



TREE HILL

• LEARNING CENTER •

Parent Handbook



Curriculum

Our curriculum, which has been exclusively developed by our teaching team of professionals, has many influences. As a staff, we have looked to the latest research and information to guide us in the development of this unique and creative curriculum. We begin the year with a theme-based learning approach as our staff observes the children's individual interests and developmental needs. From there, our teaching teams consult with one another to create a network of ideas that are based on these observations of the children's interests. From there the teaching team will bring in resources and develop activities that are relevant to the children and their success as they move through our whole program.

The project approach is another way we develop curriculum. In the project approach children have the opportunity to define what they already know about a topic of interest as well as what they are interested in learning about the topic. From there extended amounts of time are given to help facilitate this emerging interest and sustain it to new levels of thinking and understanding.

We believe that the classroom is the child's workshop. There a child develops skills in making decisions, acquiring knowledge of the world, making friends, and learning to cooperate in a group. The child is given opportunities to exercise curiosity, initiative, critical thinking and creativity. We believe in a whole child approach, supporting children in their academic, social, emotional, and physical development.

Our daily activities include those that support a child's total well-being. Some will be teacher-directed, while others are child-initiated. Children learn through their play and learn most quickly when their environment is relative and consistent. By combining what we know about healthy development and the individual needs of the children enrolled in our program, we are able to offer a relevant curriculum which provides ample opportunities for comprehensive and meaningful learning.

School readiness is an important long-term goal of our program. School readiness preparation begins as early as our infant and toddler classes and is carried through the pre-kindergarten class. Activities focus around literacy skills, math skills, and cooperative social skills. Our private accredited kindergarten program builds on these foundations and provides instruction in literacy, math, science, social studies, health, art, and music in alignment with the Washington State Common Core Standards.

Curriculum and activity plans are prepared in advance by our teaching team and posted on the Parent Information Board outside your child's classroom, along with any program changes.

Routines

Cubbies: Children are encouraged to remove their own coats/jackets and backpacks and hang them up in their cubbies. Assistance will be given when a child is unable to help him/herself - by showing how and by reminding them that they can do it, and by encouraging the child to be self-reliant. Teachers will see that all children are appropriately dressed before going outdoors - with coats/jackets fastened, and hats and boots on if needed.

Restroom Use: In the younger classes, teachers are prepared for bathroom accidents and treat these occurrences matter-of-factly. The child will be changed to dry clothing and the wet articles are placed in a plastic bag to take home. In this routine, children are encouraged to help themselves as much as possible. The child is reminded to flush, wash hands and dry them well. All children are required to wash their hands upon entering the classroom, after using the bathroom, before and after eating, and after any “messy” activities.

Meal/Snack time: All children help clean up the room and then wash their hands. Children are encouraged to remain seated until they are through eating. Children are also encouraged to help themselves as much as possible during snack times. Children clean up after themselves, placing cups, napkins and trash in the wastebasket, and wash their hands.

Circle time: Group times are planned to introduce children to peer experiences and familiarize them with teacher-directed activities. Songs, games, stories and finger-plays, meetings, curriculum or event planning are used to provide pleasant, proactive group interactions, and allow children time to talk about home experiences, ideas or articles they have brought. All children are encouraged to join group time; however, children who strongly resist or disrupt the group may sit with an adult or choose a quiet activity until circle time is over or until they choose to rejoin the group.

Cleanup: At specified times during the day children help put away play materials. Teachers help to ensure that equipment is placed on shelves in attractive, useable order. At the last cleanup time, the room should be left in readiness for the next day. The same is expected for outdoor play time.

Resting: Rest/nap times are provided daily, per individual classroom schedule, usually immediately following lunch. During naps or rest periods children are provided an individual mat, and can bring special blankets and/or stuffed toys to make this time more comfortable and secure. Lighting is dimmed and soft music is played in the background. Children are not forced to sleep, but rather invited to rest their bodies to ensure active engagement later. In alignment with best practices, children who are not behaving restfully after 30 minutes may be invited to engage in various quiet activities away from resting children. Tree Hill prohibits any child drop-offs or pick-ups during scheduled nap times.

Outdoor Environment

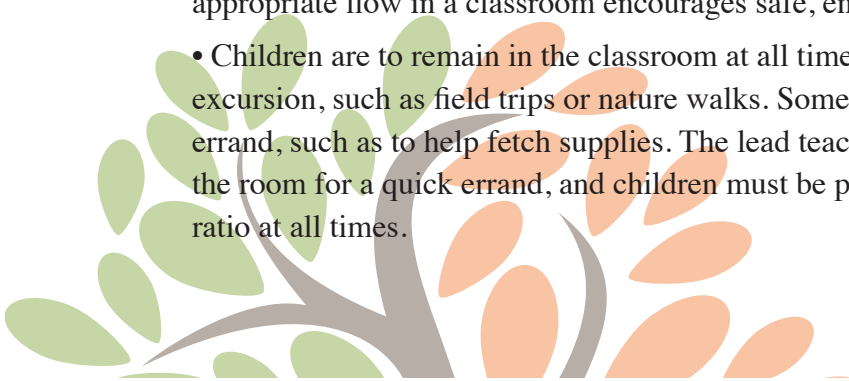
Outdoor activities are not a “recess” but an important part of the child’s development and the program’s curriculum. Outdoor play provides opportunities for loud and active play that is unsuitable for indoor play. Outdoor time is a time for free play as well as special organized outdoor activities.

- All children go outdoors during the specified time. If a child is considered too ill to participate outdoors, it is recommended that the child remain at home until able to fully participate at school.
- During the rainy season days; children should come prepared wearing a jacket with a hood, and appropriate shoes.
- All climbing equipment is closely supervised by our teaching staff, with at least one adult near the slide whenever it is in use.
- Children go down the slide feet first, always supervised by an adult.
- Sand stays in the sand area. A child throwing sand is cautioned about the dangers of sand in eyes, removed from the area and allowed to choose something else to do until ready to use the sand area appropriately.
- Children stay in their own outdoor activity area unless on a supervised walk.
- Teachers supervising the outdoor environment keep their eyes on the children at all times, even while engaged in necessary brief conversations with other adults or children. Teachers will move into areas where children are gathering to observe and will be ready to intervene in unsafe behavior if necessary.

