



The Kipling School

Early Childhood
620 Shepherd Drive
Houston, TX 77007
713-861-6743 (office)
713-861-6749 (fax)

Pre-K – 5th Grade
600 Shepherd Drive
Houston, TX 77007
713-880-3318 (office)
713-880-3321 (fax)

Early Childhood & Pre-K Parent Handbook

Information, policies, and procedures contained in this handbook are subject to change at any time.

Philosophy

The Kipling School provides a loving environment in which each child can develop at his or her own pace. The staff considers what is developmentally appropriate at each age. We believe that children learn best by hands on activities. We provide carefully organized educational experiences with opportunities for creative expression, constructive play, social and emotional interaction, communication skills, physical development, practice in reasoning, logical thought, encouragement of decision making, risk taking and responsibility.

Curriculum Goals

The most important goal of our curriculum is that each child feels successful while participating in all activities at TKS. Self-esteem fosters success.

The major area of a child's development includes physical, social, emotional, language, cognitive and intellectual aspects. Developmental factors are interwoven through all of these areas. Our learning centers are designed to address these areas of development. Center time includes art, dramatic play, computers, language, writing, science, math, fine motor activities, outdoor activities, dress-up, and music. Children learn what their role is in these activities, as well as making choices for themselves during center time.

Part of our program is to conduct assessments to support children's learning, using a variety of methods, such as observations, checklists, rating scales, and individually administered evaluations. Assessments are a vital part of education. They are used to drive instruction in the classroom, improve teaching practices, and help us meet the needs and interests of children. All assessments are conducted by the teachers in the classroom to create a safe testing environment. Parents will be provided a copy of the biannual assessments completed in April and October, and conferences with the teacher will be offered to allow you time to discuss the assessment and answer all your questions about your child's development and future expectations.

All student assessments are considered confidential documents and the information is only shared with the teaching team to make academic decisions, parents, and directors. Assessments will be stored in the student files.

When a child leaves The Kipling School, we want them to leave with a love of learning and to be excited about entering their middle school years.

Enrollment

The Kipling School is open year round, Monday through Friday. Hours for infants through 3 years are 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Pre-Kindergarten hours in the Elementary building are 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM.

EVERYTHING YOUR CHILD BRINGS TO SCHOOL SHOULD BE CLEARLY LABELED WITH HIS OR HER FIRST NAME AND LAST INITIAL.

Children 2 months to 5 years of age are eligible for enrollment. Enrollment is not restricted based on race, national origin, or culture. Admission is based on available space.

Enrollment Procedures

Parents are encouraged to tour the school and meet with the Director to discuss space availability, student need, policies, and questions.

Parents must submit all necessary enrollment forms completed in full before the child's first day in attendance. The following forms are **required by state law**:

- Admission Information Sheet
- Copy of Health Statement AND Immunization Records, signed & dated by doctor
- Hearing & Vision Screening results, signed & dated by screener (children aged 4+ only)
- Copy of Birth Certificate

These forms, along with the student's permanent records, will remain confidential. Only program administrators, the child's classroom teacher, parents or legal guardians, and regulatory authorities will have access.

Parents will be notified in writing of all policy changes within 24 hours. Notifications will be sent via E-mail.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$150.00 must be paid at the time of registration. If space is not available, your child's name will be placed on the waiting list.

A biannual \$75 supply fee is required for all enrollees except those in the infant class. When a student graduates out of the infant class and into the toddler class, or on his first day or month in the older classes, the first supply fee is due.

If a spot becomes available for your child and he or she is on the waitlist, you will be required to pay the first month's tuition within five days of confirming the position in order to hold the spot, and no later than 30 days prior to your child's start date. First month of attendance will be prorated on a daily basis. If you fail to pay your first month's tuition within 5 days of acceptance of an opening, your child's position will be released to the next person on our waitlist.

Student Transitions

Every attempt is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children. Parents will be notified of any upcoming changes to help facilitate the transition of their child from one classroom to another or from one teacher to another.

