



STEM PRESCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

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1. **WELCOME**

Welcome to Engineers of Tomorrow STEM Preschool! We sincerely hope this will be the beginning of a rewarding and trusting relationship between your family and ours. This handbook is meant to serve two purposes: 1) explain what you should expect from us and 2) explain what your responsibilities are. As always, please feel free to contact the Director, or any other staff member, in person, or via telephone or email, should you have any questions/comments/concerns about any of the topics covered in this handbook.

Please read this document in its entirety and keep it handy for future reference. Thank you for trusting your child with us and selecting us for your child's educational home!

Philosophy

We are committed to the education and care of your child. It is our goal to introduce an engaging program to our scholars that promotes intellectual learning (reasoning, predicting, problem solving, etc.) versus academic learning (memorizing, practicing, etc.). Laying the foundation for a lifetime of learning is paramount to our students' long-term success and we strive to spark that interest in each of our unique students.

Our Faculty

We believe our program is only as effective as our personnel. Our classes are led by experienced caregivers, of whom are observed and evaluated on a routine basis to ensure the highest level of quality and compliance. Every employee is background checked and FBI fingerprinted. There will always be at least one staff person in each classroom that is first aid and CPR certified. We, additionally, ensure our caregivers have the appropriate number of training clock hours, per standards set forth by Licensing, on specific child development topics.

2. **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Other than closures for holidays and staff development days, we are open Monday through Friday all year long from 6:30am to 6:30pm.

3. **COMMUNICATION**

Good communication is of the utmost importance. When a new family is accepted into the preschool, we like to be sure that we can share openly about any concerns or questions that may arise. It is important that there is a similar child care philosophy between this preschool and the parents. We welcome questions, suggestions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the child(ren). Sensitive issues will be discussed in private at a mutually beneficial time.

Daily Connect

For our students, we utilize an informative and user-friendly mobile app called Daily Connect to keep parents up to date with their child's day. As soon as an event is saved, it is immediately synchronized on each parent's account, on a real-time basis. Additionally, at the end of each day, parents receive a detailed email listing the events of the day, such as, your child's daily food intake, what they ate and drank, when diapers were changed and what it was, child's mood, their nap schedule, and any other pertinent information. This app can be downloaded on the parent's Apple or Android device of choice for \$4.99.

4. **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

There are several forms that make up the enrollment packet. This enrollment packet must be completed and in our possession before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. This is to ensure that your child will get the very best care possible and satisfies the record keeping requirement of state licensing guidelines. All forms will be reviewed annually and you will be asked to sign a Parent Verification form for purposes of verifying the information we have on file and making any revisions to outdated information. If you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, please feel free to ask the Director.

Registration fee: there is a **\$50 non-refundable registration fee** per family (this fee amount can change at the Director's discretion). The fee is due upon registration or half can be deferred until the next week's tuition billing. If you terminate child care services and are gone more than 90 days and wish to return to the preschool, you must pay a \$35 re-application fee. There is also a **\$25 annual supply fee**, which helps to cover the costs of our curriculum and other supplies used on a daily basis. Each family will be charged \$25 upon enrollment and on each anniversary of enrollment.

5. **STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS**

Engineers of Tomorrow STEM Preschool (EOT) is licensed and complies with all applicable licensing regulations and standards. These standards relate to the preschool, staff, health, safety procedures, nutrition, caregiver to child ratios, and record keeping. We believe that these standards are in the best interest of the children. The preschool is subject to periodic and unannounced inspection by state and city food program and licensing officials. The latest inspection report will be displayed on the cork board hanging on the wall to the right of the front entrance.

If you would like a copy or to view the Child Care Licensing minimum standards, by which we are evaluated, please request a copy from the Director or caregiver on duty at the time of request, or you can access an online copy at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/.

6. **TUITION/PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

Your specific rates will be outlined in your Contract and Rate Agreement. Tuition is payable in advance and is due by the end of business on Friday each week for the following week's care, unless another arrangement has been agreed upon. **Payment may be made by cash, money order or debit/credit card. There will be a late fee of \$10 for failure to pay by end of day on Monday. An additional \$10 late fee (total \$20) will be charged if payment is not made by end of day on Tuesday.** Repeated late payments may be grounds for termination and parents who are more than 2 weeks late on payment will be denied child care until account is made current. We ask you to consider how you would feel if your employer came to you on your expected payday and told you that your paycheck would be delayed?