Indoor Environment

Children may select from various interest/learning centers during free choice time. Materials and supplies are available for children to use in expressing creativity, and classroom teachers have special projects and learning activities planned for children to participate in. Children are encouraged to solve their own problems, with a teacher present to guide the problem-solving process and prevent episodes of physical aggression.

- Tables, chairs and shelves are not for climbing.
- Running is not allowed indoors - children are reminded to use “walking feet” and that running is for outdoors.
- Yelling and screaming is not allowed indoors - children are reminded to use their “inside voice” and save loud voices for outdoors.
- Materials and equipment should be kept in the areas in which they are stored. The classroom environment is arranged into areas with quiet activities separated from more active areas with, an appropriate flow in a classroom encourages safe, engaging learning and playtime.
- Children are to remain in the classroom at all times, unless the Director approves a supervised excursion, such as field trips or nature walks. Sometimes a child may accompany a teacher on a quick errand, such as to help fetch supplies. The lead teacher must always be notified that the child is leaving the room for a quick errand, and children must be properly supervised and classrooms will remain in ratio at all times.



Learning Centers

Painting: Children are encouraged to wear aprons/smocks to paint. Teaching staff provide assistance when needed with holding and using paintbrushes. Teachers show interest and encourage children to describe their work. Creativity and written descriptions of paintings are encouraged.

Clay/Dough: Modeling clay is used with a variety of tools for cutting and rolling. Play dough is used with cookie cutters, rolling pins, and scissors. Teachers guide and encourage children in using materials, but do not make things for them.

Art Materials: Children are given daily opportunities to explore and experiment with many different art materials and mediums in the art area. Teachers are on hand to help the children learn how to use various tools and materials. Assistance is provided for young children who may need help in learning to use scissors, or guidance with glue.

Dramatic Play: Dramatic play materials and props are provided in each classroom and we encourage children to participate in a variety of dramatic play activities.

Library: Books are used in the library area. Teachers model for children how to appropriately use and care for books, how to turn pages without tearing, and return books to shelves when finished. Teachers are available to read to children when they wish to listen to or engage with a story.

Music: Music is encouraged throughout the day, such as CDs, singing and dancing, and musical instruments. Teachers supervise the use of CD players.

Sensory Table: Water, sand, and other materials are introduced frequently as sensory play is an activity that many children enjoy. Children are encouraged to wear aprons/smocks to protect their clothing. There are numerous water/sand toys and objects for measuring and pouring. Sponges and mops are kept close at hand for spills.

Manipulative Materials: Puzzles, beads, peg sets, small blocks, games, etc. - are always available to children during free choice time.

Block area: Block building is done on the floor near the block shelves. Teachers provide constant supervision to see that the constructions are kept at a safe height - below the child's shoulder level. Adults show the children where and how to build, not what to build.

Classroom Enrichment

While enrolled at Tree Hill Learning Center your child will have many opportunities to explore the world in which they live. As part of our program, your child will be introduced to the various cultures that are a part of the Tree Hill Learning Center family. Visits from special guests from our community - including police officers, firefighters, dentists, magicians and maybe even a parent or two - will be planned to broaden the scope of their world and enhance your child's classroom experience.

Infant and Toddler Program

At Tree Hill Learning Center, we understand that in the first years of life, infants and toddlers are beginning to create a picture of who they are, what they can do, and what they think and feel. During this special and significant stage, learning occurs at a rate unmatched by any other phase of life! Establishing trusting relationships with the infants and toddlers in our care is of utmost importance to us. We show them they are important, interesting and competent as we share pleasure and excitement in their accomplishments and discoveries. Our primary goal is to provide a warm atmosphere where your little one will feel safe, secure and cared for. Each day we provide enjoyable and engaging opportunities for learning and growth while maintaining a consistent routine for each child to aid in smoothing the transition from home to school.

With these goals in mind, we have created a nurturing program where we hope your young child will thrive. At this young age, children learn about themselves, their feelings and the people around them during each and every interaction and activity. While we plan fun, developmentally appropriate activities and learning opportunities for our infants and toddlers, we also allow the children learn and discover at their own pace, encouraging individual exploration as well as group interaction.

Infant Meals and Routine

We realize the importance of a consistent home to school schedule and will work with parents in order to maintain individual schedules for infants. Parents are expected to supply bottles, nipples, formula and/or breast milk, jarred baby food and any other feeding supplies. All feeding supplies must be clearly labeled with the child's name. Our staff will label perishable items with the date they were opened in order to avoid spoilage. We never re-heat or re-use formula or breast milk that isn't finished at the time of initial feeding. We always hold babies while feeding them and never prop their bottles. We delight in taking our time while rocking, talking, singing and interacting with your baby during feeding times.

We recognize the importance of the relationship between infants and their parents. We welcome parents to come in and visit their little ones any time during the day, whether it be for a feeding or just for snuggles!

In consultation with the child's parent or healthcare specialist, semi-solid foods will be introduced to babies four months and older. We will take the same time and care during these meal times that we do for bottle feeding. We hope to ensure pleasurable and relaxed meal times for all children. We are required to serve whole milk to children 23 months of age or younger unless written permission from the child's parent states otherwise.

Toddler Meals and Routine

Toddlers are served the same menu as our older children, but we may adjust how the foods are served so they are appropriate for younger children. For example, if raw veggies are served to the older children at snack time, we would serve steamed vegetables to our toddlers.

We work hard with our staff and parents to transition toddlers to whole milk in a sippy-cup. Breast milk is only allowed in our infant program. Children must be drinking whole milk or an appropriate alternative by the time they are fully transitioned to Acorns.