In addition, we strive to make these transitions as easy as possible. We always try to keep each child in the same class for at least nine months, to ensure positive relationships and learning experiences related to their specific age group. We allow ample time to let them slowly transition to the new class when ready.

Student Withdrawal

A written notice is **required** thirty days in advance if a child must be withdrawn from the program. Parents are financially responsible for all tuition and fees for the thirty days following the date of notice of withdrawal. Parents that have provided appropriate notice will be refunded on a prorated basis any prepaid tuition and supply fee. Tuition and fees will be prorated according to the number of days The Kipling School is open during the given month. No refunds or credits will be made in the event that the thirty-day

notice of **intent to withdraw** has not been provided. The final payment must meet all financial obligations to date.

Children may be administratively withdrawn due to the failure of parents to meet financial arrangements including late charges, late pick up fees, or failure to follow policies and procedures as stipulated in the parent handbook. Readmission after withdrawal will require the full payment of any outstanding account balances as well as the payment of all enrollment fees including registration and supply fees.

Financial Arrangements

Tuition payments are to be made by personal or cashier's check, due in full, *on or before* the 1st of each month. A \$25 late charge will be applied to all payments received after the 1st. *Cash will not be accepted for payment of tuition and fees.*

Final month of attendance will be prorated based on the number of days that The Kipling School is open given that advance written notice of at least 30 days is provided for withdrawal. Receipts will not be issued; instead your cancelled check or bank statement will serve as your receipt.

Arrival, Departure, & Transportation

Parents may drop off and pick up children anytime between the hours of 7:00am and 6:00pm. All parents must drop off all children in the classroom or to the teacher to be signed in. Only authorized individuals will be allowed to pick up a child. Directors must be notified in writing of any individuals authorized to pick up. Authorized individuals must be able to provide a valid photo ID upon arrival.

There will be no transportation or field trips, except in the case of an emergency.

Late Pick-Up Charges

There will be a late charge if your child has not been picked up within 5 minutes after closing. For the first 3 times, the charge is **\$1.00 for every minute** after 6:00 P.M. Following the third time, the charge is **\$3.00/min** after 6:00 P.M. You will need to sign a Late Pick-Up form at the time you pick up your child. Please call the office if you are going to be late, so we may reassure your child that you are coming. Please leave a message if there is no answer.

Credit for Absences

The Kipling School will not give tuition credits for absences due to illness or any other reason.

2016-2017 School Closings

August 22, 2016	First Day of Elementary School
September 5, 2016	Labor Day
November 23-25, 2016	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 19, 2016-January 1, 2017	Winter Break
January 16, 2017	MLK Day
March 13-17, 2017	Spring Break
April 14, 2017	Good Friday
May 26, 2017	Last Day of Elementary School
May 29, 2017	Memorial Day
July 3-4, 2017	Independence Day

Food

The Kipling School will provide 2 healthy snacks per day, one at 9:00 AM and the other at 3:00 PM. Fresh, healthy, hot lunches are also provided by our chef daily. Each snack and meal will be served with whole milk. A copy of the menu will be emailed to parents every Monday morning with lesson plans. Food will not be provided by TKS to those students enrolled in infant classes.

TKS will not provide the following foods due to choking hazard and/or allergies: hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds); whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas; hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. If brought from home, the preceding items may only be served to children 4 years and older. Parents are allowed to bring a treat on their child's birthday. If you have a concern regarding this matter, we encourage you to contact an administrator.

Toys/Security Objects

If your child has a security blanket type object, which he/she needs to help ease the transition from home to school, please allow them to bring it in the beginning. We will help with the transition by suggesting that he/she leave it in a cubby, thereby gradually weaning them from it.

Please do not allow your child to bring toy weapons, jewelry, electronic devices, or money to school. All toys should be left at home. We cannot be responsible for items brought to school, but we will try to help your child get home with it. Labeling everything will help us return your child's belongings.