The success of the preschool depends upon the prompt payment of tuition/fees in order to take care of day-to-day expenses that are encountered. Tuition and fees are computed with the following factors in mind:

- Food, health supplies, craft/activity/curriculum supplies, toys, computers, play equipment and books provided for the children
- Outside play equipment
- Employees' continuing education
- Employee wages and benefits
- Building rent, heat, electricity, telephone and maintenance
- Additional time spent, each day, on record keeping, parent-provider communication, clean up from day care, and shopping trips for food and supplies

7. **ABSENCES**

Tuition is based on enrollment (a reserved space), not on attendance. To maintain a reserved space, fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation, or for any other reason.

Parent Vacation: each family is allowed one week of vacation, in which one-half of weekly tuition is due to reserve your child's space at the preschool. If a second week of vacation is taken, a payment equivalent to 75% of tuition is due. No other discounts (ie...sibling discount) will apply. Any additional vacation weeks will be billed at normal weekly rates.

8. **PRESCHOOL HOLIDAYS/CLOSURES**

A separate holiday/vacation schedule will be provided supplemental to this document. This preschool follows the Desoto ISD schedule for school closings or delayed openings. A message will be left on the preschool's voicemail notifying parents.

9. **LATE PICK UP FEES**

A \$1 per minute late pickup fee will be assessed for all children picked up FIVE minutes after each family's agreed-upon pickup time. The fee will increase to \$2 per minute for instances of habitual tardiness (4 times or more). This must be paid in cash at the time of pickup, or before the child's next regularly scheduled day. This will be strictly enforced, and habitual tardiness may result in termination of services. **Parents are encouraged to contact the preschool as soon as any delays are identified.**

10. **SCHEDULE OFFERINGS**

We offer full time, part time and drop-in care. Full time is considered four days or more per week. Part time is considered 3 days or less per week. Drop-in care requires 24 hours' notice so that we can plan our schedule accordingly. Add-ons or schedule changes may be accepted to our daily schedule only if there is a position open for that day, and they will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Please remember that schedule changes of this nature create some disruption to our normal schedule. We would appreciate as much notice as possible (one week is appreciated), so that we can plan for meals, sleeping arrangements, and any changes in activities that may occur.

We maintain an open door policy for parents during preschool hours. This means that parents are always welcome to call or drop in to see their children. We would appreciate your taking into consideration our schedule when dropping in or calling, and remember that visitors usually cause children to react in an excited manner. If you call during the day, please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you would leave a message, we will call you back as soon as possible.

If you ever have any questions/concerns, please feel free to contact our Director via phone, email or in person.

11. **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before a meal time). We will try our best to send your child home with a clean diaper, and would appreciate the same consideration when you drop off.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when being dropped off. Please make your drop off brief, as the longer you prolong the departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all that is needed. In our experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.

Please be brief at pick-up times, as well. This is a time of testing, when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider). All children will test to see if the rules still apply. During arrival and departure, we expect parents to back up our rules. Please be in control of your child during pick up times.

Please leave your cell phones in your car so that the director, caregiver(s) and your child will have your undivided attention at pick up or drop off time.

Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents, or someone else the parents designate on the Authorized Pick up and Emergency Contact Form. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day, if this person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is NOT on that list, we MUST have written permission to release your child or establish a password that is communicated to us and provided by the authorized party upon pickup. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know

them, we will ask for identification. A copy of their license will be made at that time. This is not meant to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for the child's protection. Please be advised that copies of all licenses will remain on file for three months.

12. **CHECK IN/OUT**

It is required by state law that all parents sign their child in and out each day. Every family will be trained on check in/out procedures using the preschool's computer terminal.

All children must be dropped off and signed in by 9am for purposes of obtaining an accurate meal count. If your child arrives later than 9am and there is a legitimate reason (ie...doctor appt) for the tardy arrival, we will need a doctor's note and prior notification so that your child will be included in the meal count. Curriculum instruction begins promptly at 9:00am, so it is important for your child to be present by that time to receive the full benefit of our program. Likewise, breakfast will not be served after 8:45am. If your child is not checked in by that time, we will not be able to offer breakfast to your child.

