

Thank you for your interest in our school. The Parent Handbook that you have received was designed to answer your questions concerning your child's experience and The Country Kingdom policies. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to call.

The Country Kingdom

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS SHEET

I have read and understand the information contained in the Parent Handbook. I have received my child's confidential code. I am also aware that this handbook may be revised at any time to ensure the health and safety of the children in the facility.

Signature _____ Date _____

Welcome to The Country Kingdom

We offer Montessori education with trained teachers in fully equipped classrooms. The fundamental aim of the Montessori Method is self-education of the children through special emphasis on the training of the senses.

The Country Kingdom offers an environment designed to allow the total child to develop. Every child experiences success as they are skillfully directed toward a mastery of the world around them. They will be constantly challenged as they move from the physical world--where they can develop their motor skills and all their senses with self-teaching/self-correcting, materials--into the abstract world of ideas and concepts, all of their own pace.

All this takes place in a learning environment that integrates the outdoor atmosphere with the classroom. Your child will develop the skills and acquire the knowledge to be successful through out life.

This handbook contains important information concerning your child and our procedures, so please read the entire handbook and notify us if there are any questions.

I. ARRIVAL: Please Park in the Parking Lot

1. Students arrive for Montessori Classes between 8:20 and 8:40. Parents must see that their child has entered the building and has been seen by their teacher.
2. No child will be allowed to cross the driveway unattended.
3. Cars may be parked in designated parking areas only. There will be **NO PARKING IN THE DRIVE THROUGH. Please park only in the parking lot.**
4. It is much easier on your child to have a short good-bye, then leave promptly.
5. Parents should be aware of announcements located on the board in the foyer.
6. Medication, medication forms and permission forms should be left with the office staff.
7. **Children not registered for child care should not be brought more than 10 minutes before their scheduled class time of 8:30.** Please try not to bring them into the classroom late because the child may feel uncomfortable about arriving after everyone else has become involved in activities.
8. Children need to arrive ready to begin their morning. Should you have a very young child who needs to be changed and/or cleaned upon arriving, please make use of the changing table that is in their classroom. Older children like to look their best as well. Clean face and hands and brushed hair give them a ready start.
9. It is important that students arrive on time for class so that they do not miss the first circle. In an effort to keep the children and their classes routine, we must minimize the amount of disruptions. We urge parents to have their children at school no later than 9:00a.m. Children will not be allowed to come to school after 9:00 a.m. unless they have had a doctor's appointment or there has been a family emergency. We are required to do a classroom count at this time. Children arriving later due to an appointment will need to bring a return to school note from their physician.

II. DEPARTURE: Please Park in the Parking Lot

1. Children enrolled in the morning Montessori class or the 8:30-2:30 extended program, must be picked up promptly at the close of class. If you know you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so we can reassure your child. If a student is not picked up within 5 minutes of class dismissal, he will be placed in child care. The late pick up fee is \$1.00 per the first 5 minutes and \$5.00 for each minute thereafter.
2. Child care students must be picked up from their classrooms or playground. Please make sure the teacher is aware of the student's departure. Please enter through the front door at all times. Please sign your child in/out via the computer located in the "Big Room". Our licensed closing time is 6:30 p.m. Any student remaining after this time will be charged \$1.00 per minute from 6:30-6:35, then \$5.00 per minute for every minute after 6:35.
3. Identification will be required in the following circumstances:
 - A regularly authorized person is picking up a child for the first time.
 - Special arrangements have been made for a different person to pick the child up.
 - A staff member or substitute in charge who does not know the parent.
4. No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. We must have a **written** authorization for changes. You are assigned a confidential code to use when telling us by telephone about a change in your plans. We will need a faxed authorization if you call in a change. Please ask in the office if you are not aware of your code. For your protection, we ask that you not discuss this code with other people.

YOUR CHILD'S CODES ARE: Personal-_____

Computer Entry-_____
Front Door-_____

5. Be sure that any child you have taken from the class is properly supervised all the way to his car seat belt. Accidents could occur from running from the building or leaving the building unescorted.
6. Allow a few minutes of quality time to catch up on your child's day. Be aware of the "theme" for the week and let your child share his knowledge and skill.

III. FORMS:

We are REQUIRED by the laws of the STATE OF TEXAS to have certain completed forms on file for every student enrolled. These forms are for the health and safety of all students. Please take note that if we DO NOT have these forms on file your child CANNOT attend this facility.

