*TLC Children’s Place Parent Handbook*

***Our mission:*** *To provide a child-centered learning experience in a Christian environment for infants through preschoolers inspired by the philosophy of Maria Montessori and also based on current research.*

***Our Vision***

*To create a child centered program that is highly regarded for its creativity and excellence in developing children’s individual gifts.*

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Hours of Operation; 6:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Welcome to TLC Children’s Place. We are a Montessori school that provides before and after care. Our school is an outreach ministry of Trinity United Methodist Church located in Lapel. Our vision is to create a child centered program that is highly regarded for its creativity and excellence in developing children’s individual gifts.

We are confident that the children’s experience with us will be safe, pleasant, rewarding and a challenging one. Their time spent with us will serve as a Christian foundation for their lifetime of learning.

This handbook and its policies have been put into place to create the safest and most beneficial environment for your child.

Therefore, policies change from time to time, as we grow, we ask that you fill out the form on the back of the handbook, detach it and return it to the office acknowledging that you have read and understand the policies. God Bless,

TLC Children’s Place Staff

“Let us give the child a vision of the whole universe…for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity” -Maria Montessori

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**The Nest**

**6 weeks to 18 months**

Infants are born with tremendous potential; they are eager to learn, explore, and try new things. We are here to provide a loving environment for the children to begin their experience moving at their own pace! We enhance and heighten the infant’s awareness of his/her environment by providing materials that engage and strengthen his/her senses.

**Development**–The teachers foster the development of basic trust and assist in the normal development of the personality and physical growth on each individual level.

**Language**- Basic trust develops in an environment where people respond appropriately to the infant’s communication of the need to be loved, respected and accepted. Infants must be spoken to in the language with which they will communicate.

**Senses-** Infants learn through their senses. They learn by watching and moving freely. Freedom to move is essential to the development of the infant’s potential.

**Respect-** The infant is considered as a whole person and is affected by the quality of holding and feeding, as well as the quality of physical care.

**Learning**- Independence occurs when infants participate in their daily routines of care and prepared lessons.

**The role of the teacher**- The teachers guide the children in their activities, modeling correct behavior and language, observing the children, recording the activities and daily accomplishments, and being a parent ally.

**Parent Ally-** The parent will work as an ally to the teacher by providing all vital information about the child’s health, about events that have unfolded at home, and giving the teacher feedback about how the school experience is affecting the child. The parent is the most important teacher in the child’s life.

**The Early Investigators–**

**18 months– 3 years**

Children can learn and explorer their environment freely in the toddler room. Beautiful materials are ready for the children on low open shelves. This encourages hands-on exploration and learning. **Preliminary Exercises-** Preliminary Exercises are the first step toward developing self reliance. These are “how to: exercises…how to carefully sit down at a table or chair and get up, how to open and close a door, how to roll a rug, how to turn a faucet on and off and so on. These skills, once mastered, become parts of activities found in Practical Life lessons and in other areas of the Montessori curriculum. **Practical Life-** Practical life for toddlers is designed to instill independence, self confidence, self esteem, and most importantly self control. All of these are characteristics that play a critical role in subsequent intellectual growth. These concepts are developed through a number of activities such as pouring, sweeping, cleaning the table, setting the table and spooning to name a few. Children are also starting to care for themselves; such as dressing, toileting, washing hands…

**Sensorial-** Sensorial are designed to isolate and categorize qualities of the environment perceived through the senses. A multi-sensory approach is used in the Montessori curriculum to optimize the use of the senses for learning. Montessori materials are based on sensorial exploration. Thus, a child learns by doing and by manipulating objects prepared in his environment. The materials are also designed to be self-correcting, for the purpose of fostering self confidence and the love of learning. As each child is different, the learning process is altered slightly for each child.

**Language-** Language is presented to the toddlers through countless amounts of activities and revolves around building vocabulary skills, auditory skills, and identification of items, also sorting and matching of objects in the environment. Language lessons are a continuous part of a toddler’s daily schedule. It is extremely important to develop this area in a toddler.

