



2020-21  
PARENT HANDBOOK

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Welcome to The Learning Tree Preschool! We function first and foremost as an extension of the ministries of First Baptist Fairhope. It is our sincere desire that you find this a comfortable, yet stimulating environment for your child. The Learning Tree motto, "As the twig is bent, so grows the tree", is evidence of a loving environment whereby Christian teachers can help children develop good "roots" to grow upon. These first impressions set the stage for the years of schooling that are to follow as your child learns to function with others within a group. Our desire is to encourage children to become enthusiastic learners through developmental play and activities.

You will find information in this handbook about our policies and procedures. This is not an exhaustive collection. However, please make sure you read this handbook thoroughly as it contains important information. Much of the day to day activities of our center can only be learned by experience. Please feel free to ask questions about any aspect of our program. If you have suggestions to improve our program, whether it be for the children, parents or staff, please share them with us.

Involving families in our program is a top priority. Building this partnership help children make the connection between home and school. The Learning Tree serves as an extension of your family and sharing ideas and genuine love for children is of the utmost importance. We look forward to partnering with you and thank you for choosing The Learning Tree Preschool!

Sincerely,

Laurie Jensen, Director



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## Registration Policy

Enrollment is open to all children age's one through five years old. Acceptance is determined by the number of places available in each class. Before a child can be admitted to our program, we must have a completed registration packet on file. Parents must notify the office when any pertinent information changes.

## Registration Process

Students currently enrolled in any class will have first choice for the following year registration. The period for registration will be the last week of January. Younger siblings of currently enrolled students may also register at this time.

## Curriculum Philosophy

Curriculum for our school is everything that occurs in the learning environment, the room arrangement, the materials on the wall, the resources, the teacher's plans, and most importantly, the children's questions and methods of exploration as they seek to understand the world in which they live are all part of our curriculum. Children learn as they play and the role of the teacher is to facilitate the learning in the best way possible.

All of our classes are curriculum and theme based. Experiences are designed to integrate all areas of the child's development; social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual. Because our school is Christian oriented, our curriculum includes those elements of the faith which are common to all Christians with no emphasis on any one denomination.

## Fees

·A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$250.00 is required to enroll your child in the school.

## Tuition

Tuition is charged on an annual basis regardless of attendance. Your payment reserves your child's spot in our program. For your convenience, we allow payment annually, by semester and monthly.

## Tuition (continued)

Payment options are as follows:

### 6 Month Program

T/TH	\$215/Mo.	\$2,150/Yr.
M/W/F	\$235/Mo.	\$2,350/Yr.
Mon.-Fri	\$275/Mo.	\$2,750/Yr.

### One Year Old's Program

T/TH	\$195/Mo.	\$1,950/Yr.
M/W/F	\$215/Mo.	\$2,150/Yr.
Mon.-Fri	\$245/Mo.	\$2,450/Yr.

### Two's- Pre-K Program

T/TH	\$175/Mo.	\$1,750/Yr.
M/W/F	\$195/Mo.	\$1,950/Yr.
Mon.-Fri	\$225/Mo.	\$2,250/Yr.

- If paying monthly, tuition is due the first day of each month regardless of attendance, August- May. After the 10th, a \$20.00 late charge will be added.
- A \$20.00 service charge is applied to all returned checks. A second returned check will result in a "cash only" status.
- A full one month's notice must be given before withdrawal. Payment is required for the 30 days following the withdrawal notice, whether or not the child continues to attend the school during this period
- Tuition should be mailed or dropped by the school if your child is sick or out of town to avoid late fees.

### Optional Extended Day Program

The Extended day program is offered Monday-Friday 1:00-3:00pm. There is an additional fee for this program. You must sign your child up in advance for this program, "drop-ins" will be permitted only if space allows. Emergency circumstances will be considered.

## Extended day Tuition & fees

A yearly Registration fee of \$30.00 (to cover a daily snack) is due with your first tuition payment.