Our Acorns class runs on a group schedule, meaning that the class eats, naps, and play all at the same times. A consistent schedule helps to make for a predictable routine that the children can count on.

The Diapering Process

When diapering children, we:

- Wear nitrile gloves
- Never leave the child unattended
- Place all necessary equipment on the changing table first
- Check and wipe all creases and folds
- Wipe girls from front to back
- Use diaper cream as necessary (when provided by parent)

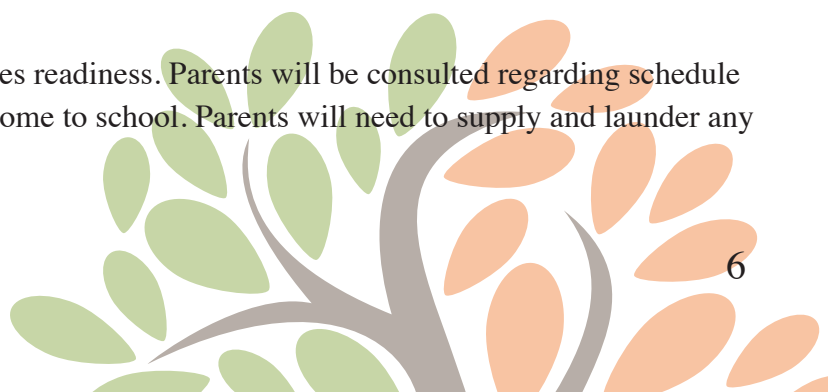
After diapering the child, we:

- Always wash the child's hands before placing him down to play
- Dispose of the plastic gloves, diaper and used wipes in the garbage
- Wipe down the changing area with a disinfectant solution and dry thoroughly
- Put cloth diapers in a plastic bag to be placed away in the child's diaper cubby to be returned to the parent at the end of the day
- Always wash our hands after completing all of the above

Cloth or disposable diapers are to be provided by parents. Laundering of cloth diapers is the responsibility of the parent.

Toilet Training

Toilet training will be initiated when the child indicates readiness. Parents will be consulted regarding schedule and technique to maintain a consistent routine from home to school. Parents will need to supply and launder any training pants or pull-ups.



Health and Safety

Tree Hill Learning Center is licensed by the State of Washington Department of Family and Social Services. Tree Hill will maintain the highest standards of cleanliness for a healthy environment. Washington State Licensors visit the site to make sure that all health and safety requirements are met.

The staff makes every effort to maintain this safe and healthy environment for the children so that a minimum of absences occur due to illness. Health habits taught at home are reinforced at the center including frequent hand washing, especially before meals and after restroom use, proper use of tissues for wiping noses, wearing appropriate clothing for weather conditions and rotating active and quiet activities with opportunities for the children to rest.

All of our staff members hold current CPR/First Aid certifications and undergo regular training to maintain the health and safety standards of our program. All staff members and classroom volunteers are further required to obtain TB clearance and HIV/AIDS Awareness and Prevention training.

Meals and Snacks

At Tree Hill Learning Center we strive to provide well-balanced, nutritious meals and snacks to the children enrolled in our program. Our menu is planned a month in advance by our cook and copies are available on the Classroom Information boards. All of the food we serve to the children is prepared here in our kitchen or purchased from a store. To ensure a healthy mealtime environment, all staff members who prepare and serve food are trained and qualified in the safe and sanitary administration of food preparation and all dishes are washed and sanitized after each use.

The cost of breakfast, lunch and two snacks is included in your child's tuition costs. However, we will not be providing any discount if you choose to send a packed lunch to school with your child.

Please remember to keep the staff informed of any restrictions or modifications to your child's diet. We must obtain from the parent or health care provider a written list of foods that your child cannot consume due to allergies, personal health requirements or religious restrictions.

We may not provide nutrient concentrates or supplements, a modified diet or any allergy diet, except with written permission from a child's health care provider. Parents are responsible for the cost of this special diet.

If you wish to bring a special food for all children to eat (e.g. a birthday treat), please check with the staff at least one day before you plan to bring it. Please keep in mind that we are not able to serve food cooked at home to children in the program. We are only able to serve commercially prepared foods or foods cooked on-site.

We are a nut free facility. All foods brought into the building must be peanut and tree nut free, including milk alternatives.

Breakfast

Children who arrive before 7:45 a.m. will be offered breakfast providing at least one- quarter of the recommended dietary allowances (WAC 388-73-144(5)) .

Typical breakfast: Choice of cereal, organic milk, and fruit

Snacks

Two snacks (mid-morning and afternoon) are served daily. Additionally, all school-age children arriving at our facility after their school day will be served a snack as soon as they arrive.

Snacks shall consist of, but are not limited to, two or more of the following items: organic milk or milk products; fruit and /or vegetables; whole grain or enriched breads and /or cereal products; and protein food (such as turkey or tofu) (WAC 388- 73-155(5)) .

Typical snack: Apple slices, whole grain crackers and water.

Lunch

All of our lunches contain adequate nutrients for a meal that is well balanced as well as delicious. Our lunches are served in portions that are appropriate for the age and size of the children who are being served.

Typical lunch: Chicken, steamed rice, mixed vegetables, pears and organic milk.

Ensuring that children are well fed and nourished is one of our highest priorities. We make every effort to provide meals and snacks that are both nutritious and appealing to children. If for any reason you should decide to pack your child's lunch yourself, please do your best to follow the nutrition guidelines developed by the State Department of Health. A satisfactory lunch should provide at least 1/3 of the day's nutrient needs. For the child 3-6 years of age, the following pattern will meet those needs:

- Organic milk (3/4 cup)
- Meat or alternate protein (1.5 ounces)
- Vegetables and fruits (1/2 cup)
- Bread, whole wheat or enriched (1/2 - 1 slice)

Foods to avoid:

Salty foods (make chips a treat, not the norm)

Foods with high sugar content (including fruit snacks and roll-ups}

Any lunches brought from home will be monitored to ensure safe preparation, storage and nutritional adequacy. We will supplement foods brought from home that do not meet nutrition requirements and will provide food to children who may come without a meal.