**Gross Motor Development-** We have 2 scheduled outdoor playtimes, where the children are practicing skills, such as running, climbing, jumping… When the weather is permitting, there are opportunities for

gross motor development that occur during indoor play times as well as in the classroom: Music and movement, Yoga for toddlers, balls, tunnels, indoor climber, bikes and scooters, to name a few. **Creativity-** Montessori is reality based, which holds to the theory that a child must learn what is real FIRST and later can explore the abstract (make believe). As a result, we do not have a lot of dress-up and make believe in the Toddler environment. We do encourage the children to use their imaginations while they are working. We do have a small home living area where children are practicing real life things with natural materials, such as caring for a baby, dressing and putting on clothes, and washing dishes and preparing meals.

**Preschool**

**The Explorer’s & The Seekers**

**3 years to 6 years**

We have 2 preschool classrooms. The preschool classrooms are designed like a "living room" for children. Children choose their work from self correcting materials displayed on open shelves, and they work in specific work areas. Over a period of time, the children develop into a "normalized community," working with high concentration and few interruptions. Normalization is the process whereby a child moves from being undisciplined to self-disciplined, from disordered to ordered, from distracted to focused, through work in the environment. The process occurs through repeated work with the materials.

**Practical Life** – In this area children learn grace & courtesy, spooning, pouring, digging, painting, tracing, cutting, gluing, polishing, cleaning, fastening (buttons, zippers, tying, sewing), and caring for the self and the environment.

**Sensorial & Geometry** -- Using the five senses, children are exposed to different sensations including sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. This includes introduction to different geometric figures and shapes through tactile representations of them.

**Language** – Within the language curriculum children are exposed to phonic sounds, blending sounds, reading, handwriting, creative writing, basic parts of speech, as well as a very rich vocabulary throughout the classroom

**Math** -- In our math area children learn about quantity of large and small numbers, and have an introduction to adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. By using concrete materials that the children can manipulate, they understand complex concepts much earlier than traditional schools allow. Through the materials, the young children learn to understand what they are doing rather than just being taught the techniques to complete an assignment.

**Culture & Science** -- Children learn about other cultures through stories, art, and classroom celebrations, as well as learning geography through puzzle maps and art activities. Children love to understand the world around them and the animals in their lives. They learn to understand their world through lessons about the weather and basic physical science. They also learn about various animals and plants, their habitats, and their life cycles.

**Art** -- Art and music are a part of every subject area, as well as being subjects in their own right. Children experiment with different artistic mediums to create work they can enjoy and be proud of. By fostering children's individual creativity, we stimulate them to take initiative in their own education and to achieve excellence in their work as they work toward their potential.

**Music** -- Children experiment with tone, pitch, and rhythm, as well as learn many songs for their enjoyment. Incorporating music and movement into the curriculum enriches their learning experience.

**The Inspectors– Elementary age children from 5-12**

We provide quality after school child care to children between the ages of 5 (completed Kindergarten) and 12 years. Children are given a warm and caring atmosphere where they are allowed freedom within reasonable limits. Daily activities include healthy snacks, homework assistance, crafts, and outdoor play on the playground. A booster seat must be provided if we transport your child in the TLC van.

We also offer full day programs when Pendleton and Lapel schools are not in session. We also have a summer camp that is a 3-5 day program. The children can come and learn while they have a blast in the summer. From games to experiments and field trips, there are a variety of activities that create a fun and awesome summer.

**Consecutive Days and questions**

Children, especially the very young, thrive when they have a set consistent routine. When children feel safe, they know to expect each day. Safety is very important in the developing brain. When children feel safe, they are ready to learn and grow.

Additionally, the child will find it easier to progress through the lessons if they do not have lapses of time between their experiences in our environment.

General Information

**Policies and Procedures**

**Days of Operation**

TLC Children's Place is open Monday through Friday from 6:00am– 5:30 pm. We follow a twelve month calendar year with the following closings for holidays.