13. **CLOTHING/ATTIRE**

Children should arrive dressed for play. We like to have fun! Having fun involves outdoor play and lots of messy activities, so make sure that your child is dressed appropriately. Please don't dress your child in nice clothing and expect them to be spotless when you arrive to pick them up. Clothing should be comfortable, seasonally appropriate for outdoor play and not too short (no shorter than 3 inches above the knee) or tight. Make sure to include hats, mittens, boots and coats for cold weather.

For the sake of comfort and safety, keeping in mind that part of your child's day will involve active play, such as running and climbing, the only allowed shoes at the preschool are closed-toed athletic footwear with non-skid, non-marking rubber soles to be worn with socks.

14. **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

We prefer that children do not bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. books, videos, etc.) Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy will be that a child may bring a favorite sleepy toy for naptime only, and toys may be brought for show and tell activities. We are not responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name.

15. **SUPPLIES**

Parents must supply the following items to be kept in their child's cubby:

- Diapers, wipes, pull-ups, powders/ointments, binkie (preferably on a binkie string), bottles, bibs, saline drops/gel and nasal syringe, blanket for rest time, and a complete change of clothes (replace when soiled), sunscreen & bug spray
- All personal belongings should be marked with your child's name. Eating utensils, cups and dishes will be supplied. If any of these items are brought, they must be marked with your child's name, to avoid mix-ups with other children

Donations help us keep costs down, so if you have any of the following items on hand and are willing to donate them, it would be greatly appreciated. This is not mandatory.

- Dress up clothing, costumes, jewelry, hats, etc.
- Paper of any kind, brown, white, colored, waxed, foil, etc.
- Crayons, water color paints, or any miscellaneous art supplies, such as fabric scraps, glitter, pipe cleaners, paper plates, etc.
- IDEAS! We welcome any ideas that you may have for fun activities or crafts!!!

16. INFANTS AND PRE-TODDLER SCHEDULES

Infants and toddlers will not necessarily follow the same schedule as the preschoolers. Infants are not capable of sitting still for circle time, may need a morning nap and are always fed on demand. Breast feeding infants need to have an adequate supply stocked and properly labeled. Toddlers usually eat meals and snacks on a set meal schedule. **To maintain our daily flow, we require children under 2 years old to be in attendance no later than 9:30am.** We welcome breastfeeding mothers and have a private space for mothers to interact and bond with their children at the preschool.

17. PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE

Preschoolers enjoy a structured schedule that allows for flexibility. A schedule helps the day to flow more smoothly and allows the children to anticipate the day's events. We will adhere to our written schedule to the best of our ability. There will be times when we have to make adjustments to the schedule. We appreciate families considering our schedule when picking up or dropping off children. It is better if arrivals and departures do not occur during quiet time (usually between 1-3pm), but when they do, please take note of the fact that children may be sleeping. Come and go as quietly and quickly as possible. Children who arrive during quiet time will be expected to rest or play quietly until the rest period is over.

We thank you for the information you filled out for us regarding your preschooler's individual needs and schedule. It will help us get to know your child better.

The daily activity plans will be posted in each respective classroom.

18. NAP/QUIET TIME

There will be a designated nap/rest time each day. All children must nap, rest, read or play quietly during this period. Rest time gives children a much needed break during the day. Without rest time, some children are argumentative in the afternoon, short-tempered with others, and not real happy when they go home in the evening.

Infants nap at varying times and their schedules will be accommodated. Somewhere between 12 and 18 months, children usually drop down to one nap per day. At this time, we will attempt to put them on the scheduled nap/rest period.

19. INDOOR/OUTDOOR PLAY

Indoor play

We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. Toys may be rotated or placed temporarily out of use so that the children do not become bored. Younger children have less-developed organizational skills and can get easily frustrated or upset when there are too many toys to choose from. It is also more difficult for them to help with clean up when there are toys everywhere, because it is so overwhelming to them. For this reason, during free play times, each child may select one or two things at a time to play with. They will be shown how to put those things away before selecting something else.