Illness

The staff appreciates the fact that many family members who enroll their children at the center are working and that it is difficult to have their schedules interrupted.

However, your cooperation is needed in stopping the spread of contagious illnesses. Children who have the following symptoms cannot be admitted to the school until the contagious period has passed and for at least 24-48 hours after the symptoms have subsided. We cannot serve children with:

- Temperatures 101 degrees or above or 100 degrees or above in combination with any of the following symptoms:
- Severe cough
- Sore throat
- Green/yellow thick discharge from the nose/eyes
- Diarrhea
- Watery eyes
- Swollen glands
- Vomiting
- A skin rash that has not been identified by a physician
- Evidence of head lice or other parasites
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)

Staff members conduct daily health checks of children when they arrive at the facility and any symptoms of illness are recorded in our Illness and Injury Log. If a child is found to be ill or becomes sick while at school, the parent/legal guardian will be notified. The child will be isolated in the front office if possible and the parent/legal guardian will be expected to pick the child up within an hour.

If there is an outbreak of a contagious disease such as chicken pox, this information will be posted on the classroom door with handouts giving information on the disease so that parents may take appropriate action to protect their children. All outbreaks of communicable diseases will be reported to the local Health Department. Any children not fully immunized according to the DOH schedule are not allowed at Tree Hill in the case of an outbreak of such a disease.

At Tree Hill Learning Center, we understand the importance of maintaining consistency in your child's classroom. Each classroom will have a lead teacher and an assistant teacher. If illnesses or personal reasons leave this position open, we will ensure a qualified substitute teacher or assistant is called in.



Medications

Medication may be administered to a child only with a signed Medication Authorization form from the parent. We may only administer medication when the dose, duration, and method of administration is clearly specified on the manufacturer's label for the age or weight of the child; as specified on prescription labels; or as authorized in writing by a physician. All medication must be in its original container and properly labeled with the child's full name, date prescription was filled or medication's expiration date, and legible instructions for administration.

Parents must give all medication directly to the classroom teacher or director. Medication may not be given to children to hand over to staff. All medication will be kept in a locked box in our health room out of the reach of children. Children are not allowed to keep medicine in their pockets, lunch boxes or cubbies. Medication will be administered only by the Program Director or Lead Teacher. We will record the administration of any medications on the child's Medication Authorization form. Any unused medication will be returned to parents or properly disposed. All Medication Authorization forms must be renewed every six months.

Children who have been given a prescription medication for a contagious illness must be on that medication for at least 24 hours before they may return to Tree Hill.

The following are considered medications and require signed Medication Authorization forms from a parent and may only be administered at the dose, duration and method of administration specified on the manufacturer's label for the age or weight of the child needing medication:

- Antihistamines
- Non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers
- Non-narcotic cough suppressants
- Decongestants
- Anti-itching ointments or lotions
- Diaper ointment and powders
- Sun screen
- Cough drops/throat lozenges

If you wish for your child to be given any non-prescription medication that is not included in the above list: is to be taken differently than indicated on the manufacturer's label; or lacks labeled instructions, a written authorization from a physician will be required. For example, some labels indicate that for children under 2 years of age, you are required to consult a physician. In that case, a physician's written authorization would be required. It is our policy never to give aspirin to a child except with written authorization from a physician.

Medications for chronic conditions and allergies:

For chronic conditions (such as asthma), the parent's written consent must be renewed every six months. An individual care plan must be provided that lists symptoms or conditions under which the medication will be given, this may require a physician's signature.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a life threatening emergency, one staff member will stay with the injured/ill child. 911 will be called for any major medical emergency that could be life threatening or extremely dangerous. Severely injured children will not be moved before the ambulance crew arrives unless we are otherwise instructed by a 911 operator. For a child who is choking, staff trained in using the infant and child CPR shall follow the procedure.

Parents will be contacted as soon as possible. If the parents cannot be reached, we will make every effort to contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's Medical Authorization form.

In the event of minor emergencies, staff trained in first aid will take appropriate steps to aid the child. All staff members are trained in first aid and infant/child CPR. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible if the accident might possibly require medical care.

When accidents and minor injuries occur that are unlikely to require further medical attention (such as minor cuts, scrapes, bruises), parents are not called but will be informed of the incident when they arrive to pick up the child and be given a Childcare Injury/Incident Report.

All injuries (both minor and major) and illness are recorded in the Illness and Injury Log.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirements

Our staff is mandated by Washington State Law and licensing requirements to immediately report any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect or exploitation to the police or Child Protective Services. We may not notify parents when the police or Child Protective Services are called about possible child abuse, neglect or exploitation, except on the recommendation of Child Protective Services or the police when they are called.

Hand Washing Policy

All children, staff, and parents must wash their hands:

- Immediately upon entering classrooms
- After toileting
- After helping children with toileting
- After diapering a child
- After helping a child with nose blowing, coughing or any sign of illness
- Before getting trays from kitchen or handling any food service
- Between activities (e.g. wash before and after using play dough)

Children will be supervised as often as possible to promote proper hand washing procedures, and will be taught proper hand washing techniques.

Sanitation Policy

Tables, sinks, countertops, and toilets are sanitized with a bleach solution as needed during the day. Toys and shelves are cleaned on a regular basis and as needed.

Mouthed toys are immediately placed in a sanitizing bleach solution and thoroughly washed and dried before being returned to shelves.

Safety

We ask that families closely supervise their children in the parking lot, lobbies and elsewhere in the day school. It is recommended that families who have more than one child have children who have already exited from the car keep one hand on the car until all are ready to cross the parking lot to the building. Please have children hold your hand or hang on to an article of your clothing you are wearing (e.g. a shirt tail or purse/diaper bag) while crossing the parking lot. When departing from the school, please do not allow children to run outside while you are signing them out or speaking to school staff and other families. Please keep your child with you at all times except when they are signed into their classrooms.

