



**PINECREST CHILDREN'S ACADEMY PARENT HANDBOOK
CARING FOR CHILDREN SINCE 1985**

"Throughout childhood, the most critical factor for the development of higher intelligence and creativity is this fundamental sense of security, of feeling safe and loved"

Joseph Chilton

SERVICES AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

- **Preschool, ages 18months – two years**
- **Infant and Toddler**
- **Pre-Kindergarten Ages 3 & 4 years**
- **Before and after school programs with transportation**
- **Field trips**
- **Summer day camp**
- **Nutritious & balanced meals- breakfast, lunch & afternoon snack**
- **Emphasis on music & art**

BUSINESS HOURS

We are open from 5:30am – 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. Occasionally we have a Friday night "Parent's Night Out". On this special occasion an announcement will be made and reservations required.

HOLIDAYS

Pinecrest Children's Academy observes the following holidays:
New year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day (July 4th), Labor Day,
Thanksgiving Day and day after, Christmas Holidays to be posted depending on
calendar year.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Pinecrest is committed to working with parents in providing the best possible care and education for their children.
Parents are encouraged to visit the center anytime to observe or bring your own special talents to share.
Pinecrest is a volunteer and supporter of the Make a Wish Foundation.
www.texgulf.wish.org

REQUIRED ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

ENROLLMENT FORMS INCLUDE

- Current immunization records
- Physician's health statement
- Physician's notes on allergies and /or special diets
- Food Program forms
- Infants (Newborn through 17 months) written care and feeding schedule, completed at the beginning of every month by parent/guardian
- Parent Tuition agreement
- Teacher classroom information

The enrollment information must be fully and accurately completed and turned into the office BEFORE the first day of attendance.

"To learn through play children need choice: materials, space, permission and time-lots of time, to start when their ready and stop when their finished. There's no need to hurry children in preschool. If we slow down and listen, we can share the children's discovery of their world."

Elizabeth Jones

TUITION/PARENT FEES

Tuition payments are due in advance and payable monthly, bi-monthly (1st & 15th) & bi-weekly. A late tuition fee will be charged on balances received after the tuition due date.

Late fees are \$10. 1st day and \$25. 2nd day late.

There will be a charge of all returned checks. Your account may be put on a cash only basis after two returned checks. Current charges for returned checks are posted in the Center office.

Children attending school will have extended care fees billed each day when school is not in session.

Arriving after closing at 6pm, the late fee is \$10 for 1st 10 minutes and \$1 for each minute thereafter.

Should you need to withdraw from the Center, two weeks written notice is required. If you are unable to give a two weeks notice, then the regular scheduled tuition is due for the two weeks period regardless of attendance.

CURRICULUM

Our program is based on the knowledge that young children are active learners. Because children learn by doing, activities are planned to be meaningful and interesting to young children and which reflect anti-bias and multicultural awareness. Teachers provide learning experiences through discussion, activities and plan involving all your child's senses.

Learning Centers provide practice in making decisions, following directions, working independently, and learning the care and use of materials. Classrooms are arranged with interest centers. There are areas for books, block play, art, puzzles, puzzles & manipulative games, discovery and dramatic play. The centers contain educational toys, teaching games and materials that the children may use individually, with a friend or in small groups.

Group Activities provide a chance for your child to learn in a larger group setting. These group activities include stories, music and movement, language experiences and discussions relating to the lesson plan.

Field Trips offer first hand experiences. These are usually related to the lesson plan and are also planned for variety and fun. Field trip notices will be posted 48 hours or more in advance. Usually ages 4 years and older participate in field trips.

A Nurturing Atmosphere helps your child to appreciate his or her unique gifts and talents, and to recognize and respect the uniqueness of others.

Every Christmas season, the children from babies through school age children present a special Christmas performance for their families. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters and friends attend the caroling. This has become a tradition here at Pinecrest since 1985.

SUMMER DAY CAMP

Summer Day Camp is offered for ages 4 thru 12 years old. Both groups attend educational and fun field trips throughout the summer. Activities are planned for variety and fun. Swimming lessons are offered for an additional fee.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ILLNESS:

Pinecrest adheres to the contagious illness guidelines by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Child Care Licensing.

You are the best judge of your child's health and we trust you will not bring an ill child to the center. However, if your child becomes ill, we will call you to pick-up your child.

ACCIDENTS:

Staff uses every measure possible to prevent accidents. Your child will be well supervised by caring and experienced staff.

Unfortunately an accident can occur even with the best supervision.

If an accident occurs that is serious, the parent will be notified.

MEDICATION

1. A signed permission is required by the parent/guardian.
2. Prescription medication must be in the original container with child's name.
3. Over the counter medication must be age appropriate and labeled with the child's name and directions.
4. Please inform office if refrigeration is required.

THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA WILL BE USED TO DETERMINE ILLNESS

1. Fever over 100.4 degrees without fever reducer medication
2. Vomiting during the previous night of present morning
3. Persistent diarrhea
4. When your child appears lethargic or becomes unable to participate in the program activities.
5. Unknown rash
6. Inflammation /redness of the eyes

If your child was sent home due to illness, he/she cannot return until he/she has been free from symptoms for 24 hours. This is to allow your child ample time to recover and stop the spread of illness to the other children.

Please notify the center if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Upon return, please bring a Doctor's release to attend school.

On occasion, if a health concern persists, the Director may request that a physician see a child before returning to the center.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

CHILDREN MAY BE RELEASED ONLY TO PERSONS LISTED BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS ON THE ENROLLMENT FORM. IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN AUTHORIZED IS PICKING UP YOUR CHILD, THEN WE MUST HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE SIGNED BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN. WE MUST CHECK PICTURE IDENTIFICATION OF ANY PERSON WHO COMES TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD. IT IS A GOOD PRACTICE TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE YOU DESIGNATE TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD FROM THE CENTER.

