

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 pro-gram that is highly regarded for its creativity and excellence in developing children's individual gifts.

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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 was 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 your child'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

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 child to begin his experience moving at their own pace! We enhance and heighten the infant's awareness of his environment by providing materials that engage and strengthen the child's 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-leads to independence, occurs when infants participate in their daily routines of care and prepared lessons.

The role of the teacher- guiding 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 explore 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. Much of the child's emotional growth is developed through language and learning how and when to use it.

Gross Motor Development- We have 2 scheduled out-door 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 class-rooms are design like a "living room" for children. Children choose their work from among the 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

Practical Life – 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 -- 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 -- 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 the life cycles. Biology and parts of body and their function is another subject of interest.

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. Music and movement incorporating it into our curriculum brings the work alive for the children, and enriches their experience greatly.

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. You must provide an adequate booster seat, 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 pro-gram. 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.

Tips for the first day of school:

We suggest the following procedures to help make your child's first day of school successful:

1. Prepare them in advance with a prior visit by contacting the school or teacher to make an appointment. And speak positively about the school and what they will do there.
2. On the first day, do not linger when dropping your child off. Kiss, hug and say goodbye at the door. This may seem abrupt, but it minimizes separation anxiety for your child, as well as tells the child that you have full trust in what they are doing. Reassure your child that you will pick them up. A staff member will be there to greet you. Be prepared for tears on some days. (Parents and children) Our staff will give hugs and love and are trained to help with this transition.
3. For reassurance, you may call the office during the day or email your child's teacher to see how your child is doing.

Rest assure that although children take various amounts of time to adjust, they eventually become very familiar and comfortable with the routine. It is normal for the children to take up to 6 weeks to adjust to their new environment.

Consecutive Days and questions

Children, especially the very young, thrive when they have a set consistent routine. They feel safe when they know what to expect each day. Safety is very important in the child's brain. When a child feels safe, they are ready to learn and grow. When a child starts school, it must quickly become part of their routine for it to become comfortable for them.

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, Of course, the ultimate decision to bring the child to school rests with the parents, which we respect.

General Information

Policies and Procedures

Days of Operation

TLC Children's Place is open Monday through Friday from 6:00am– 6:00 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

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 can 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. Registration obligates you to our school until proper notification of withdraw.

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 of fees can be placed in the lock box on the entry desk. Tuition is due in advance of care each week. Tuition is due no later than Wed. of each week.

Late payment Policy

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 withdraw notice must be given and your account is turned over to our attorney. 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 withdraw 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).

This is something that we want to enforce not only help you pay your tuition, but to help you not to further your debt. If you can-not 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 withdraw 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. See Current Calendar for dates.

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.

Withdraw policy

Registration obligates you to TLC Children's Place until proper withdraw notification has been made. Withdraw notice must be in writing and must be received 4 weeks prior to withdraw 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

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.

Conferences

There are 2 scheduled conferences yearly with your child's teacher. These will help the teachers to update you on the progress of your child at school and help the teachers to partner with what your needs are. The teachers and director are always available by appointment for any questions or concerns that you might have. We feel that it is best to share information apart from your child. We believe that this is one way of being respectful of your child's feelings.

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 will also change our phone message at school by 6:00 am, as well as send a school wide email or post on face book, 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

This policy is for when a child is picked up after the closing time of 6:00pm. 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 peace squares to sit in, 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.

TLC is staff by experienced teachers. Behavior issues are handled with 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/Christmas Camp

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

TLC must have at least 20 children needing care, before we will open for Christmas camp. This is a pay as needed camp.

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, small pillow and a soft item to cuddle with. These items must go home every week to be cleaned. Please do not let your child bring in toys for naptime. By soft item, we mean something comparable to a stuffed animal.

Car Line

The parent carline is from 7:30– 8:30 , during the months August to June. It is where a child can be dropped off right at the front door, where a staff member will assist the child into the building.

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 of who you are, they 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. It is a good idea to always remind whomever is picking your child up to always have their identification ready.

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 and learning dressing skills. Please refrain from hard buttons and belts, or over-alls and onesies. These kinds of dressings make the bath-room 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 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 child through the process, hands-free, encouraging the child to learn the process on their own.

We hope to partner with parents by providing an environment that is positive and helps the child to accomplish using the bathroom on their own. Please ask your child's teacher more about the toileting process.

Communication

Mail Folders

Each family has a mail folder in the entryway. Please check your folder daily for notes and information.

Facebook

Each classroom, as well as the school, has a Face book 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.

Email

All classrooms have an email to communicate:

School– tlchildrensplace@trinity-tlc.com

Early Investigators– tlclearlyinvestigator@gmail.com

Seekers– tlcseekers@gmail.com

Explorers– tlcexplorers@gmail.com

Montessori Education Nights

Four to six time a year we will host Montessori education nights open to the school. We have fun nights with children, but we also have learning nights with just parents. We will discuss different areas of the Montessori philosophy and child development. This is a great opportunity to meet and talk with other parents, ask questions, and learn about what your child does each day in the class-room.

These meetings will be announced through our newsletters, face-book pages, and on our school calendar.

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

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 100.0 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 24 hours, fever free/medicine free for 24 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
- Fruit salad/Fruit cups
- Yogurt
- Pudding cups
- Jello cups
- Cracker packs

Food Services

Breakfast (served 6:30am– 7:30 am)

AM Snack (beginning at 8:30, offered until 9:30/10:00)

Lunch (times are by classes between 11:30– 12:30)

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.