No child is ever to be left alone or unsupervised. At arrival, families are expected to help the child settle into play. Be sure to let a teacher know when you are ready to leave the classroom so the teacher is aware that you have left and the child is in the teacher's care. This process will help with transition to the school environment. Likewise, let a teacher know when you are taking your child at the end of class, so that the teacher is aware of the child's departure.

Families whose children are enrolled in the program are permitted access at all times to all parts of the center where children are cared for, including nap areas. Families with children in the program are encouraged to drop in to visit with their children (i.e. have lunch with their child). Before entering any of the classrooms during such a visit, please sign in as a visitor at the office to receive a visitor's badge. Remember to stop by the office after the visit to sign out and return your badge.

To maintain a safe classroom, our program uses the following minimum staff-child ratio:

Infants: 1:4 (maximum group size of 8)

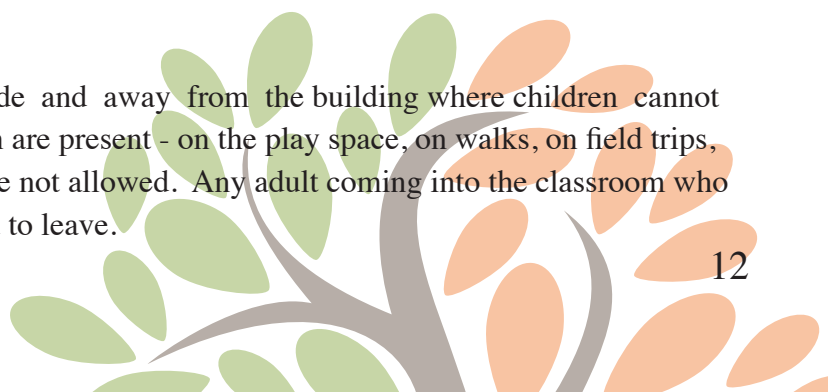
Toddlers (Twelve months to Thirty months): 1:7 (maximum group size of 14)

Thirty months-to-Five: 1:10 (maximum group size of 20)

School-Age (Five and up): 1:15 (maximum group size of 30)

These ratios are set by Washington State licensing requirements and are the minimum allowed by law. However, our ratios are usually lower and closer to the standard of best practices established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This is due to the nature of our program and learning environment.

Use of tobacco products can take place **ONLY** outside and away from the building where children cannot see you. Tobacco use is never allowed when children are present - on the play space, on walks, on field trips, on the bus or in the classrooms. Alcohol and drugs are not allowed. Any adult coming into the classroom who appears under the influence of any drug will be asked to leave.



Discipline and Guidance Policy

Our program subscribes to a disciplinary policy built on mutual trust; with teachers and children working together to help the children grow and mature. Teachers value and respect the children; children trust their teachers' patience, understanding, and friendly firmness in guiding behavior.

In helping to direct the child toward self-discipline, the following guidance techniques are used:

- Positive statements are used in giving direction to behavior
- Redirection is consistent with the child's needs
- The child is given opportunities to make choices and solve problems
- Suggestions are given in time to prevent conflicts
- Comparisons between children are avoided
- Unacceptable behavior is clearly explained and the child is told what is acceptable. Approval of acceptable behavior is clearly expressed

Discipline of children shall primarily be the responsibility of the teacher and classroom assistant in accordance with the individual child's age, stage of development and the knowledge that the teacher has of the child's needs. We view guidance as a team effort and an ongoing learning process.

Disciplinary methods used shall be based on guidance to help the child develop inner control, self-responsibility, and respect for the rights of others, as he learns to cope with the daily experiences of living and working with others.

Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be used or tolerated by anyone, including parents, on school grounds. This includes biting, shaking, slapping, hitting, kicking, or any other means of inflicting pain on a child.

Verbal abuse is not allowed. This means no yelling, no obscene language and no put downs between adults or between adults and children. Spanking, threatening, or withholding food cannot be used to discipline children.

The staff shall accept and respect each child for who she is as a unique individual. If a child's behavior becomes unacceptable, this shall be explained to the child in a positive way without humiliation, fright, or physical harm. The child shall then be helped to find a better way of resolving problems or meeting his needs. Respect for the child's feelings shall be maintained. If the teaching staff feels that parent involvement is necessary, the parents will be contacted and a meeting will be set up to discuss further options.

Biting Policy

Biting is a difficult behavior for all parties involved. Tree Hill staff does everything in our power to minimize instances of biting. For most children, this is a normal stage of development that passes as quickly as it starts. But for some children it becomes a negative pattern of behavior and requires consistent consequences and monitoring. Tree Hill trains all staff on our biting policy and ask that parents maintain consistent strategies if biting behaviors are seen at home.

Tree Hill's management strategy for biting is as follows:

- The “biter” will be told firmly “No biting” and removed from the situation
- Any adults involved will turn their attention to the child who was bitten, and give an ice pack if needed
- The “biter” may benefit from separation for up to 5 minutes
- After the situation is resolved, teachers will engage both children in an activity and/or give positive reinforcement for wanted behaviors

Strategies that may be used if biting behavior becomes consistent:

- Encouraging use of a pacifier, or teething toy
- Use of teething tablets or pain reliever with parent consent
- Short term restriction in high chair during transition times
- “Cool down” time at front desk
- Designating a teacher to “shadow” child

Tree Hill's biting response protocol:

One bite: we will send a text or email to parent notifying them of the bite

Two bites: We will call parent to discuss bites

Three bites: Child will need to go home for the day, we will call parent again to arrange pick up

After three days of child being sent home due to biting, the Director will schedule a meeting with parents to discuss a plan of action.

Following the parent meeting, if the child is sent home 6 additional days due to biting, the child will be removed from our program.