Show and Tell

Each class has a "Show and Tell" day. All items must be labeled with your child's name and placed in the appropriate basket in your child's classroom. Please call the Director to let us know in advance if you plan to bring a live pet. It must be properly vaccinated and leashed or in a container. Some animals are prohibited, including all reptiles.

Clothing

Our activities include such things as sand and water play, painting, clay modeling and playing outdoors. All activities require comfortable, washable, "play" clothes. **Shoes should have non-slip soles.** This is very important for your child's safety. Since we go outside each day, please send a sweater or jacket in the winter, and sunhats and sun block in the summer. **These items need to be labeled with your child's name.** Quite often your child will have a jacket just like another child's.

Change of Clothes

Little accidents happen. Children should be sent with a set of clothes on their first day to leave at the school in case they need to change clothes. Please label the clothes and put them in a zip lock bag labeled with your child's name.

Discipline

Our purpose for all discipline with your children is to help them learn self-control and be socially responsible. "Be Kind", "Be Neat" and "Be Safe" are the rules we use to set appropriate limits of behavior. We will try to redirect their actions to more appropriate behavior. Choices will be given. If all efforts fail, we will use a time-out from activities until the child feels able to control himself and rejoin the group. At no time will a child be physically punished, threatened or intimidated. We rely on techniques of redirecting attention to constructive behaviors, compromising differences, and encouraging children to

seek alternatives within the boundaries of their abilities.

Our discipline and guidance policy is as follows: discipline will be individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Caregivers will only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following: 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 using brief supervised separation time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited: corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment; punishment associated with food, naps or toilet learning; pinching, shaking, or biting a child; hitting a child with a hand or instrument; putting anything in or on a child's mouth; humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child; subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language; placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

For children with persistent or challenging behavior teachers, families, and professionals will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Dismissal/Expulsion Policy

Unfortunately we must include a dismissal/expulsion policy. This will be referred to primarily in the event of dangerous or other behavior issues that cause harm to other students or teachers.

The most common issue is biting. We will work with children who develop a biting problem; however, if it persists uncontrollably for long, we will have to ask that the student take a break from school until the biting stops. Please do not take this personally if your child is the biter. If your child is bitten, please know that biting is unfortunately something that some children do and is quite normal. We understand how upsetting it is to arrive at the end of the day to pick up your child and see bite marks on them. We ask for your patience while we try and work with these children to stop the biting, as your next child may end up being a biter, and you will want the same courtesy extended to you.

Hitting teachers or students, spitting on teachers or students, screaming, cursing, etc. will not be tolerated. Unacceptable behavior from parents will also not be tolerated. We have truly wonderful families and employees at this school, and we will not tolerate rude or inappropriate behavior toward any of them. This includes other children, parents, teachers, and staff. Please know that every effort will be made on our part to correct the issue before it gets to this. The safety and wellbeing of each child is of the utmost importance to us.

Parent Involvement

Parents are welcome at any time. We believe that parents are a child's most important teacher. We would like to work with you in making your child's pre-school experience the best it can be!

Parents will be kept informed through notes, emails, or calls from the administrators, teachers, newsletters, and bulletin board postings. Parent conferences are held twice a year, and upon request, in order to discuss your child's growth and development. Parenting is not an easy job; therefore we will offer parenting support through parent training sessions, referrals, and even a listening ear. Let us know how we can help. Remember your input is always appreciated.

Policies and Procedures for Parents

1. Parents are welcome to make an appointment to review and discuss with the Director any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the child care center, in person, or by phone at 713-861-6743.
2. Parents are also welcome at any time during the center's hours to observe their child, the childcare center operations, and program activities without having to secure prior approval. However, please be aware that your presence in the classroom may interrupt instruction. Mothers of infants are welcome to breast feed their children in the infant classrooms during the center's hours.
3. Parents are encouraged to participate in the center's operation and activities by contacting the Director in person, by phone, or e-mail.
4. Parents may review a copy of the minimum standards and TKS's most recent Licensing inspection report in the lobby.
5. Parents may contact the local Licensing office at 713-960-1471, or report child abuse at the PRS website at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_Us/report_abuse.asp. The hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.

