

# **TRINITY A.M.E. EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **1. HISTORY OF TRINITY A.M.E. EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

Trinity A.M.E. Early Learning Center's link with the Southwest Atlanta community spans a period of 30 years. During that time, our center has provided children's educational programs and support that enhance the development of a child in a nourishing environment. Our children come from varied ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds. All are welcomed.

## **2. AFFIRMATION ACTION STATEMENT**

Trinity A.M.E. Early Learning Center (TLC) admits all children regardless of race, color, nationality or religious background.

## **3. MISSION STATEMENT**

TLC's mission is to improve the early childhood experience of young children through developmental child care and early learning focusing on the educational development of the child and to provide support services and information to families.

## **4. PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that in order for our children to achieve their fullest potential, our instructions should be designed for the development of the whole child. We believe that each child's physical and mental health should be properly nurtured. We intend to execute our program so as to produce an environment that is conducive to the development of a value system that builds a foundation which promotes high self-esteem and appropriate positive self-confidence.

## **5. PROGRAM**

Planned within the framework of TLC's philosophy and mission, High Reach Learning curriculum will be used. This curriculum ensures that

children will develop skills in language and literacy, math and science concepts, art and music, physical development and social concepts. Activities include sharing and conversation time, stories, songs, finger plays, exposure to shapes, colors, numbers, and letters, creative arts and crafts, games and large and small muscle activities, food preparation, field trips throughout the community and celebration of birthdays and holidays.

## **6. EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM**

TLC operates an extended care program for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Children are escorted to West Manor Elementary School on a daily basis at 7:30 a.m. and are brought back into the Center at 2:30 p.m. The Extended care curriculum consists of homework assistance, dance classes, Tae –Kwon-Do and arts and crafts.

## **7. ERICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

Dazz with Jazz Dance Academy offers classes in ballet at TLC for children age three to twelve at a reasonable fee. Registration is handled by Dazz With Jazz Dance Academy at the beginning of the school year. Ta-Kwon-Do is also offered as extra-curricula activity by Master James Hagans. Registration and payment of fees is handled by Master Hagans.

## **8. ADMISSION**

Children aged six months to 12 years of age are accepted into the program. Classes are filled on a first come/ first served basis according to the date of enrollment with the Director. Classes are filled when a parent calls, the child's name will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur. As vacancies occur during the year, they will be filled from the waiting list or from new registrations. All applications for admission must include a current health and an immunization certificate signed by the child's physician or health service.

Enrollment in TLC's **Pre-Kindergarten Program** (funded by the Department of Early Care & Learning) is on a first come first serve basis. Registration for **Pre- Kindergarten** begins the first week of April in the same year prior to the beginning of the school term. Children must be four years of age by September 1st of the school year. Parents are required to produce a birth certificate, a passport or official documents from other countries verifying the birth date of your child. Immunization/health information as required by law must also be submitted.

## 9. **WITHDRAWAL**

The Director is to be notified two weeks in advance before a child is to be withdrawn. Parents are required to pay for those two weeks regardless of when the child leaves the Center.

## 10. **CALENDAR YEAR PROGRAM**

TLC operates a year round program. The **pre-kindergarten program** operates for 180 days per year and is usually consistent with the Atlanta Public School calendar. The following holidays are observed: New Years Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the Friday after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Week.

## 11. **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Children enrolled in TELC's program may be dropped off and picked up between 6:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday. Drop off and pick up times are confusing times for children. We learn that a quick transition of authority is best. If you are unsure as to how this is done, we suggest a hug, a kiss and "I'll pick you up later. I love you and have fun today." We will greet your child and immediately engage them in conversation or direct them toward an activity that will quickly capture their interest. Any stress on your child's part is usually over before you drive away. **Children are to be dropped off no later than 10:00 a.m. daily in order to assist with the transition process. Any child reporting to school after 10:00 a.m.**

**must present a doctor excuse or other valid excuse to be permitted into class for the day.**

TLC does not allow children to pick up children. **No one under the age of 18 will be allowed to pick up or sign out a child that is enrolled in our program.**

Individuals that are not listed on the child's application as authorized persons for pick up will not be allowed to receive a child without verbal permission from the child's parent/legal guardian. Visitors are allowed at any time during the TELC's operating hours and must sign in at the front office.