The forms that the state require are:

ENROLLMENT CONTRACT - Registration in programs and contract for the method of fee payment. Registration will be on a first come basis without regard to race, color or creed.

MEDICAL - MUST be signed by your child's physician within 5 days of admittance..

PUBLIC SCHOOL - Statement that health and immunization records are on file at his school.

EMERGENCY CARD - Emergency telephone numbers which MUST BE KEPT UPDATED!

HOSPITAL FORM - This gives The Country Kingdom authorization for treatment should your child require medical aid.

PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT - This cover sheet is state required and is required by TCK to be on file.

FAMILY-SOCIAL HISTORY FORM - This form is not state required, but allows the teacher to know your child and give him the best education and care possible.

FOOD PROGRAM ENROLLMENT – This center participates in the Child and Adult Food Program.

IV. THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD:

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, the state health laws require that you file with us a statement from your physician indicating that your child is physically able to participate in our program AND is current with the following required immunizations:

This is the immunization plan we received by the state as of August, 2005. Please be aware that we are also governed by the county. Their plan may be different than the state and it is the county that we acknowledge. Your physician may also have a different plan. Once again, it is Galveston County that we must follow.

By 2 months: 1st dose DTaP, HibCV, IPV, HBV, Prevnar (Pneumococcal conjugate)

By 4 months: 2nd dose DTaP, HibCV, IPV, HBV, Prevnar

By 6 months: 3rd dose DTaP, HibCV, Prevnar

At 12 months: Varivax (Chickenpox)

By 16 months: 1st dose MMR, 3rd dose HBV, 4th dose Prevnar

By 18 months: 3rd dose IPV, 4th dose DTaP

Beginning at age 2 years: 1st dose of Hepatitis A

At age 2yrs 6 mths: 2nd dose of Hepatitis A

At the age of 4 years: 2nd dose Measles Vaccine and Varivax

4th dose IPV, 5th dose DTaP

This form MUST be returned within ONE WEEK of enrollment. If this information is not received and KEPT UPDATED, your child will be subject to dismissal. Should there be a reason why your child is not to receive a certain or any, immunization, we must have a notarized affidavit that must be obtained from Austin, TX.

Parents of public school students are required to provide a signed and dated statement that their child's immunization record is current and is on file at the school the child attends. The parent must include the name and phone number of the school in the statement. We also need on file the date your child had the Varivax/Varicella vaccine or date of chickenpox onset.

Vision and audio screenings are REQUIRED by the state for all children age 4 years and older who are not attending a public school. New enrollees must have had the screenings within the past 12 months or will have them within 120 days after enrollment.

We will administer the vision and audio screening by an outside professional. The screening is performed in the fall at a nominal cost.

Test that are administered are primarily for screening purposes. You will be referred to persons who provide special services if we feel that your child needs further evaluation.

ILLNESS:

Your child will be sent home if he appears to have symptoms of an illness. In such cases, he is immediately isolated from the others and a parent contacted.

YOU MAY NOT BRING YOUR CHILD:

If your child has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hours.

If your child has a heavy nasal discharge.

If your child has a constant cough.

If your child has had vomiting or diarrhea during the previous 24 hours.

If your child has symptoms of a possible communicable disease, (these are usually sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, rash, headache, abdominal pain, or a fever).

Please notify the school at once if the child does have a communicable disease.

YOUR CHILD MAY COME:

If his cold is over but he is left with a minor nasal drip (clear discharge).

If he has been exposed to a communicable disease, but the school has been notified so that the incubation period can be discussed and it can be determined on what dates he should stay home.

V. MEDICATIONS:

No medication will be given to any student without a signed medication form provided by the school with complete written instructions signed by the parent. MEDICATIONS WILL BE GIVEN AT NOON AND AT 4:00 p.m. ONLY! If medication must be refrigerated there is a special shelf in the kitchen refrigerator door. Other medication must be placed in the office closet. **Please do not put any medications in lunch boxes or book bags.**

PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES

Medications will be given to a child when the medication is provided in the original pharmacy container with the following information: child's name, physician's name, medication name, and the instructions for administering. Please ask for and fill out a medication form.

NONPRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Must be labeled with the child's name and the date the medication was brought to the center. Nonprescription medication must be in the original container. If it is in a very small container, the container may be put in a sealed plastic bag with the information on the bag. **Medication must be age appropriate and NOT out of date.**

EMERGENCIES

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we can't reach you, we will call the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance. Until the arrival of a parent, the physician, or an ambulance, the Director or an assistant will be in charge and make decisions about the care of the child. It is to your child's benefiting that you keep the school up to date on phone numbers, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information.

VI. COMMUNICATING CHANGES:

In the event that a significant change occurs in the home, the facility needs to be notified immediately. All information given will be treated with strict confidentiality. Children often respond to marital upsets, death, sickness of a family member, etc. in different ways. In order for us to handle the situation in the best possible way, we need to be aware of any changes.

VII. VOLUNTEERS:

We need and urge your voluntary assistance in organizing classroom parties, chaperone on field trips, plan program, recruitment of students and other activities. When volunteering, it is recommended that other arrangements be made for younger siblings.

We also have an occasional need for part-time workers and substitute teachers. If you are interested or if you know someone who is, please let us know.

VIII. CONFERENCES:

1. Conferences in relation to your child's progress can be scheduled throughout the year. Those conferences will be arranged upon request. Please do not try to confer with a staff member upon arrival or departure.
2. Your own child will be given maximum consideration as an individual. We will look after his health and safety while he is at school and present a planned program geared to what we believe to be developmentally sound and educationally beneficial.

IX. CLOTHING:

Your child should wear clothing, which is:

- >Free of complicated fastenings
- >Washable and sturdy
- >Appropriate for the weather
- >Appropriate shoes for running and climbing No "OPEN TOE" Shoes
- >LABELED with the students name (including ALL WINTER COVERINGS!!)

If your child is prone to having toilet accidents it is recommended that a complete extra set of clothing be sent to school with him.

When your child has an accident at school and it is necessary to send him home in borrowed clothing from The Country Kingdom, please launder them and return them as soon as possible.

Donations of outgrown clothing (including underwear in good condition) are always welcomed for our extra clothes closet.

X. NUTRITION:

A nutritious breakfast is a very important part of your child's day. High sugar food, (donuts, sweet rolls, etc.) give an instant energy boost and may cause a child to be very active for a short period. This also burns out quickly and leaves a child tired and listless. Both conditions are detrimental to a child's behavior and concentration.

An adequate diet is very important to the growth of young children. Their bodies and brains require certain nutrients to develop to their potential. The children will be expected to bring a nutritious lunch. Since law requires this, the teachers will be responsible for determining that lunches meet the requirements. If significant deficiencies exist, we will provide the necessary foods. You will be billed accordingly.

XI. LUNCH:

Our lunchtime is 11:30-12:00. You may sign up for our "Hot Meal" program or bring a lunch and a drink. We highly discourage foods of non-nutritional value such as candy and soft drinks. Your child may bring a cold lunch or a "warm up" lunch. Please label all containers that are in your child's lunch box with your family name.

We maintain some emergency supplies to provide lunch for children who forget their lunch. There will be a charge for each meal.

XII. BIRTHDAYS:

On your child's birthday (or the day closest) your child is invited to bring snack for his class. We discourage iced cakes, and very sweet snacks. Nutritious snacks such as nut breads, fruits, sandwiches, crackers and cheeses, puddings, vegetable sticks and dip, etc. are always enjoyed by the students.

Birthday party invitations cannot be handed out in class unless every child gets one. You may ask for a list of names and addresses of those children your child would like to selectively invite and mail an invitation. Note: Some of our families have requested that their information not be given out.

XIII. TOYS FROM HOME:

We ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in your car. If an item is brought we cannot be responsible for it. It must be shared and it must have the child's name on it. We welcome books, tapes, or VCR tapes to share with the class. Items which are of the same subject as the current "theme" are of particular interest to all the children. Some classes will have assigned show and tell days set up for the students to bring educational items from home to share with their class.

XIV. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS, REGISTRATION FEES:

A registration fee of \$50.00 per child or family is payable when you enroll your child. \$50.00 is due for each succeeding year your child is enrolled. The Registration fee is non refundable.

TUITION (Montessori Classes)

All fees for students enrolled only in a Montessori class are due on the first day of each month. The Country Kingdom follows the Clear Creek School District calendar during the months of August thru May. We also have classes during June and July with a week long break between the two. The monthly fee remains the same for the months from September thru July. Only August is prorated for families who have their child enrolled for Montessori class only. Should your child be enrolled during the school year but not at the beginning of a month, the fee for that month will be prorated.