Webcam Viewing

The Kipling School is equipped with cameras in each classroom and on the playground so that you can log on and view your child's activities throughout the day. By logging onto WatchMeGrow.com you can register and will be allowed access to view your child's classroom starting on his or her first day of school.

Safety

Keeping children safe is a top priority for The Kipling School, so there are a few rules we ask parents to follow to ensure this priority is met.

On stairs, parents must always hold their child's hand, and make sure that their other hand is holding the rail. Children are never to be allowed on the stairs without an adult. Children may not be anywhere in the school without adult supervision. This includes older siblings.

In the parking lot, it is important to be highly alert at all times. Always drive slowly (*no more than 5 MPH*) when entering and exiting the parking lot, and *never* use cell phones. Parents must also be sure to have a firm hold on each child before exiting the building. ***Again, cell phone use is prohibited at all times, whether driving or parked on school property.***

Medication

If at all possible, parents should schedule times for administering medication to their child while the child is at home. If this is not possible, a Medication Authorization form must be filled out and signed before any medication will be administered at school. All medications must be clearly marked with your child's full name and must be in the original container with the original label. Medication of any kind is not to be left in the child's cubby, backpack or lunch box. Medicine cannot be left at the center longer than the date indicated on the Medication Authorization form and will not be stored overnight. Medicine left with no authorization will be returned to you.

- **Medication must be in original package and labeled for the child. Label directions will be followed (not parent directions), documented and witnessed.**
- **If label directions recommend to ask a doctor, TKS must have a doctor's note on file to administer the medication. It must include specific dosage information and instructions to give the medication to the child.**
- **Even something as simple as a homeopathic medicine or a throat lozenge will be treated in this manner and must be kept in the office.**
- **Classroom teachers must be made aware of any medications to be administered at school and times to be given.**

Emergency/Accident

In the case of a small accident (scraped knees, etc.) the staff will clean the injured area and apply a Band-Aid. If the injury is a bump, an ice pack will be applied. In the case of accidental injury we make an immediate attempt to contact either parent. If the parent cannot be reached, we will call the child's physician and other emergency contact numbers. If the injury is serious we will call for a paramedic immediately. The child's physician and/or ambulance paramedic will make the decision for treatment. Since emergency situations cannot be foreseen, it is imperative that the office be informed of any telephone number changes or a change in your emergency contacts.

Emergency Closings

In the event of inclement weather or in other emergencies in which H.I.S.D. is closed, The Kipling School will also close. In the event that an evacuation becomes necessary, a notice of our whereabouts will be posted on the entrance doors and/or there will be a message on our answering machine. An e-mail and Celly message will also be sent out. Fire drills are practiced monthly, and severe weather drills are practiced quarterly during the school year. H.I.S.D. reports on school closings etc. may be obtained by listening to the radio or local television stations.

Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

The Kipling School employees have a responsibility to report any suspicion they may have regarding the abuse or neglect of a child. Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities is a misdemeanor; staff can be subject to criminal penalties or civil litigation for not reporting. Therefore, staff will report instances of suspected abuse or neglect to the childcare center director, the owner, and the Texas DFPS Child Protective Services Division. We are legally obligated to comply with these guidelines. Child Abuse can be reported to the Texas Child Abuse Hotline number (800-252-5400).

Gang Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty. The Kipling School is a GANG FREE ZONE.

Health of Children

Your child's health is very important to all of us. Upon enrollment you must file with us a health form **signed by a physician**, which states that your child is free from infectious disease and physically able to participate in a preschool program. This form must be signed and updated yearly. We also require that all children enrolled have certain standard immunizations and that these records **be kept current after each new immunization**. Children will not be allowed in school if any symptoms of illness are apparent. In such cases, your child will be immediately isolated from other children and you will be contacted. It is very important that you pick up your child as soon as possible or make arrangements for your child to be picked up. **Children must be symptom and/or fever free for 24 hours without medication to return to school.**

Your child will be excluded from attendance for any of the following:

1. Temperature: No child will be allowed in attendance whose fever exceeds 100 degrees taken under the armpit as specified by the Texas Department of Health. We will not administer medication to lower a child's temperature (ex. Tylenol or aspirin) in order to allow a child to remain in attendance. If your child has a history of possible convulsions caused by a high temperature or sudden temperature change, you may leave medication with the appropriate instructions from your child's physician on an as-needed basis. This medication will be administered to lower the temperature immediately while you are in route to pick up your child.