## **12. FEES**

Tuition is due on Monday of each week. Parents should pay all fees promptly with the full understanding that no refunds will be made for absences and that these fees are due as long as the child is officially enrolled because our program and licensing requirements force us to engage staff based on the number of children enrolled and expenses remain in your absences. An exception to this policy can be made to hold your child's place for absences of more than five consecutive school days. In this case and in the case of illness, parents will be charged half of the weekly tuition. If the parent DOES NOT NOTIFY the CENTER that the child is out because of illness or on vacation, the PARENT(S) will be charged FULL TUITION for that week. **One- half of tuition is also due for Christmas week when the center is closed.**

At registration, the first tuition payment is due, also due are the registration and application fees.

In the event that the tuition payments are late, a delinquent surcharge or late fee of \$5.00 per day is assessed for each day that the current payment is late. Parents will be given up to two weeks to make restitution. If after this period has expired and the account has not been settled, the child will be refused admission and further action will be taken against the parent.

Full or partial payment will be accepted from the Department of Family and Children Services. Application forms and a contract must be submitted at the time of enrollment.

All payments are to be made in either by check, cash, money order or credit card on Monday of each week. The returned check fee is \$20.00.

The Tuition and fee payments are:

Registration	\$125.00 (non-refundable)
Registration (Camp)	\$50.00(non-refundable)
Infants (6months-12months)	\$145.00
Toddler I	\$140.00 (12 months- 24 months)
Toddler II	\$135.00 (24 months-36 months)
Preschool	\$130.00 (3-4 years)
Pre-Kindergarten	No Charge
Pre-K Extended Care	\$65.00
Extended Care	\$65.00 weekly (Kindergarten through 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade)
Summer Camp	\$85.00
Drop-In Fee	\$28.00 per day depending on age of child
Late Fee	\$1.00 for each minute after 6:10 p.m.
Part-time	Price based upon what class. Services will not extend past 3 months. After three weeks you will be billed fulltime tuition.

If the extended care child utilizes full day care services any time during his/her enrollment, the fee will increase to 65.00 per week.

### **13. DISCIPLINE**

TLC uses a Peace Education curriculum that engages children in self-regulating practices. Making good choices is the goal of this plan and bad choices are handled using consequences such as removing themselves from play or work until they are ready to make good choices. The primary practice for the discipline of children is positive reinforcement and redirection.

Corporal punishment is not an accepted method of discipline. TLC staff will not physically or sexually abuse a child or engage in or permit others to engage in obviously sexual behavior in the presence of any child enrolled in the center; shake, jerk, pinch, handle a child roughly, or use any substance in or on the child's mouth including , but not limited to, lemon juice, vinegar or soap; verbally abuse or humiliate a child which includes, but is not limited to, the use of threats, profanity or belittling remarks about a child or his family; isolate a child in a dark room, closet or unsupervised area; use mechanical or physical restraints or devices to discipline children; use medication to discipline or control children's behavior without written medical authorization issued by a licensed professional and given with the parent's written consent; unreasonably restrict a child from going to the bathroom; punish toilet accidents; force or withhold naps; allow children to discipline or humiliate other children; confine a child for disciplinary purposes to equipment such as, but limited to, a swing, highchair, infant carrier, walker or jump seats.

**Supervision:**

Children shall be supervised at all times. "Supervision" means that the appropriate numbers of staff members are physically present in the area where children are being cared for and are providing watchful oversight to the children, chaperons and students in training. The persons supervising in the child care area must be alert, able to respond promptly to the needs and actions of the children being supervised, as well as the actions of the chaperons and students in training, and provide timely attention to the children's actions and needs. No mirrors, video, or sound monitors are used in the classroom by teachers for supervision. Video monitors are in each classroom for front office supervision.

**Class/Teacher Ratios:**

Infants (0-1 yr)	1:6
Toddler One (1 yr)	1:8
Toddler Two (2 yrs)	1:10
Preschool One (3 yrs)	1:15
Preschool Two (3-4 yrs)	1:18
Pre-Kindergarten (4 yrs)	1:18

## 14. INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

TLC will keep parents informed of any concerns and incidents concerning their child (without breaching confidentiality), including illnesses, injuries, adverse reactions to medications, etc. If the concern has to do with a child's behavior, TLC will discuss the concern with parents first and decide how to deal with the problem. If the child is old enough to understand, the child will be included in the plan for dealing with the problem.