Rules and Guidelines

Necessary rules shall be few, clearly and simply stated, and consistently maintained to assure the health and safety of the children at all times. For example, rules such as “no hitting” and “children riding bikes must wear a helmet” would always be enforced. Guidelines are more flexible and open to interpretation by individual teachers and can vary with the developmental level of the children. For example, some teachers require that house-keeping materials be kept in a dramatic play area, while others allow them to be used in other areas. It is easy to see how the ability of the children to return play materials to their proper place when finished with them would influence such a guideline.

Rules that are strictly enforced include:

- No hitting, kicking, or biting other children
- Helmets must be worn when riding bicycles
- Violent play is not allowed, including playing “guns”
- No running indoors

Program Policies and Procedures

Admissions and Enrollment Policy

Tree Hill Learning Center serves children 12 weeks to 10 years of age. We provide high quality care for children in an age appropriate environment.

Tree Hill Learning Center gladly welcomes and accepts children and families from all backgrounds, regardless of race, color, national and ethnic origin, religion, ability or gender. We are dedicated to providing whatever assistance is necessary to aid children and parents who have limited English language ability, whether through written translation or through the assistance of an interpreter.

Upon enrollment It will be necessary for the following forms to be completed, signed and returned to the Tree Hill before your child’s first day:

- Pre-Registration Form
- Complete Registration Packet including:
 - Enrollment Form
 - General Permission Form
 - Medical Authorization Form
 - Immunization Record
 - Before and After School Transportation Permission Form (if applicable)
 - After Hours Policy
 - Billing Policy
 - Grievances Policy



- Signed acknowledgment of Parent Handbook
- Signed acknowledgment of Pesticide Policy
- Individual Health Plan (if applicable)

To ensure proper adjustment for all children, each child will be admitted to the program for a trial period of up to two weeks. At the conclusion of this time, parents and Director will decide if the program is suitable for your child.

A child's enrollment may be terminated at any time by joint decision of the Program Director and Supervising Teacher for the child's classroom. Should the need arise for a child's enrollment to be terminated, if possible we will give the parent two weeks notice so that other care may be found for the child. Reasons for termination/withdrawal include:

- The program does not meet the needs of the child and/or the child's family (because of schedule, tuition or philosophical differences)
- Tuition payments have not been submitted and no arrangements for payment by the family have been made
- The family fails to cooperate with the staff in operation and management of the program (e.g. consistently fails to pick up child on time, brings visitors without prior arrangement, sends ill child to school, etc.)

Tree Hill Learning Center reserves the right to request a child's withdrawal from the program if his/her behavior is consistently disruptive in such a manner that it is harmful to the well being of other children and staff.

Transition Policy

Child transitions into new classrooms will be overseen by the classroom teachers, curriculum director, and center director. Transitions will be discussed with parents and a transition date will be set. Transition readiness can vary from child to child. The entry requirements that must be met are as follows:

Seedlings: Infants must be at least 12 weeks of age before entering the Seedlings classroom.

Acorns: Toddlers must be at least 11 months of age before entering the Acorns classroom. They must be ready to have only one nap a day, be weaned off of bottles and drinking out of sippy cups. Breast milk and formula will be replaced with cow's milk or an appropriate substitute.

Oak Leaves: Children may transition to the Oak Leaves at 18 months. Children must be able to communicate their needs with their teachers, drink from an open cup, and be showing early signs of potty training readiness.

Willows: Children may transition to the Willows class after 30 months of age. They should have begun the potty-training process and have an appropriate level of self help skills, such as hand-washing and putting on their own shoes and jackets.

Maples: Children may transition to Maples after 3 years old. Children must be fully potty trained and have appropriate self-help skills including dressing self and hand washing. Children should be able to self-regulate their behavior in order to participate in group activities, circle time, and clean up time. While age appropriate comfort items are encouraged; pacifiers should be left at home.

Evergreens: Children may transition to the Evergreens classroom after 4 years old. Children should be showing some academic readiness skills including but not limited to letter and number recognition and early writing skills. Children should be able to participate appropriately in circle time and group activities.

Cedars: Children may transition to the Cedars classroom at 5 years old. Children should be showing kindergarten readiness skills including but not limited to letter name and letter-sound recognition, knowledge of sight words, writing own name, counting to 20, and basic addition and subtraction.

Redwoods: Children in first grade or older will be in the Redwoods classroom

After Hours Policy

Tree Hill closes promptly at 6:15 p.m. daily. All children must be picked up by that time. In the event that child remains at the center past closing, a teacher will stay with the child and follow the following procedures:

- Every effort will be made to contact the child's parents
- If a parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called. Identification will be required by this person, and it must match the name on your pick up list in order for us to release your child to them. Parent/legal guardian will be notified as soon as possible that the child has been released to one of their emergency contacts.
- If the staff have not been able to contact anyone by 8:00 p.m. to come for the child, the child will be considered abandoned and the police will be called*
- Late fees will be billed at a rate of \$10.00 for the first 15 minutes, and \$2.00 per minute thereafter**

*Please note: We have to make these provisions in the event that this situation ever develops. Our sincere hope is that we never have to implement this procedure.

**Working together as a partner in your child's care will make your experience with Tree Hill Learning Center a pleasant one. Please try to notify us of any situation or emergency that occurs that may prevent you from picking up your child on time. We are happy to work with our families in any way possible.

Billing Policy

Tree Hill Learning Center is on a monthly tuition schedule. We offer full-day (more than five hours per day) and half-day programs.

Tree Hill bills one month in advance for space to be reserved in your child's class. Payment is due the 1st of each month. Any accounts not brought current by the 10th of the month will be given a \$10 late fee, if the account is still unpaid by the 20th an additional \$20 fee will be applied.

You are welcome to pay your child's tuition in advance; however, we do not offer a discount for this option.

If you decide to withdraw your child from the Tree Hill, we do require at least two-weeks written notice. Families failing to provide notice will still be responsible for two-weeks tuition for each child enrolled, and no refunds will be given for unused time or tuition. We do not offer refunds for any other reason.