TUITION AND CHILD CARE FEES

All accounts receive a statement monthly. Parents may pay their accounts in one of the following manners:

>>1): Monthly: Accounts paid monthly are due on the 1st of each month

Monthly accounts that are late, after 3 times, will be transferred over as a Weekly account.

Students enrolled in Montessori class only are always Monthly Accounts.

>>2): Bi-Weekly: Accounts paid bi-weekly are due on the 1st and 15th of each month.

>>3): Weekly: Accounts paid weekly are due on each Monday.

Please note: Bi-weekly and weekly accounts are billed for the 5th week on months that include 5 weeks.

MONTHLY BENEFIT

If all fees are always paid by the 5th of each month, the charge is based on a four-week month. Since your fee is based on a 4 week fee, should your child be out one full week (Monday thru Friday) during a 5 week month, no credit will be given.

FAMILY DISCOUNTS

Family discounts will be given when two or more children of the same family are enrolled in the full time, 5 day program. The oldest child will receive a 10% credit. Should there be 3 or more children enrolled, in the full time, 5 day program, there will be a 10% discount on all the children.

WEATHER RELATED ABSENCE

Please be aware that tuition and child care fees are still due even though TCK may be closed due to mandatory evacuations.

CREDIT FOR ABSENCE

Child Care Accounts, based on students enrolled on a 5 day schedule, that are paid Monthly, Bi-Weekly and Weekly, should your child be out for a full week (Monday thru Friday), you will receive a quarter of a week credit towards the Child Care fee (not the Montessori fee).

PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

Past Due Accounts: A 10% penalty is added to the total balance on all past due accounts as follows:

At 8 a.m. on the morning of the 6th day on Monthly Accounts.

At 8 a.m. on the morning of the 2nd and on the 16th on Bi-Weekly Accounts.

At 8 a.m. on Wednesdays on Weekly Accounts.

Any returned check will be assessed a \$30 penalty fee. Original amount of payment plus late fees will be added to your account.

Any account more than two months delinquent may be asked to make other arrangements for their

care.

Any account more than 60 days late is subject to being taken to court. You will be responsible for all owed fees, late fees and court fees.

VACATION CREDIT

Students enrolled in full time Child Care (5 day basis), on a continual yearly basis, will receive a 1-week vacation credit after attending TCK for 1 year. There will be only one week of vacation time per fiscal year.

MAKE-UP DAYS FOR ABSENCES

We are licensed to handle a certain number of children per day, distributed between the various classrooms in specific numbers. Therefore, we cannot grant opportunities to make up days lost as a result of absences in the Montessori classrooms whether due from an illness or a holiday..

Childcare rooms also have a limited capacity. Your child's enrollment in childcare assures you of this place. Therefore, you are responsible for these even during an absence. If your child is absent 2 weeks or more, without notice or payment other than scheduled vacation time, he will be considered withdrawn. To reenter your child, it will be necessary to repeat the registration process, including the \$50.00 registration fee on a space availability basis. Please see section Enrollment - *Withdrawal*.

REQUEST OF PARENTS

Should your child be absent, for any reason, please call TCK and let us know what is happening. Our staff, as well as our students, are concerned when another student is out. In the event that we have not heard from you, you will be contacted just to make sure all is well. This is very important if your child is one of our "Big Kids". Please call their public school also so that the teacher on "bus duty" will know of their absence.

EARLY DROP-OFF/ LATE PICK UP FEE

There will be an early drop-off fee for those students who are not enrolled in childcare and arrive before 8:15 a.m. There will be a late pick up fee charge for children not picked up at their regular dismissal time. Our morning classes are over at 11:30 a.m., our extended program is over at 2:30 and our Kindergarten Class is over at 3:00 p.m. Accounts for students dropped off early and/or picked up after normal dismissal time will be billed a fee for being here at non registered hours.

The Country Kingdom is licensed to operate 12 hours a day, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Families who have not picked up their child/children by 6:30 will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child during the time frame of 6:30-6:35 p.m. A charge of \$5.00 per minute per child will be charged for the time frame of 6:36 p.m. and later. Should your child still be here at 6:41p.m., and TCK has not been called to be told you are running late, Child Protective Services will be called. We ask parents to plan this in their schedule. Parents who repeatedly arrive late will be asked to locate a facility with a night care that can better meet their needs.