Payment options are as follows:

T/TH \$65/Month \$650/Year

M/W/F \$90/Month \$900/Year

Mon.-Fri. \$140/Month \$1,400/Year

· “Drop-In” service fee is \$15.00 per day.

· Same policies regarding tuition, applies to extended day tuition payments.

## Arrival and Dismissal

· Our school day is from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Monday- Friday. The doors will be opened 8:45am - 9:15am for drop off. Preschoolers begin their day with Circle time. Have your child here no later than 9:15am, so they do not miss this valuable learning time.

Dismissal is at 1:00pm. All classes will dismiss from commons area outside of the preschool hall.

At all other times the doors will remain locked. Anyone wishing to enter the building at any other time will have to use the key pad outside the main doors. If it is a person who is not recognizable as a child's parent, they must be prepared to show picture identification to enter the church to retrieve a child.

Walk In & Pick Up Procedure: Please park in the parking areas provided. Escort your child to his/her teacher. Children must never be allowed to enter/leave the school unattended. Also, when picking up your child you should make contact with your child's teacher. Please be alert and cautious in the parking lot areas. Supervise your child closely.

Carline Procedure: Carline will begin at 8:45am for drop off and 12:50pm for pick up using the doors under the awning along White Avenue. If you chose to use car line, please display the name card provided in your front window. Please do not exit your car at any time while in car line. During morning drop off, a staff member will greet your child, remove them from your vehicle and walk them into the school. For 1:00pm

## Arrival and Dismissal (continued)

pick up, your child will be brought to your vehicle, placed in their car seat and you will pull forward to buckle your child in.

· A \$5.00 fee will be charged for late pick-up. This fee is paid directly to the teacher. Late is considered to be ten minutes after the hour (1:10). An additional \$5 charge will be incurred for each additional 10 minutes.

## Items to bring to school

- A Back pack with a change of clothes in a zip lock bag, labeled with your child's name.
- Snack and lunch -No peanut butter until we determine if there are allergies in your child's class.
- Diapers and pull ups for 1's and 2's and a package of wipes each month.

## Separation Problems

It has been our experience that children who are having separation problems at drop off times should be immediately placed in the capable hands of your child's teacher. The parent should then quickly leave school. We have found that the longer the parent stays, the more emotional it becomes for the child. We encourage parents to call the school office to check on their child's status. In the event that your child continues to be unduly distressed, we will call you.

## Communication

Our main source of communication is through the Brightwheel app.

All information under your child's profile should be up to date, including approved pick-ups, allergies and all contact information.

Communication with your child's teachers or myself should be done through Brightwheel messaging. Often teachers are busy and unable to respond right away, but I will also see the message and can reply.

Teachers will also use Brightwheel to send pictures and updates throughout the day.

## Calendars

Each month you will receive a class calendar of events for the coming month. Please read it to find out what is going on in your child's classroom.

## Toys

Books are a welcome treat at school. Please remember to label them. Toys are not allowed to be brought to school, unless your child's teacher has a special show and tell.

## School Clothing

We play outside every day, weather permitting, so please dress your child in appropriate play clothes. Always send a jacket or sweater in the winter - please label these with your child's name. Please send a change of clothes in a zip lock on the first day of school. Be sure to include socks and underwear. For safety, tennis shoes or shoes with a back strap are appropriate.

## Potty Training

It is required that all three and four year olds must be potty trained. Our two year old teachers are happy to help with the potty training of your child. Please remember to send him/her in child friendly clothes (no snaps, buttons or overalls). Elastic waist pants, shorts, etc. are best. Children should be accident free for an entire week before coming to school in underwear.

## Fund Raising

In lieu of a fund raising event each year, we have adopted a fund raising fee. This fee will be payable in October. This fee pays for a variety of items for the children's benefit at the preschool.