Outdoor play

We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is appropriately dressed (see Clothing/Attire section) for outdoor play at all times. Our activities will include walks, playground, water play (sprinkler play only...no wading or swimming pools), and others. We do not go outside when the temperature is below 32 degrees (including wind chill), or above 103 degrees (including heat index). We are mandated by state law to take the children outside. Parents who feel that their child is not well enough to participate in outdoor activities must keep them out of care until they are able to participate in all activities.

20. MEALS

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and all meals will be provided at no cost to parents. All parents will be required to fill out the USDA Eligibility Form regardless of eligibility. Any parents who refuse to participate must provide all meals, snacks and drinks.

As long as this preschool participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, all meals will be provided at no extra cost. Meals will consist of breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Children who arrive after meal times should be fed before they arrive. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board just inside the door. Copies of the menu are provided to parents upon request. We prefer that children do not bring food, drinks, etc. from home unless requested. We will honor a parent's religious or philosophical objections to a menu item and the parent can substitute any objectionable item with an item from home.

It is our belief that infants should be fed on demand. If parents have another feeding schedule in mind, we will need to discuss, so that the infant's needs will be adequately met.

If your child has allergies, and requires a modified diet, we must be notified of this in writing. We will need to have a physician's written instructions describing any foods the child is not permitted to eat. An appropriate substitution will be made, if possible. If a child has so many allergies that he/she cannot eat from our menu, we may require the parents to provide his/her lunch and snacks. We never force a child to finish what is on his/her plate, but we do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything. All eating patterns will be communicated to the parents.

21. CLEANLINESS/HYGIENE

We do our best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed before and after meals and after toileting. We use paper towels for drying hands, so children do not have to use the same towel. If parents provide a toothbrush and toothpaste, teeth will be brushed as well. All employees are required to wash their hands frequently and also use antibacterial gel. Infants sleep in separate cribs or pack and plays, with clean sheets used only by them. Beginning at toddler age, a cot will be assigned to your child that only your child will use. The cot and sheet will be sanitized/washed weekly (unless soiled, then they are washed as often as necessary).

Children use separate cups, plates, bowls and eating utensils that have been thoroughly washed. High chair trays, etc. are disinfected after each use. We disinfect toilet seats and clean potty chairs between each use.

22. FIRE DRILLS

We are required by state law to do one fire drill per month. We vary the time of day to help the staff and children prepare to evacuate the building quickly and safely. We will not do fire drills when the temperature is below 32 degrees or above 103 degrees. Pack and ply cribs with wheels are used to transport infants and non-walking toddlers to the emergency meeting area. Fire drills will last approximately 3 minutes.

Upon enrollment, along with a copy of this document, each family will receive a copy of the preschool's Emergency Preparedness Plan.

23. TOILET TRAINING

When you feel your child is ready for toilet teaching, we ask that you begin this teaching at home during a weekend or vacation. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. The child must be showing signs of readiness. When a child is ready, the process should go pretty quickly. The child must be kept in pull-ups or panties/underwear at all times. Putting a child in diapers part time, and training pants part time, can be confusing and delay the training process. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore, we may continue to use diapers or pull-ups until your child can and will announce that he/she must use the bathroom (not just at home, but here, as well) and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement.

Parents need to supply pull-ups and/or panties/underwear, plus a couple of extra changes of clothing each day (including socks 😊).

During toilet training, we ask that the child be dressed in "user friendly" clothing, as much as possible. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists, or dresses. Try to avoid really tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, and overalls. These are difficult for children to remove "in a hurry".

24. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's preschool experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Lending objects for units of study
- Coming and talking about your job, when asked
- Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying here (see monthly newsletter)
- Helping your child prepare for "Show and Tell"
- Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties

25. ACTIVITIES/CURRICULUM

EOT offers a structured, professionally planned preschool curriculum designed to be used in child care centers. This on-going preschool program is offered Monday through Friday and is both entertaining and educational. Your child will enjoy activities ranging from art and craft projects to games, songs, finger plays, storytelling, creative dramatics, exercises, science, shapes, numbers, colors, alphabet, and much more through various monthly themes. Some of these projects will be taken home to share with you, and others will be group activities that you can ask about. We know that children learn best by "doing". Therefore, the activities the children participate in are developmentally appropriate, concrete, hands-on, and most of all fun, because we believe that learning is an exciting experience. This curriculum fulfills the Head Start Domain Elements, Standards, and Indicator Guidelines and is consistent with the National Association for the Education of Young Children Guidelines for curriculum content.