∙ New Year’s Day

∙ Memorial Day

∙ Independence Day

∙ Labor Day

∙ Thanksgiving Day plus one day

∙ Christmas Eve

∙ Christmas Day

∙ Good Friday

We also close the week between Christmas and New Years Day.

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, TLC will be closed on that Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the Monday after.

**Registration and Enrollment**

For each child the following must be completed and on file with the office before a child may start: Application, Emergency form and Fees

Current Immunizations

Parent Handbook received form

Medication Record (if needed)

**It is essential that our records contain up to date information. This is the parent and/or guardian’s responsibility. You must keep phone numbers, address and immunizations current.**

**Enrollment fee**

To hold your child’s place in a class, it is one week of full-time tuition that will be applied to the initial week of care. Should a situation occur and you will no longer need care, you must notify TLC Children’s Place 4 weeks in advance of the start date to receive your enrollment fee back. After said date has passed, the fee is completely non-refundable under any circumstances.

**Registration fee**

Registration fee is a non-refundable $35 to go toward filing paperwork and adding the child to our software system.

**Tuition and Payment**

Tuition/payment may be given to the staff member answering the door. They will place it in the tuition lock box. Tuition is due in advance of care each week. Tuition is due no later than Wed. of each week.

**Late payment Policy**

If payment is received after Wed. a late fee of $10 will be added to your payment due. Tuition credit is not given for absences due to illness, vacation or other plans. (See withdrawal policy) If your payment is a week late, please pay the $10 late fee as well as tuition due as soon as possible. If you are an additional week late, we are asking for the $20 in late fees as well as your full debt that is due before the child can return to normal care (If you cannot pay this amount, please request a meeting to work out a payment plan).

If you cannot pay your full debt to TLC Children’s Place, then we will freeze child care for up to 1 month, until it is paid. As this point, a withdrawal notice must be given and your account is turned over to our attorney.

**Supply Fee**

There is a $50 supply fee collected twice a year for classroom supplies.

**Class Placement**

All class placements are made by the school director in consultation with the lead teachers in each classroom. Placements are made to maintain the balance within the classroom with respect to age, sex, educational, emotional, and social needs of all children. The director will assign a starting date for new students, which may differ from the announced first day of classes. The “phasing in” of new students allows for a smooth transition for beginning children while maintaining an even rhythm of classroom activities.

**Withdrawal policy**

Registration obligates you to TLC Children’s Place until proper withdrawal notification has been made. Withdrawal notice must be in writing and must be received 4 weeks prior to withdrawal date or parent/guardian will be required to continue to pay tuition for the entire four weeks. If you are pulling your child for a length of time (maternity leave, summer…) but would like to hold your spot for the future, tuition is dropped to 50% per week during this time or weekly attendance can be reduced.

**Visitation and Observation - Right now during this pandemic, we are asking parents to drop the children off at the door. We are trying to lessen the amount of germs in the building.**

Parents are always welcome to observe their child at any time throughout the day. We have an open door policy. If you would like a meeting with the teacher or director, you must set up an appointment ahead of time.

**Non-discrimination**

TLC Children’s Place does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, family structure, national or ethnic background or religious beliefs in the admission policies nor in the administration of its educational program. TLC Children’s Place shall accept only children who are at a stage of growth and development which enables them to benefit from its program and for the age level the Children’s Place is staffed and equipped to provide care. TLC Children’s Place shall not admit or maintain a child whose needs it obviously cannot meet or whose behavior would be dangerous for other children and staff in the Children’s Place. Explicit, documented reasons for refusal to admit or provide care to a child shall be provided in written form to the parent.

**Equal Opportunity Provider**

We will not discriminate against any child for any reason, whether it is race or disability.