## Class Visitation

Parents are always welcome to visit/volunteer in their child's classroom. It is requested that you contact your child's teacher 24 hours in advance to arrange an appropriate time.

## Birthdays

Birthdays will be recognized at school. If you wish to provide birthday snacks, please make arrangements with your child's teacher in advance. As a safety precaution for all children, balloons and candles are not allowed in the classroom.

## Field trips

The three and four year old classes will take field trips throughout the year to places the director and staff feel will benefit the children's learning experience. We ask that parents accompany the group in order to provide adequate supervision.

## Discipline

One of our goals at The Learning Tree is to provide children with a secure environment where they can work and play together in a friendly, cooperative way. Our teachers will establish a behavior management system that reinforces positive behaviors and provides the children with ongoing opportunities to develop solid self-discipline skills, while maintaining a safe classroom situation.

In most instances, we can effectively manage inappropriate behaviors through redirection and rewarding of "good" behaviors with praise and special recognition. We do have certain rules that children must follow for the health and safety of the entire group. We prefer a positive approach of managing children's behavior. We focus on desirable behavior and praise children for it. When undesirable behavior occurs, we use such methods as verbal reminders of acceptable behavior, removing the child from the situation, and notes to the parents for a coordinated effort to change problem behavior. The faculty does not administer corporal punishment. Parent-teacher conferences can be arranged during the school year.

## Illness

The following guidelines and policies have been developed in an effort to help keep the children and staff at The Learning Tree healthy. If your child shows any of the symptoms below, you will be called and asked to come and get your child. We expect parents to respond promptly in order to protect the other children.

- Fever of 100° or higher
- Severe coughing
- Recurring vomiting or diarrhea
- Pink eye (tears, redness of eyelid lining, followed by swelling and discharge of pus)
- Unusual spot or rashes
- Headache and stiff neck
- Sore throat
- Any parasitic infection (lice, scabies, etc.)

If a child has any of the above symptoms at home, we ask that you keep him/her out of preschool until the following conditions have been met:

## Illness (continued)

- Absence of fever for 24 hours with out medication
- Diarrhea and vomiting has subsided for 24 hours
- Antibiotics for 24 hours for bacterial infections
- Physician has approved readmission
- Lice are under treatment, and NO NITS are present on hair
- Pink eye had diminished and been treated to the point that the eyes are no longer discharging
- The child has completed the contagious stage

It is important that we all work together to keep all of the children and staff at The Learning Tree as healthy and safe as possible. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If parents cannot be reached and a child needs immediate medical attention, the paramedics will transport the child to Thomas Hospital. Every child must have a signed medical authorization form on file.

## Medication

The Learning Tree does not administer medication unless it is for a life threatening condition such as asthma or severe allergies. A signed and dated authorization form must be completed and medication must be in the original container.

## Safety

Fire Drills are conducted on a monthly basis during the school year. Staff will lead children through the appropriate steps in vacating the building in case of fire.

In case of an unexpected severe weather threat, the teachers will move the children to a designated safe area of the building. The children and staff will remain there until the warning is lifted. No children may leave the building during this time.

In the event that we have an unsafe visitor on the grounds, the school will go into a lock down. This means teachers will close all classroom blinds and lock all class room doors. All external building doors will be locked and the police will be called immediately.

## Child Abuse and Neglect

We understand the importance of family unity, however if a time arrives where upon any symptoms of suspected child abuse or neglect by a staff member or parent/guardian are brought to our attention, we are required by law to report it to the Baldwin County Department of Social Services

## Emergency Closures

The Learning Tree will close during times of threatening weather or pandemic. We will follow the lead of the Baldwin County school system. Please stay tuned for any information that they release.