We encourage payment by check, credit card (Visa and Mastercard), or money order. However, in the event of an NSF check, there will be a \$50.00 NSF charge. Money order or cash must pay NSF charges. More than two NSF checks in a year will result in cash, money order or cashier check acceptance only.

Credit cards will be saved in our secure billing system and automatically processed for the full balance of your account on the first of every month. If for any reason you do not want your saved credit card charged, you must notify us or provide alternate payment before the first of the month.

We reserve the right to re-evaluate our rates at any time. In the event that our tuition rates change, we will provide one month's notification.

If there is a billing problem or error, please contact the school director to resolve the matter.

For divorced and separated families: We have one account per child. We do not bill parents separately. Please make co-payment arrangements between yourselves. The learning center considers account liability to rest with those signed as enrolling parent(s) /legal guardian(s). We will ensure that only individuals authorized in writing are picking up your children. It is not the responsibility of Tree Hill Learning Center to follow or enforce any other parenting plan arrangements.

Vacation billing and sick days: Tree Hill Learning Center does not credit accounts or issue discounts for vacation time or sick days.

Ten Hour Policy: State law dictates that children may not be in child care for more than 10 hours per day. At Tree Hill we enforce this policy by charging a \$25 fee per day each child is present at Tree Hill for over 10 hours.

Siblings: There is a 10% discount on the lowest tuition rate for siblings enrolled in our program.

School-age extra attendance days: In the event of a non-school day, we will bill one week in advance based on projected attendance. We will provide sign-up sheets so families can schedule their child to be at Tree Hill during any non-school days. If your child is scheduled for any of these days, but do not attend for any reason, you will still be billed for this day.

Daily Communication

It is our hope that daily communication will occur between parents and staff. We recognize that time constraints can often make this difficult and we hope to provide options that will accommodate each family's schedule. Our infant and toddler teaching staff will provide written communication each day to parents indicating the details of daily routines such as feeding and diapering as well as any significant incidents that may occur during the

day (i.e. your child's overall mood, exciting discoveries, etc.). The teaching staff of the older children will make every attempt to speak with parents at drop-off or pick-up times. If this is not often possible, we may dedicate a communication log where parents and staff may send written messages back and forth between home and school in order to communicate effectively about a child's daily activities. Any and all occurrences of injury or illness will be reported to parents verbally and by way of an Injury/Incident Report.

Additionally, parents are always welcome to schedule a parent-teacher conference or meeting to discuss any questions or concerns.

Disaster Plan

Parents are required to review our complete disaster plan upon enrollment and annually thereafter. Staff will review it annually.

Preparedness: Tree Hill Learning Center is prepared to care for your child in times of critical situations. Please make sure all contact information, emergency contacts, and authorized release forms are up to date and correct. In the event of an emergency that leaves our school safe and intact, parents will be called as soon as possible and children will be dismissed to authorized persons.

The staff at Tree Hill Learning Center conducts monthly emergency evacuation drills and/or earthquake drills with the children. Though we have never experienced a major disaster, we want to take precautions should an emergency state occur while your children are in our care. The most likely disasters identified for our site include: fire, earthquake, windstorms and winter storms.

In the event of a disaster requiring children and staff to remain at the facility, we will have a 72-hour supply of food and water for children and staff in case of emergency.

Fire: In the event of a fire, building alarms will sound and the emergency lights will come on. Staff will enact rehearsed evacuation procedures with the children.

Evacuation Process: In the event of fire or natural disaster that will require us to evacuate the premises, we will evacuate to 3400 SE 196th Avenue Camas, WA 98607. Each teacher will be responsible to account for every child on their class' attendance roster and then it will be double checked by the Director. Staff will stay with evacuated children continuously until such a time as the children are in the care of their families or other guardians. Parents will be notified as soon as children are safe and comfortable. Teachers will be responsible for their classes Comfort Kits.

Power Outage: In the event of a power outage while school is in session, the following will occur:

- After one-hour Infant's and Toddler's parents will be called for dismissal
- After two-hours the rest of the children's parents will be called for dismissal

Inclement Weather: Tree Hill Learning Center will be closed when weather conditions become too dangerous. Listen to local radio and television stations for announcements of closures. We also post closures or late openings on our Facebook page. When schools are delayed we will do our best to open our school at the earliest possible time. Our first concern is the safety of staff and students.

Lockdown: In the event of an emergency lockdown staff will gather children safely in their classrooms and lock doors until clearance is given by the Director.

A disaster plan for children with special needs will be developed individually and approved by the parents and staff.

Out of Town Contact: If a disaster does occur, parents will be notified by phone as soon as possible. Parents may call the school at (360) 833-1230. If the emergency disrupts local phone lines, Tree Hill Learning Center has designated Ann Marie Biskar as the out-of-state phone contact in case of an emergency. Her phone number is (760) 668-0376.

Holidays and Celebrations

Tree Hill Learning Center celebrates all culturally relevant holidays to the children in our program. Please remember to inform teachers of which holidays your family celebrates. Please also let us know if there is a holiday that you don't wish your child to partake in. We will make other arrangements to provide an alternate activity.

We are closed for the following holidays:

- Thanksgiving Day
- 8 AM opening the day after Thanksgiving
- Close 12:00 noon on Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- 8 AM opening the day after Christmas
- Close 3:00 p.m. on New Year 's Eve
- New Year's Day
- 8 AM opening the day after New Year's
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day

Families who wish to share birthday celebrations may bring simple refreshments to serve at lunch or snack time. Please let classroom teachers know in advance when you would like to bring treats to avoid scheduling conflicts. Refreshments must be store purchased and must be peanut/tree nut free.

Hours of Operation

Regular hours of operation are 6:15 a.m. to 6:15 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are closed weekends.

Attendance: Regular attendance is important for children to receive the maximum benefit from the program. In order for teachers to effectively plan for the day and to be aware of scheduling needs for each individual child, we require families to notify the school when the child will be absent, arriving late or leaving early.

