrictions preclude us from providing class lists, phone numbers or addresses of the children in your child’s class. If you would like to have a celebration away from school, please give the completed invitations to an office staff member and we will give them to the appropriate parents during pick up time. This also helps us avoid disappointing children who may not have been invited.

## **26 IMMUNIZATIONS**

A copy of your child’s immunization record must be on file on or before the first day of enrollment. Immunizations must be current based on your child’s age. When your child receives immunizations as s/he gets older, please provide us with a copy of the updated immunizations for your child’s file. Tuberculin testing may also be required by the county. Parents who request that immunizations be waived on religious or other grounds must provide a legal waiver. Please see the center director if you are not familiar with this procedure. Note: Copies of immunization records for school age children are on file at public school and are not required to be on file at Oak Leaf Kids Academy.

## **27 HEARING AND VISION SCREENING**

First time enrollees who are four years old or older and all children enrolled who are four years old by September 1 of each year must undergo hearing and vision screening. Results of the screenings must be in your child’s file.

Testing can be obtained through your child’s pediatrician. These screenings will also be available at Oak Leaf Kids Academy throughout the year and any child who is 4 years



old or older and does not have a screening report on file will be required to participate.

### **28 POLICY CHANGES**

In the rare event of a change in policies at Oak Leaf Kids Academy, notices will be posted on the Parent Information board. If you would like a copy please let Management know so that you can obtain a copy.

### **29 TRANSPORTATION**

Oak Leaf Kids Academy transports children under the following circumstances: field trips, to a designated evacuation site, for emergency medical treatment, and to and/or from public school. All drivers hold a valid state driver's license and our vehicles are properly maintained and insured.

Oak Leaf transports children to school beginning at age 4. We supply the booster seats according to age and height requirements.

Children are required to sit with their back against the seat and their bottom on the seat, properly strapped into a seatbelt or properly strapped into a booster seat. The children are allowed to talk quietly, but no loud noises that can distract the driver. After a verbal warning we will talk to parents if a child will not behave on the vehicle, if the behavior continues we will inform the parents that we will no longer transport their child.

We ask that you let us know by 2:30 (this is when the buses leave to go pick up from the schools) if we are not picking up your child. We MUST account for every child on our list. If a parent repeatedly does not call when we are not picking up we will add a \$10.00 charge to the account every time we have to search for the child.

### **30 WATER ACTIVITIES**

During the summer time, children age 12 months - 3 years may participate in water activities on the playground in water tables, splash pools, and/or sprinklers. Children age 4 and older and fully potty trained children may also participate in these activities as well as inflatable water slides, and swimming in the swimming pool. See the enrollment application for permission form.

### **31 CLOTHING**

Children will enjoy a variety of activities including painting, sand play, shaving cream, and playing outside each day. Children should wear comfortable play clothes, socks and tennis shoes. Sandals and "flip-flops" are not appropriate footwear for running and playing at school and are not allowed. Child(ren) can/will be sent home, or parent(s) will be called to bring an additional pair of close toed shoes. Additionally, all children must have at least one extra set of clothes in their cubbies. So that the teachers can better assist you and your child in keeping up with your child's belongings, everything, including clothing, jackets and sweaters must be labeled with the child's first initial and last name. We are unable to replace lost or damaged articles.

Babies and children who are potty training must have a minimum of 6 disposable diapers or pull-ups each day, an ample supply of disposable wipes and at least two changes of clothing, please.

### **32 PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Personal items from home should not be brought to school. Exceptions are curriculum related items, children's books, and/or items for Show & Tell. Be sure that these items are labeled with your child's first and last name. Oak Leaf Kids Academy is not responsible for lost or broken items.

Cell Phones are not permitted for all children at Oak Leaf Kids Academy due to inappropriate content, and due to the risk of lost or stolen items. Please leave them at home. If found they will be confiscated and will be at the front office for pick up when leaving school for the day by parent. Oak Leaf Kids Academy is not responsible for lost or broken items.