## New procedures in response to COVID-19 (Updated May 27, 2020)

### Daily Screening/Drop off & Pick up

- Drop off and pickup times will be staggered. All families with siblings will do drop off at 8:45am and pick up at 12:45pm. Families without siblings will drop off at 9:00am and pick up at 1:00pm.
- We will use our car line for both drop off and pick up. If you drop off late or pick up early, please do not enter the preschool hall. If no one is in the office, ring the doorbell on the preschool hall doors and a staff member will escort your child to or from class.
- You should do a health check at home before bringing your child to the preschool. Check for symptoms such as shortness of breath, cough, fever, body aches, lethargy etc.
- Allow extra time for drop off as only one family can be screened at a time.
- A health check of your family will be taken upon arrival, including having temperatures taken before leaving your vehicle (temperature needs to be below 100 without medication).

### Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- \*1) Do you or anyone in the family have any symptoms of a respiratory infection (e.g., cough, sore throat, fever, or shortness of breath)?
- \*2) Have you or a close contact traveled to any area considered to be a Hot Spot for COVID-19?
- \*3) Have you had contact with any persons under investigation OR with a known case of COVID-19?
- \*\*Please note: TLT reserves the right to turn any child away at drop-off due to concern of illness.\*\*
- Hand sanitizer must be used upon entry for both students and staff, followed by immediate handwashing after entering classrooms.

### Student Activity

- Masks are not required at this time by staff or children in our care, as they will be screened before entering the building.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned/sanitized properly will not be used.
- Sensory play will be limited to materials that are easily cleaned and not shared.
- There shall be no items from home being brought into the preschool; backpacks, toys, books, stuffed animals, etc.

-Please dress children in outdoor play clothes and apply sunscreen. We will spend as much time as possible outside in small groups. Fresh air improves everyone's health.

-Shoes will not be worn in any of the classrooms.

-Centers within classrooms will be clearly defined and will be limited to a small number of children at one time.

### Tuition/Billing

-All billing and payments will be moved to online payment only. Please take the time to set up Brightwheel online payment through your bank account. Direct payments are charged a \$.60 fee per transaction. If you choose to pay using a debit/credit card, you will be charged 3% of your total amount due.

-Monthly tuition payments will be due the beginning of every month, August- May, regardless of closure due to a pandemic or emergency weather closure.

-At this time, TLT will not accept cash or check.

### Personal Hygiene

-Children will be required to clean their hands between every transition and after coughing or sneezing. Babies will have their hands washed with a clean, warm soapy washcloth between transitions.

-Children will only be allowed in the restrooms one at a time. Restrooms will be cleaned frequently.

### Updated Safety policies

-All toys and surfaces in shared areas will be cleaned every hour.

-At the end of each day the entire preschool will be cleaned and disinfected.

-Students will be kept in the same classroom together as much as possible.

-Any and all adults besides teachers are NOT allowed on preschool hall.

### Specific policies in regards to COVID-19

-One parent/guardian must be designated as available via phone/Brightwheel messaging throughout 100% of their child's stay at TLT. If a child shows signs of becoming sick/ill, they will be isolated and need to be picked up within 30 minutes.

-If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, they (as well as siblings) need to remain home until they are symptom free for 72 hours, fever free without medication, **AND** have at least two negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

-If a family travels to an area considered to be a "hot spot" or out of the country, the child(ren) will not be permitted in the building for 14 days.

-If there is a positive case of COVID-19 reported at the preschool (child or staff), all families will be notified via Brightwheel. The preschool will close for no less than 24 hours so that a thorough cleaning can take place. \* The Baldwin County Health Department will be asked to give guidance in the event of a COVID-19 case at TLT.

-If a child or staff member shows symptoms throughout the day, they will be sent home immediately.

-If a child or staff member has had immediate exposure to someone positively diagnosed with COVID-19, they will not be permitted in the building for 14 calendar days.

-Any child sent home for any illness will require a pediatrician's evaluation and release before returning to school.

\*\*Please note:

TLT will communicate any additional policies, as well as lifting of policies to families via Brightwheel.

Any questions or concerns, please call or email  
Laurie Jensen, Director  
@251.928.0496 or TLT@firstfairhope.org