2. Colds and Runny Noses: Runny noses and colds spread easily and quickly in schools. If the nasal discharge is clear it may be allergy based and non-infectious. If the discharge is yellowish green, then your child should be seen by his physician. Before your child returns to school we must be assured that your child's condition is being treated with medication or that the condition is not contagious.

3. Diarrhea: Children will be excluded from attendance if this appears to be caused by a viral infection. This infection will show up as loose, watery stools (4-6 per day) combined with mucus or blood flecks. As long as the diarrhea does not appear to be viral the child will not be excluded.

4. Vomiting: All children will be excluded from attendance for at least 24 hours after vomiting ceases and no fever exists. Temperature does not need to be present for a child to be excluded.

5. Ear infections: If there is no fever present and the child is currently being treated the child will not be excluded from attendance.

6. Chicken Pox: The child will be excluded from attendance until all blisters have crusted over and no fever exists. The sores don't have to be gone, but all blisters have to be crusted over. TKS suggests a one-week minimum absence from classes to insure your child is no longer contagious.

7. Impetigo: This is highly contagious and spreads rapidly. It appears as blisters on the skin that open and become covered with a yellowish crust. Even if no fever exists, the child must be excluded from attendance until treatment is begun. All sores must be covered.

8. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Symptoms include red eyes, usually with some discharge or crust on the eyelids. The child must be excluded from attendance and can only return when the child's physician has

said the child is no longer contagious. The condition is highly contagious and will spread rapidly among children as well as adults.

9. Strep Throat: The child must be excluded from attendance until 24 hours after antibiotic is begun and no fever is present.

10. Head Lice: The child will be excluded from attendance and may only return after a minimum of 24 hours, with a note from a lice treatment professional or physician stating the child has been seen and all nits have been removed. All clothing and belongings must be washed in hot water prior to return.

11. Other Communicable Diseases (Mumps, Measles, Etc.): The child will be excluded from attendance and may only return with a doctor's authorization. Any child lacking a regularly scheduled vaccine for a communicable disease will be excluded from the school at this time also.

Please do not bring sick children in with you when picking up your TKS student. If you need assistance, please call the office.

Screening

Hearing and vision screening is **REQUIRED BY STATE LAW** for all first time entrants, (age four and older) and all four year old children as of September 1st of the school year. If you do not have your 4-year-old screened, you must supply the office with documentation that the screening will be done within 120 days of enrollment.

Health of Staff

Staff members are not required by our center to receive the same standard immunizations as children; however, staff are required to follow same sick policies listed above to help ensure that children are not exposed to communicable diseases.

Accreditation

What is a high quality early childhood program?

A high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children. In our program you will see:

- frequent, positive, warm interactions among adults and children
- planned learning activities appropriate to children's age and development
- specially trained teachers
- enough adults to respond to individual children
- many varied age appropriate materials
- nutritious snacks
- a healthy and safe environment for children
- regular communication with parents who are welcome as visitors at all times
- ongoing systematic evaluation

Quality Survey

We are committed to providing you a **quality** childcare facility in which your child can learn and develop. We care about how well we are doing and welcome your input as a team member. We conduct a parent survey each year to solicit your input and provide an opportunity for you to rate the success of our efforts.

However, please feel free to come and discuss your concerns and provide suggestions at any time throughout the year. We will send out a formal survey in March of every year.

You will be asked to rate The Kipling School in the following categories:

- Facility
- Curriculum
- Staff
- Community Involvement
- Communication
- Business Practices
- Child Safety
- Parent Events/Involvement