Our main objective is to have fun, improve social skills, and encourage creative expression. We will utilize a variety of activities to accomplish this goal. Free play, computer programs, reading, arts and crafts, music/singing, dancing, dramatic play/pretend, puzzles, and educational TV/videos are just some of the activities we will be doing.

Music helps to develop young brains and will play a strong role in day-to-day activities. We may have special music activities and may also play music during other activities, for example, during arts and crafts or meal times. Some of the music we will be using may include, classical, children's songs (by a variety of artists), foreign language tapes and others.

Children of all ages will be taught age appropriate curriculum daily. Our educational program is an advanced learning program and infuses lots of different uses to technological media, along with infusions of science, math and engineering concepts.

Television will be used as a tool to help children unwind and relax. We usually watch no more than one hour of television per day, and some days, none at all. The exception may be on rainy days, or if we are having a particularly difficult day. Viewing will be limited to PBS/Nickelodeon and child-friendly, educational-style videos, etc. We carefully screen everything the children watch and watch along with the children to help reinforce lessons learned during viewing. We avoid any type of graphic images, potentially frightening images, unpleasant language, or anything of that nature, as we believe that young children are extremely impressionable. We prefer to err on the conservative side when choosing appropriate viewing.

26. PRESCHOOL RULES

There are certain preschool rules that all children will be taught and expected to follow. This is for the safety and well-being of everyone. In addition, we realize that we must expect a certain amount of wear and tear where children are concerned.

There will be no running permitted in the preschool. Hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, or pinching other children/infants/adults will NOT be allowed. No standing or climbing on chairs or tables. There will be no use of obscene, derogatory or disrespectful language.

Children may not walk around the preschool with food, cups or bottles. Respectful treatment of other people and all property, toys, and furniture is expected. Willful destruction of property will be charged to the parent at the cost to replace the item. Please support us in the enforcement of these rules, in order to create a better environment for all.

No smoking is permitted on the premises as per state law; this included parents and staff.

27. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

As a day care center provider, we are mandated reporters to the Department of Family and Protective Services if we feel a child is being abused or neglected. We utilize the hotline (1-800-252-5400) to report incidents in a timely manner. Always be sure to let your director know when you drop your child off if he/she has any unexplained cuts or bruises. We document any and all instances of children that come to the preschool with injuries.

If you ever feel that our preschool is not operating in a safe manner, please bring the matter to our attention. If you desire a copy of the state licensing guidelines, we will be happy to supply you one. We are proud to say we do our best to follow state licensing guidelines to the letter. Our staff is highly trained in knowing and complying with all applicable state and local laws. DFPS can be contacted using their local number at 214-951-7902, and additional information can be obtained by visiting the agency's website at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/default.asp.

28. DISCIPLINE

We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency and firmness. We stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. The children are explained the rules of the preschool frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children. Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, etc. We will try to prevent problems, redirect when appropriate, discuss inappropriate behavior, encourage making amends when offense involves another person, and sometimes withdraw privileges based on the principle of "natural consequences". An example might be where a child is misusing a toy then he/she will not be allowed to play with the toy for a period of time. The use of time outs will be rare except when a brief cooling off period is needed. Sometimes when children are fighting or throwing toys, we will put the toy in a short time out, and then bring it back into circulation a little later. This seems to work better than giving the child a time out.

Overall, and in summary, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.
2. Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
3. Time-Out: The child is separated from the group for an age appropriate amount of time in the preschool's Thinking Corner (one minute per one year of age). This technique is only used when a child repeatedly will not follow our directions or listen to our words, is exhibiting temper tantrum type behavior, or hurting one's self, others or equipment. When the child shows that he or she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, they are encouraged to join the rest of the group to try again. Children in the Thinking Corner will be allowed to look at a book and work a puzzle quietly until their time is up, but will NOT be required to sit facing the wall.
4. Last Resort: When a child's behavior is continually upsetting or dangerous to others, a conference will be called with the parents. If the problems cannot be resolved, arrangements will have to be made for the child to go elsewhere for care.