Personal Items

It will be necessary for each child to have at least one complete change of clothing, including shoes, at school in the event their clothing becomes wet or soiled.

Please clearly label all coats, boots, extra clothing, blankets, pillows, or any other personal belongings with your child's name.

It is sometimes comforting for children who are feeling anxious about being at school to bring along a special item (doll, blanket, etc.) and we encourage them to do so. However, because we are concerned about the loss or damage of children's belongings, we ask that parents understand that the toys children bring may be broken or otherwise damaged at school. Tree Hill Learning Center is not responsible for personal items that are lost, broken or damaged while at school.

Your child should not bring to the program:

- Toys that are defined as being fragile or of high personal value
- Any object that can be labeled as a weapon by the Director (i.e. guns, knives, swords, etc.)
- Money in pockets, wallets or purses
- Tablets or similar electronic devices

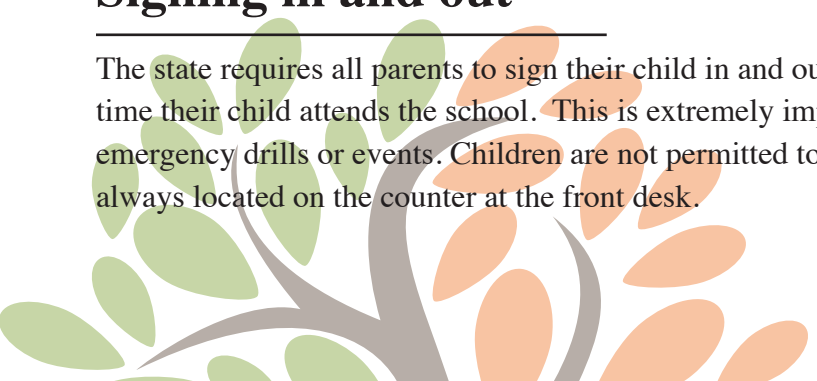
Pesticides

Increasing concern about the impact of pesticides on children's health has led to a law dealing with pesticide use in schools and licensed child care centers. We are dedicated to using the least amount of chemical control of pests in our program in order to provide the healthiest environment possible for our children.

Tree Hill Learning Center will notify staff and families at least forty-eight (48) hours before application in writing and we will post a pre-notification letter prominently on our parent information board and on the front door of the school. Available for your review at our front desk is a copy of our complete pesticides policy.

Signing in and out

The state requires all parents to sign their child in and out with the time and their full legal signature each time their child attends the school. This is extremely important as this list is used to check attendance during emergency drills or events. Children are not permitted to sign themselves in and out. Our sign-in/out record is always located on the counter at the front desk.



If you need to pick up and return your child to the learning center during the day (e.g. for a doctor appointment, etc.), please be sure your child's teacher is aware that you are picking up your child and approximately when you will be returning. State law requires that in cases such as this, a staff member is to write down the time and their initials on the sign-in sheet each time a child leaves or returns to our facility for school. We do not allow any dropping off or picking up during our scheduled nap time, 12:30-3:00. If there is a special circumstance, such as a doctor's appointment, please make arrangements to pick up and drop off outside of naptime.

Children enrolled in our Before and After School program will be signed out by a staff member when they leave in the morning and signed back in when they return at the end of their school day.

Children are released only to persons for whom the staff has written permission from the parent/legal guardian. Families should be sure to update this permission when they wish a new person to pick up their child, as the child will not be released unless written permission has been granted. Teachers/staff will request picture identification from anyone not known to them seeking to pick up your child, so please advise your designated pick-up person to bring a driver's license or other photo identification.

If a person picking up a child appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, 911 will be called immediately.

Transportation

Children enrolled in our School Age Program will be transported to and from their local elementary school on one of our 14 passenger busses.

We provide bus service to and from the following schools:

- Prune Hill Elementary
- Dorothy Fox Elementary
- Fisher's Landing Elementary
- Illahee Elementary

We are within the **Grass Valley Elementary** boundaries, and will **walk children to and from the bus stop** located directly across the street from Tree Hill.

It will be necessary for the learning center to have on file a signed and completed Transportation Authorization form in order for us to transport your child to and from school.

Field Trips

Children in supervised groups may participate in age-appropriate field trips (e.g. pumpkin patch, zoo, library) only if the parent has given written permission. Families will be informed about each field trip (including destination, purpose of trip, method of transportation, additional fees, etc.) a week before the trip. Please make sure you (if you plan to attend) and your child are signed up for the field trip at least 1 week prior to our departure. Children will travel by foot or be transported on one of our buses. Safety is of the utmost importance to our staff and we will ensure that all safety precautions are in effect when field trips are taken.

“Early release” field trips for our school aged children occur frequently throughout the school year. We will provide a list of regular destinations at the beginning of the school year and reserve the right to change the location of the trip as needed. Weather is the primary factor in determining the location and duration of an early release field trip.

Visitors and Volunteers

Parents or other family members are welcome to help out and volunteer in our program. Regular volunteers must complete a background check and submit proof of negative TB test results at their expense. All visitors and volunteers are expected to uphold our program’s health and safety standards at all times.

Tree Hill does reserve the right to ask any family members or other volunteers to cease visits if it becomes problematic for any reason.

Before entering any of the classrooms, all visitors and volunteers are expected to sign in at the front desk and to wear a visitor’s badge during their stay. Remember to stop by the office after the visit to sign out and return your badge.

While we appreciate our parent’s contribution to our school, volunteer time cannot be exchanged for tuition.

Religion

We do not teach or follow any religious doctrine. Mealtime at our school is an important social and learning time. Classrooms may choose to follow our tradition of singing the “Tree Song” before meals and snacks. We will not force any child to partake in this saying it simply acts as a starting point for our meals, signaling to the children that all of their friends have been served their food and it is now time to eat. We feel this tradition encourages respect of their peers, and the meal that has been prepared for them. Our mealtime saying is as follows:

**For trees so tall,
and skies so blue,
For friends and food,
we thank you!**