### **33 OUTSIDE PLAY**

Sunshine and fresh air are vital to the healthy development of young children. Getting 10-15 minutes of sun exposure (UV rays) everyday is the most efficient way for the body to make vitamin D. Vitamin D is essential in aiding the body's absorption of calcium for strong healthy bones, preventing disease, supporting the immune system and healthy cell reproduction. At Oak Leaf Kids Academy the children play outside every morning and every afternoon. We do take the wind chill factor and/or heat index into account as appropriate and the length of time spent outdoors varies according to the weather as well. Please dress your child accordingly and include a jacket with a hood during cold weather days. Outside time is required per state minimum standards.

### **34 LOST AND FOUND**

Oak Leaf Kids Academy is not responsible for lost or broken items. However, we will do our best to help locate missing items within a day or two. Please label everything with your child's first and last name.

### **35 FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are a fun way to broaden the learning atmosphere of the classroom. Some of our field trips are educational in that they serve as an extension of the weekly unit or theme. Some field trips are fun but also teach children valuable social skills.

Please see the Parent Notification board, website, or Facebook page for dates and times for field trips. The addresses and phone numbers for field trip locations are listed on this information board as well. Please remember, children cannot be dropped off or picked up during a field trip. It is important that children arrive at school at least 30 minutes before the scheduled time on the day of a field trip. Children must also be appropriately attired wearing the proper footwear, the required school T-shirt, and a jacket if the weather is cold in order to go on the field trip.

### **36 ANIMALS**

If animals are to be on the premises at Oak Leaf Kids Academy, parents will be notified via the Parent Notification board. The animals will meet all the necessary state and local requirements and proper care and safety precautions will apply.

### **37 PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

In the interest of privacy and confidentiality, any concerns regarding children other than your own must be addressed to the director rather than the classroom teacher. Oak Leaf Kids Academy does not allow photographing or videotaping of children via any means (this includes "camera phones"), except in the cases of "school pictures," and school events which will be photographed or videotaped by a Oak Leaf Kids Academy representative and distributed and/or displayed at Oak Leaf Kids Academy discretion. Oak Leaf Kids Academy reserves the right, without parental notification or consent, to photograph, videotape, or perform necessary evaluations/development assessments of your child(ren.)

### **38 OTHER INFORMATION**

If you would like to review the most recent Licensing inspection report please check the parent information board.

The number to Licensing is 214-583-4253, or you can go to their web-site at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

If you suspect abuse/neglect you MUST call 1-800-252-5400. If the person suspects the child is in immediate danger they should not wait and should call 911. You may also, additionally, call your local law enforcement agency. You may also contact the DFPS on the web at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us). We also have detailed information about abuse/neglect on our Parent Information Board. Staff will receive one hour of annual training in abuse/neglect annually. Oak Leaf always tries to educate parents and teachers on what abuse and neglect signs are. Just a few to keep in mind are: Talk openly about abuse, teacher children to respect their bodies, supervise children well, speak to children about limiting time with one-to-one contact between adults and children.

Dallas Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) is a great center who specializes in counseling and interviewing children who have been victims of abuse/neglect. They can be contacted at 5351 Samuel Blvd., Dallas, TX (214) 818-2600. <http://www.dcac.org/>.

These numbers and web-sites are also located on our parent information board.

### THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read this Parent Handbook. Together we can give your child a foundation of positive self-esteem, self-confidence and the ability to become a curious life-long learner.

*Please sign, tear out and return this page with your child's enrollment packet.*

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My signature below certifies that I have read and understand the contents of this Parent Handbook and agree to abide by and comply with the policies set forth herein.

I also acknowledge that I have been given the opportunity to discuss any policies in this handbook with the Director of the facility.

I acknowledge that Oak Leaf Kids Academy reserves the right to modify or amend these policies at any time without prior notice.

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Mother's Signature

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Date

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Father's Signature

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Date