**Staff Training and observation**

Throughout the school year, TLC will be closed for staff development up to 3 days a year. During these days, children will not be permitted at school. Advance notice will be given.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

Every effort is made to keep TLC Children’s Place open during inclement weather. We do not follow the school closings or schedules. We do listen to the county emergencies. If there is a county emergency for Madison County, we are closed. If we feel that it is unsafe for our staff and our families to travel, we will close.

For announcements of school closings or scheduling, we will post closings on **Channel 13 WTHR and Channel 8 WISHTV. We also use the Remind app to send information via text message.** We will also change our phone message at school by 6:00 am, as well as send a school wide email or post on facebook, if power allows.

Inclement weather can worsen during the day, please call to verify, if we have to make changes or we will call you at your emergency number provided. It is your responsibility to update your emergency numbers.

**Arrival and Departure (during school hours)**

Arrival may be up to fifteen minutes before scheduled class start time and departure will be up to fifteen minutes after time ending, unless extended care is obtained.

**Late pick up policy**

The late policy is for when a child is picked up after the closing time of 5:30pm. If you are late picking up after hours, then $1 a minute per child is paid for each minute that the childcare is provided. Please plan to pay this when you pick up your child or the next day upon returning to school. This fee is paid directly to the closing supervisor.

**Discipline**

At TLC Children’s Place, we train our staff with Conscious Discipline. Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive social and emotional classroom management style that empowers both teachers and students. This style uses daily conflicts to teach: conflict resolution, social skills, character development as well as self control. The discipline empowers children to become competent problem solvers in all areas of life.

We also use peace education. Peace education is the process of acquiring the *values*, the *knowledge* and developing the *attitudes, skills, and behaviors* to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment. We use tools such as Labyrinths to work with, Zen gardens, as well as peaceful music to calm the senses. Through peace education, conscious discipline and the Christian role models, the children learn how to deal with real life situations, as they come, instead of being just told what to do in a situation. Behavior issues are handled within the school. However, the school reserves the right to involve the parent if it is considered beneficial for the child and his/her wellbeing.

**Vacation**

All families earn one week vacation each year. TLC requires each family to be enrolled for at least 6 months before a family is eligible for vacation time.

**Holiday week**

During the week between Christmas and the New Year, we will shut down the school. You are not obligated for payment during this week.

**School Attire**

Please send your child to school in washable, comfortable play clothes that he/she can manage independently. Clothing that fosters independence helps the child become self-sufficient when dressing.

**Naptime Items/Water Day Items**

For naptime, you can provide a small blanket and **small** pillow. These items must go home every week to be cleaned. Please do not let your child bring in toys for naptime.

**Authorization for Pick up**

One of the most important procedures that we have in place to ensure safety is asking for identification when a child is being picked up. If a staff member is not certain who you are, she will ask for identification and check that you are on the approved list. We ask for your patience and understanding during this process. The staff is doing this only with your child’s safety in mind.

**Medication**

All Medicine is kept in the refrigerator or in the locked cabinet in the sick room. All medicine must be brought in its original bottle, which contains the directions from the pharmacist and a current date. Anytime medicine is to be given to the child, a parent must fill out a medication authorization form. Teachers will document when administered.

**Toilet Training Policy**

We ask that all clothing must be child friendly when learning how to use the toilet. Please refrain from hard buttons and belts, or over-alls and onesies. These kinds of dressings make the bathroom a frustrating place to go sometimes. We want to make it as enjoyable as we can.

Here are our policies per age group:

**36 months and younger–** All diapers and wipes must be in unopened packages labeled with the child's name. We are partners in the bathroom with parents. We try to create a positive environment in the bathroom and encourage the children to sit on the toilet whenever possible. The teachers change diapers standing up to encourage the children to walk over and use the toilet as part of the training process. A child will only use the toilet when ready. **WE WILL NEVER FORCE A CHILD TO USE THE TOILET.** We do have a changing table for children who cannot stand due to a physical disability. **3 years and up–** We like to look at this level of training as “coaching.” Teachers will guide the children through the process, hands free, encouraging the children to learn the process on their own. We hope to partner with parents by providing an environment that is positive and helps children accomplish using the bathroom on their own. Please ask your child’s teacher more about the toileting process.