## 15. HEALTH POLICIES

The Director is responsible for observing the health and development of children, handling illness, implementing accident prevention and emergency procedures, keeping health records complete and current and informing parents of community resources. Some or all of these duties may be shared with, or delegated to other staff members.

Each child is required to have on file a health statement which includes records of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's source of medical care. If a child's health care summary is not complete at the time of enrollment or within 30 days after enrollment, the child will be excluded from the program. All children enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten program must have evidence of a vision/hearing/dental screening within 30 days of enrollment into the program. When a child is overdue for any health screening, a statement must be provided by the parents/guardians, or the child's health care provider, indicating the appointed time for service as a condition for remaining enrolled in the program.

**EXCLUSION OF SICK CHILD: No child who arrives noticeably ill with a rash or with a fever will be admitted for that day.** Should a child become ill during the day, he or she will provide a comfortable setting for the child, and remain under adult supervision. The parent/guardian of the child will be notified immediately and the stay under adult supervision until a parent or an authorized person arrives to take the child home. In the event a child contracts a communicable disease and exposes the other children, notices of

such exposure will be posed, and parents will be notified when they pick up their children. The sick child will not be allowed to return to school until the period of contagion has passed.

**EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION:** The Center must have on file for each child a signed Permission for health Care authorizing emergency care and transfer of medical records to the local hospital. Current information about health insurance coverage should also be provided. Emergency numbers for reaching the parent or guardian and another authorized person will also be on file.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:** At least one staff member on duty at all times has first aid training through an accredited course. All other staff members are trained in emergency procedures through annual in-service. The child's parents, guardian, or an authorized person will be notified immediately in the event of a serious accident or illness requiring emergency care. First aid will be administered by a qualified staff member.

The 911 emergency number is posted by the telephone. The local rescue squad or ambulance service will provide emergency transportation; Crawford Long Hospital will provide emergency care.

An Accident Report will be completed for each except minor scratches and abrasions. The report will be made as soon as possible following the accident and no later than the same day. The original report will be filed in the child's file, one copy will be filed in the Accident Log, and one copy will be given to the parent.

**MEDICATIONS:** Medications are kept in a cupboard, are locked, and out of reach of the children. Any prescription medication to be administered by a staff member must be in its original container and be labeled. The label is to contain the child's full name, physician's name, pharmacist, medication, dosage, frequency, starting date, and expiration date if applicable. The medication must include instruction on how to administer the prescription and storage guidelines. An individual child's record of Medication Authorization Form is signed by the parent/guardian authorizing its administration.

A staff member will triple-check the label before administering the medication—once before opening, once after opening, and once after closing the container. After the medication has been administered, the individual child's record of Medication Authorization Form will be filled with the child's health record, signed by the staff that administered the medication and placed in the child's file.

Any unused portion of a prescription drug is returned to the parent or destroyed by the Director. Medications having a specific expiration date are not used after the date of expiration.

The parent must be informed when any medication is given or any adverse reaction to medications. TLC staff will not dispense non-prescription medications to children.

## **16. EMERGENCIES**

If the Trinity A.M.E Board of Directors has determined that weather conditions may make it impossible for the majority of staff to get to the Center, then the Center will be closed. We are usually guided by the Atlanta Public School System policy on school closing due to inclement weather. In some cases, the Center will be open even if the school system is closed. Please call the Center between 6:30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. on those days to make sure we are open.

**FIRE:** TLC conforms to all fire regulations as designated by the State Fire Marshall. A fire evacuation plan is drawn and posted in the school.

The 911 emergency number is posted by the telephone. Monthly fire drills are held. The fire alarm system, emergency power pack lights, and fire extinguishers are checked yearly for proper function. All staff members know how to use the fire extinguishers.

In the event of a fire, the building will be immediately evacuated. The staff member in charge will phone the fire department from within the building, if it is safe, or from another phone. A designated staff member may attempt to extinguish the fire while the building is

being evacuated. All other staff members are to remain with the children and see them safely to the designated emergency shelter.