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES, will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name calling or isolation used. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment.

If a discipline problem arises that does not respond to the above mentioned techniques, we will hold a conference with the parents. Together, we will try to find a solution. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents us from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made, for the safety and well-being of all.

29. **ILLNESS**

Sick Child Policy: Under no circumstances, may a parent bring a sick child to the preschool, if the child shows any signs of illness (see SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM DAY CARE), or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular day care program. Sick children will expose all children and staff members who they come in contact with. These people can in turn expose the other children. Sick children want care from their parents in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to day care before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will be unnecessarily inconvenienced. **Because this is disruptive to other children and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important.**

Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices (see Cleanliness and Hygiene). If your child is unable to participate in the normal activities of the preschool (including being able to play outside), then your child MUST stay home.

Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to come pick the child up.

For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24 - 48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic. If a child receives an antibiotic for an ear infection, he/she may return to day care immediately if he/she has been free of other symptoms mentioned for at least 24 hours. If you aren't sure about whether or not to bring your child to care, please call us to discuss prior to drop off. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion if you have a note from your doctor.

Symptoms requiring removal of child from day care:

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken by swiping the thermometer across the forehead or 101°F taken orally. A child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to care, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substance.
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 3 or more consecutive loose stools
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period
 - Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited during the night
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

Just a note: Many times our child care may get blamed for the illness of a child, meaning that we have "allowed" sick children to come to the preschool. Parents may not stop to think that when sick children are brought to the preschool, our entire staff is also at risk of exposure. How would you feel if another parent brought their sick child and exposed your child? **We STRESS this again -- if**

you are not sure whether or not it is okay to bring your child, please call ahead to ask us. We may require a doctor's decision as to whether or not the child is contagious. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

We are required to communicate outbreaks of some illnesses and conditions to the CCL (ie...lice, seizures, ringworms, chickenpox, measles, etc.).

If your child is out for an entire week due to sickness, we will discount tuition by 25%. This is a COURTESY unique to this preschool. As previously mentioned in this document, tuition is based on enrollment (a reserved space), not on attendance. To maintain a reserved space, fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation, or for any other reason. Any additional weeks of absence related to illness will be billed at normal weekly rates.

30. MEDICATIONS

Parents will provide any medications needed by the child, including over-the-counter and prescription medicine. Written authorization is needed for us to administer ANY medication, prescription or over-the-counter. NOTE: All medicines must be in their original container with pharmacist's or manufacturer's label, child's name, dosage instructions, current date, name of medication, and times to be administered clearly written.

31. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Minor injuries receive appropriate first aid, and if an emergency injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted as soon as possible. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital where you will be asked to meet us. If you are not going to be at your usual place of employment, or at home, please make sure that we have a number where you can be reached. We are required to notify CCL if there is an incident that requires any child in our care to be seen by a healthcare professional.

Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation, if required. The owners of the preschool will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent/guardian or child while on these premises.

32. TERMINATION POLICIES

We reserve the right to terminate a child for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Routinely late picking up your child
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the preschool after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- Serious illness of child
- Lack of respect from child for rules, school property and staff

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when terminating, and will give the same courtesy in return. Parents are required to give two weeks written notice when they decide to terminate child care. The two weeks will be paid in full, regardless of whether or not the child is in attendance.

We will give two weeks' notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether or not the child is in attendance. The provider reserves the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance.

Anyone who terminates care and has a balance that is outstanding will need to have the account settled within 30 days. All accounts not settled within 30 days will be turned over to a collections agency regardless of amount owed. All accounts turned over to collections will have a \$20 per week late fee plus 35% collections fee added to amount due.

33. GANG-FREE ZONE

This is to inform parents/guardians that EOT is within a gang-free zone. This means that, under the Texas Penal Code, any criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity occurring within a 1,000 feet perimeter of this preschool are subject to harsher penalty.

34. HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

State licensing standards require specific medical and immunization information, including documentation of current negative TB test results (not required in all counties), to be on file for each child upon enrollment and at the beginning of each school year thereafter, with the exception of children enrolled in our after-school programs. DFPS audits our records regularly. **Your child will be excluded from attendance at this facility if this information has not been submitted, is not current or is incomplete.** When your child receives an immunization, it is very important for you to give us a copy of the documentation from your health care provider in order to keep your child's records up-to-date.

State regulations also require that all children who are four years or older by September 1st of each year must have a vision and hearing screening. We must have a copy of each screening in your child's file.

Employee Requirements

EOT's employees are required to have certain immunizations (Influenza, Hepatitis A and Pertussis), unless basis for exemption has been provided to the Director. Each member of our staff is required to provide exemption support or obtain necessary immunizations within 10 business days of employment. Documentation must be provided to be kept in the employee's personnel file. If employee fails to obtain necessary immunizations, the following disciplinary actions will ensue: 1) employee will be placed on non-paid leave until immunizations have been obtained, up to 5 business days, and 2) if immunizations are not obtained during unpaid 5 business day grace period, the employee will be terminated.

An employee can obtain exemption for either of these two reasons: 1) the employee has a medical condition that CDC has recognized as having contraindications or precautions, and/or 2) state exemption form has been filed with the state for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. All employees are required to protect the children from exposure to disease and, when needed, will use protective medical equipment (ie...gloves, masks) to deter the spread of communicable diseases. This is especially critical for those employees that have filed an immunization exemption with the state or for those that are in their 30-day probationary period.

TB immunizations are not required for employees in the City of Desoto.

35. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

EOT trains its employees on the prevention, recognition and reporting requirements for child abuse situations. This training is required to be completed prior to directly caring for children and each subsequent year of employment. This training includes opportunities for feedback and a written questionnaire to insure an understanding of the information presented. We will inform parents of information on child abuse and neglect prevention methods as well as warning signs of abuse for our employees and parents through the following methods: memos, monthly newsletters, and on the center website. The information provided might include local child advocacy websites that give extensive information for preventing and /or detecting abuse.

Parents of children who are/have been victims of abuse or neglect should contact the local child advocacy center, child protective services or law enforcement to obtain assistance and intervention. A list of your community child advocacy websites or other information on child abuse can be obtained from your Center Director.

36. ANNUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All employees are required to attend pre-service training in order to familiarize them with the center’s operational policies. On an annual basis, all employees are required to obtain 24 clock hours of training pertaining to certain topics, including but not limited to, child growth and development, guidance and discipline, teacher-child interaction, abuse and neglect, and diversity. Our Director is required to obtain 30 clock hours of training as well.

37. REVISIONS TO HANDBOOK AND CONTRACT

There will be a yearly revision to this handbook and the accompanying contract. All families will sign a new contract each year. We reserve the right to make changes in rates and policies as we deem necessary. You will be notified, in writing, of any changes that may occur. Every attempt will be made to give at least two weeks’ notice of changes.

ENGINEERS OF TOMORROW

Receipt of Parent Handbook/Policy Acknowledgment

As a parent of a child attending Engineers of Tomorrow STEM Preschool (EOT), I understand the above policies and procedures at the preschool. I agree to do the following:

- Comply with and support all policies and procedures.
- Be financially responsible by keeping my child's tuition current and pay late fees when due.
- Inform preschool staff if child will not be in attendance by 9am.
- Pick up child no later than 6:30pm and pay late fees when I do not comply with policy.
- Check my child in and out daily.
- Adhere to preschool's sick policy and 24 hour symptom-free rule.
- Pick my child up promptly in case of an injury or illness.
- Complete all forms as provided and keep all documents current (emergency information, enrollment data, etc.).
- Read all information provided/shared from EOT.
- Provide the preschool with supplies, as notified, necessary for my child's care in a timely manner.
- Discuss issues and keep the lines of communication open to avoid problems and/or misunderstandings.
- Respect the EOT staff.

I have received the policy handbook and, further, understand that non-compliance with the preschool's policies and procedures may result in my child's enrollment termination.

Parent's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____