Communication

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**Facebook**

Each classroom, as well as the school, has a Facebook page that we keep private. We will accept current student’s parents and grandparents (with permission). We post pictures of the children and let you see a glimpse into their classrooms. We also post reminders and current news.

**Remind**

Remind is a free, safe, and simple messaging tool that helps teachers share important information, updates and reminders. Subscribe by text, email or using Remind App.

**Text- @tlcchil to the number 81010**

**Or for email search- remind.com/join/tlcchil**

**Email**

All classrooms have an email to communicate:

School– tlcchildrensplace@trinity-tlc.com

Early Investigators– tlcearlyinvestigator@gmail.com

Seekers– tlcseekers@gmail.com

Explorers– tlcexplorers@gmail.com

**Newsletters**

Each classroom sends home a newsletter, either weekly or monthly depending on the classroom. This is full of exciting information about what's going on currently and events in the near future.

Health and Wellness

We are taking temperatures at the door and charting them. The health of a child is very important to TLC Children’s Place. By monitoring each child’s health, teachers are able to maintain a better environment of the entire school. A child who is unable to participate in all our activities should not be in attendance. Cooperation in keeping your child home when he/she is ill is greatly appreciated. DO NOT SEND SICK CHILDREN TO SCHOOL!!!

If a child arrives in the morning showing signs/symptoms of an illness, TLC will be unable to accept him/her.

Examples of health symptoms that require exclusion from the school include, but are not limited to: Severe pain or discomfort in joints, abdomen or ears.

Vomiting or diarrhea (2 bouts in 1 hour or 3 in a day)

Severe coughing or sore throat

Temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher

Jaundice skin or eyes

Conjunctivitis (pink eye) must have 24 hours of drops and no seepage

Infected, untreated skin rash or severe itching of head or body.

Difficult or rapid breathing

Swollen joints or lymph nodes

Blood/pus from ears, skin urine or stool.

Symptoms of chicken pox, impetigo, live, scabies, conjunctivitis, or strep throat

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parent will be contacted immediately. The child will be given the opportunity to rest in the first aid room or an isolated cot until the parents arrive. If the child is not picked up within one hour from time of notification, the parent will be contacted again. If we are unable to reach the parent, we will call the emergency contact person. Children who are sent home with an illness will not be readmitted into the school until all signs of illness are gone for 72 hours, fever free/medicine free for 72 hours, or a doctor’s note stating the child is not contagious and what the illness was.

Food

**Birthdays or Special Treats**

Our celebration of life is unique to Montessori and is a wonderful experience in our classroom. On the actual day or closest school day, please bring in a picture of your child for each year of life. During our line time, we represent the Earth with a globe and the sun is in the center of our line. The child begins at birth and walks around the sun for each year of life. The children sing and celebrate their friend’s life. Before bringing in a treat, please be aware of any students in the class with allergies. Also the food must be store bought and in unopened containers.

Parents are welcome to attend the celebration of life!

Here are a few suggestions for birthday or special day treats, please bring peanut-free items for they pose life-threatening for those allergic:

Ice cream cups

Cracker packs

Fruit cups

**Food Services**

Breakfast/AM snack 8:30

Small snack 10:30 if needed.

Lunch 12:00

PM Snack (2:30– 3:30)

**No Sippy cups or open food may be brought into the school.**

**Allergies**

It is up to the parent or guardian to make the staff at TLC Children’s Place aware of an allergy your child may have. Please make sure you have a doctor’s note on file or fill out the medication /allergy portion of the enrollment application. Children with special diets must provide their own lunch and snacks.

**Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**

**Form**

I/We,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) of

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Have received, read, understand and will abide by the information presented in the TLC Children’s Place Handbook.

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Parent Signature Date

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Parent Signature Date

Detach this form and return it with your paperwork.

Thank you!