ENROLLMENT - WITHDRAWAL

The Registration Form is a contract between the family and the school to provide age appropriate education and/or childcare for each child. There are specific child/staff ratios that must be maintained. The Country Kingdom meets these standards at all times. Therefore, to keep tuition as low as possible, we maintain full enrollment. To withdraw a child we require two weeks written notice in the child care environment and a month in the Montessori class. You will be billed for the month or the two weeks for early withdrawal.

XV. PARKING/ PARKING LOT

Please note that the two drive thru areas outside of the front door **are not parking areas**. Please, for the safety of our children and their families, **park in the parking lot** when dropping off your child (ren) and when picking up.

The only times this area is to be used by vehicles are:

>>TCK vans/bus use this area while preparing to go to and upon returning from a field trip. TCK vehicles will also use this area on a rainy day after “school bus” runs.

Should you prefer to come inside at 11:30, please park in the **parking lot**.

Parents please, vehicle engines MUST be turned off while you are picking up your children and gathering their belongings.

Updates for TCK Parent Handbook:

Please know that any time it is necessary to make a policy change, it is to ensure that each child continues to receive the highest quality learning and care available.

Hotline Phone Numbers and Web Sites Pertaining to Child Care:

Child Abuse Hotline: 800-252-5400
Protective Regulatory Service: web site: www.tdprs.state.tx.us
Childcare Information line: 1-800-862-5252
Childcare Licensing Office: 713-940-3009

Parent Notification:

Parents will be notified under the following circumstances:

1. If your child is ill and needs to be picked up.
2. If your child has had an accident.
3. If your child is in need of a parent for personal reasons.
4. If you need to be called due to your child’s behavior.
5. If we are under a weather alert and need to evacuate.
6. Notification of communicable diseases will posted on the foyer bulletin board.
7. Off campus activities will be posted on the foyer bulletin board.

Discipline and Guidance Practices:

1. Discipline and guidance shall be consistent, shall be based on an understanding of the individual needs and development, and shall promote self-discipline and acceptable behavior.
2. There shall be no cruel, harsh or unusual punishment.
3. No child of any age shall ever be shaken or hit and no child shall ever be spanked.
4. Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used if necessary (1 minute per age in years).
5. Children shall not be humiliated or subjected to abusive or profane language. Punishment shall not be associated with food or naps or toilet training. Children who wet themselves shall not be shamed or punished.

TB Requirement:

There are certain counties in the state that require TB testing. At the moment, Galveston County is not among those listed.

Procedures for Parents to Discuss or Review School Procedures and Policies:

If a parent wants to discuss policy and procedures they may either speak with the Assistant Director or call the Director and make an appointment. The school has an open door policy. Parents do not have to schedule an appointment to observe their child or the school's operations.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate in the school's operations and activities. This is as long as this does not cause a disruption to the learning environment.

The most recent license inspection report is available for viewing. It will be posted for 3 months after inspection. After this time it will be filed. The Minimum Standards is also available for viewing. You would need to ask the Director to view these items. The files are not to be removed from the school.

Arrival Update:

Effective August 1st, 2007, all children need to arrive by 9:00a.m. When your child is not here for the beginning of the 8:30 classes, he/she is missing out on the early circle time that covers a wide range of learning issues. Also, we need a final classroom count of all children in the building at 9:00a.m. This is to ensure the correct count for snack time, lunch time and staff for children in attendance.

Should your child be arriving late due to a doctor's appointment, please bring a return slip from the physician. Please call TCK before 9:00 a.m. should your child have an appointment or that you know that your child will be arriving late.

To our After School Parents:

We realize that you have very busy schedules and we want to do our best to continue to provide exceptional service. We need your help. **Please call TCK before 1 PM** when your child will not be attending. This is very important because the schedule that we try to maintain to provide care is compromised when we get to a school and wait for a student that has already been picked up. Effective November 14, 2005, if this situation persists then there will be a fee added to your account.

Transportation Information:

TCK transports to and from the following elementary schools: Bauerschlag, Ferguson, Gilmore, Goforth, Hall, Hyde, League City, Ross, and St. Mary's.

Field Trip Information:

Scheduled field trips will be posted on the entry board at least 48 hrs before planned trip. Transportation will be by school van or bus.

Water Play:

Water play will consist of sprinkler type items. Water play will only be on the grounds of The Country Kingdom. There will be NO away water activities planned.

Please note: This handbook may be revised at any time to ensure the health, safety and policy procedures of all children in the facility.