**TORNADO:** A written tornado shelter plan is posted. Tornado drills are held monthly from April through September. A battery-operated radio is easily accessible and kept in good repair. In case of an emergency, staff will tune to the local radio station for tornado information. In the event of a tornado warning, the children will be evacuated to the designated area and remain there until the threat passes.

**BLIZZARD:** In the event of a blizzard when parents are not able to pick up their children, the staff will house the children at the facility until the parents or guardians can pick them up.

**POWER FAILURE:** Two flashlights in working order are kept in an accessible place. Power pack emergency lights are installed to light each exit.

**MISSING CHILD:** Should a child become missing, staff will search the building and grounds completely. If the child is still not found, the police and parent/guardian will be notified while staff begins searching the immediate surrounding area.

## **17. CHILD ABUSE**

If a staff member suspects possible child abuse or neglect, observation and dates must be documented on the Observation of Child Problem Form. The staff member must inform the Director, who in turn must notify the local family services agency. Any suspicion of abuse by staff at the Center must be documented on the Documentation of Employment Problem Form and reported immediately to the Director. The Director will confer with the staff member, then report to the local family services agency and the Board of Directors if the Director determines that abuse is a possibility.

Procedures outlined by family services must be followed. The staff member will have the opportunity for defense before the Board of Directors.

## **18. CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

All student records are kept in a locked filed cabinet and are available to the child's parents/legal guardian and other certain individuals for reasonable access. Student records are open to the particular child's teacher for access to emergency procedures and child care management. The Director and assisting office staff have access to each student files to ensure that all needed documentation is provided and current. An authorized employee of the licensing agency is granted access to all student files for monitoring purposes or the child's parents or legal guardian.

## **19. UNIFORMS**

Uniforms are to be worn by Pre-Kindergarten and Preschool students during the school year. We ask that your child wear navy blue pants, skirts or shorts and white shirts/tops. Uniforms should be worn four (4) days out of the week (Monday-Thursday). Uniforms may be purchased at any department store. However, we utilize the services of Optima Uniforms (in the Greenbriar Mall) as our vendor. You may also purchase uniforms at the Target stores, who carry a larger supply of smaller sizes (beginning at size 4). Plastic aprons are provided by the Center for art and water activities. Water activities, sand play, and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate that an extra set of clothing (including socks) be kept at the Center at all times. All extra clothing should be marked with the child's name. If wet or dry clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes the next morning. Children are taken outdoors daily (weather permitting) and should be dressed accordingly: a light jacket, a cap, rain boots (for damp days), in fall and spring; a heavy winter jacket, mittens, hat, scarf, and snow boots in winter. All clothing should be marked. Parents of a non potty-trained child must provide TLC with diapers and diaper wipes.

## **20. NUTRITION**

TLC will meet the nutritional needs for all children enrolled by providing on a daily basis nutritional breakfast, lunch, and on afternoon snack. We ask that you do not bring food to the Center unless your child is on a special diet. Breakfast is served at 8:00 a.m. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. and snack time begins at 2:15 p.m. Teachers serve, sit and eat meals with the children in a family style dining atmosphere. While eating, children are engaged in conversation with their classmates and their teachers.

Meals are in accordance with the U.S.D.A. food and Nutrition Program. Your child will enjoy appetizing, well balanced meals that promote healthy growth of young minds and bodies. We encourage children to try new and different food and eat as much as they like whatever is served. Weekly menus are posted in the center.

Children on special diets must provide a written statement from the child's doctor stating such. All foods brought from home must meet the U.S.D.A guidelines and labeled with the child's name and date.

## **21. BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

Parents are welcome to send cakes and other desserts to share with their child's friends on birthdays or special occasions. Please let your child's teacher know in advance when you are planning to bring a treat.

## **22. ANNUAL FUND RAISERS**

Trinity ELC usually has two fund raisers a year. Candy is sold in the fall "Little Mr." and "Little Miss Trinity Contest in the spring. The money raised from these fund raisers is used to defray the cost of furniture, equipment and supplies. Participation is on a volunteer basis.