Parent/guardian must sign in and out daily. A clipboard is available with the sign in and out form for each classroom.

Parent/guardian must walk child to the classroom and release the child to a staff person. Please do not allow your child to leave the building ahead of you. Once you have arrived at the center to pick up your child then you assume responsibility for your child.

GUIDANCE METHODS

Staff members use positive guidance methods that help children learn self-control without loss of self-esteem. A balanced schedule of activities suited to the children's development promotes cooperation and reduced stress. Children are encouraged to use words to solve problems with others.

In addition, a variety of other methods for gaining the child's cooperation are used, including redirection, choices between acceptable behaviors and removal from activities when necessary. Staff works closely with you to understand your child and to determine which methods work best for him or her.

Upon enrollment, please pick sign the Discipline and Guidance Policy.

CHRONIC DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

We will make every effort to work with parents of children having difficulties in child care. We are here to serve and protect all of our children, though. Children displaying chronic behavior that is detrimental to the physical/emotional well being of another child may require the following actions:

Initial Consultation

The Director may require the parent/guardian of any child to meet in a conference. The problem will be defined and documented. Goals will be outlined and the parent will be involved in creating approaches towards solving the problem.

-Second Consultation

If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parent/guardian will meet with the Director. Another attempt will be made to identify the problem, outline new approaches to the problem and discuss the consequences if progress is not apparent.

-Suspension

When the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made towards solving the problem, the child may be suspended from childcare indefinitely. The Director may immediately suspend a child at anytime he/she exhibits harmful behavior to himself/herself or others. A parent may be called anytime the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior and can't be modified by the childcare staff. That parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. Suspensions from the program may vary from a few hours to an indefinite period.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation service is offered to and from area schools and field trips. If your child is participating in our transportation program, you must notify the Director of any schedule changes before the bus run begins. This policy insures the safety of your child and lessens confusion at pick up time from School.

We are required by law to use seatbelts. Students may lose transportation privileges for non compliance of seat belt use. Pinecrest reserves the option to ask that a parent/guardian make alternative arrangements for transportation.

CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS

Children should dress comfortably, simply and suitable for the weather. We do engage in “messy” activities that, despite efforts, can get clothes soiled. We do not want to inhibit the children unnecessarily, so we ask you to send them in old clothes that they can play in without hesitation. Remember also that children will be playing outdoors, so be sure their clothing is sturdy and durable. Dress in layers on cold days! An extra set of clothing (labeled) including underwear, socks, pants and shirt must be left at school permanently in case of accidents. An extra sweater or jacket at school is also recommended. Sometimes, children need to bring special toys or new treasures to school to use as a “bridge” between home and school. On these occasions we will work with you and your child to make it a positive sharing experience. The teacher will post a notice about “show and tell” day. Play guns, weapons and other toys that encourage aggressive play are not welcome in our classrooms. We are teaching cooperation and concern for one another in our school; these items promote aggression, competition and hostile feelings. Please leave them at home. **IMPORTANT:** There are four things we feel strongly must remain at home – guns, gum, candy and money.

LOST ARTICLES

We cannot replace lost articles. Please do not send your child with money or other valuable. Please check in lost and found if an item is missing. Lost and found items will be cleaned out periodically and donated to a charitable organization.

NAPTIME

We provide a quiet rest /nap time for all full-time children. Some children may need sleep and others may only rest. We try to accommodate each child’s sleep needs.

***** PLEASE BRING A SMALL BLANKET AND PILLOW FOR NAP TIME*****

We provide a cot or mat.

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Children are invited to celebrate their birthdays. If you would like to celebrate your child’s birthday with his friends, please let us know. Parents may wish to bring a cake or other treats for the special day. What you bring doesn’t matter, just that you are bringing it, that’s what is special to your child. The class will gather usually at afternoon snack to share cake and sing Happy Birthday. Parents often donate a book, puzzle or game to the classroom. The birthday child has the honor of giving, not just receiving, on their special day. As part of your child’s special day, we will read the book to the class or play the game whatever the case. We appreciate your participation to help make this event a delightful one for each child.

Surrounding special holidays, Valentines, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. we have Classroom parties. Details are posted on the classroom door.

Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure to report suspected cases of child abuse. According to law this facility must report suspected child abuse or neglect. The law requires that we make a report to the Texas Department

of Protective and Regulatory Services. Persons making reports in good faith are protected from liability, and their identities are kept confidential. Persons making false and malicious reports are open to the scrutiny of the criminal justice system. To report to DPRS, contact the department's local chief Protective Services Office, or call the toll-free Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-5400, voice or TDD). Please contact the center Director about any questions or concerns you as a parent may have.

PARENT – FACILITY COMMUNICATION

In caring for your child, it is important that good communication exist between the home and Pinecrest. If your child is experiencing a change in the home environment that may result in changes in behavior at the Center it is important for you to notify the Director. Your Director will keep you informed of any behavioral problems that may occur with your child at the Center. Every effort will be made to resolve any problem that may occur. If a problem cannot be resolved Pinecrest reserves the right to ask you to make alternative arrangements for the care of your child.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Pinecrest Children's Academy is an equal opportunity provider. We operate in accordance with Federal and State laws, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability, national origin or political belief. The age range and licensed capacity is posted on the center's state license.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Pinecrest has an open door policy. This means that parents are encouraged to visit the center and participate in center activities. Parents are welcome to visit anytime. Open communications between parents, teachers and the Center Director is essential to your child's experience at Pinecrest.

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING PINECREST!



