



**Parent Handbook**  
**of**  
**Operational Policies**  
**Allen**  
**2022-2023**

# ¡Bienvenidos!

Welcome to Spanish Schoolhouse Preschool and Kindergarten! We are excited to have you and your child on this Spanish language immersion journey.

The following policies are important in order to maintain a healthy, safe and positive atmosphere for your child. Please read the policies carefully and refer to them throughout the school year. Thank you! ¡Gracias!

## General Information

### Our Motto and Philosophy

***“Learn the Language. Experience the Culture. Create the Future.”***

We strive to prepare our students for elementary education and beyond by developing their cognitive, social, cultural, and motor skills. Our teaching philosophy is based on the principle that children learn best when they are engaged. We implement this philosophy by creating an active learning environment where children have direct, hands-on experiences with manipulatives, art, books, music, dance, cultural events, circle time and more, with plenty of student/teacher interaction.

Children engaged in an active learning environment construct their own knowledge through their interactions with the world and the people around them. In a Spanish immersion program, the Spanish language drives these interactions. Children experience and interpret the world around them in Spanish and eventually take full ownership of the second language.

At SSH, the ingredients of an active learning environment include:

- Abundant materials
- Opportunities for manipulating or handling these materials
- Freedom to choose which materials they will use and how they will use them
- Encouragement for students to use language (Spanish, of course!) to describe what they are doing and reflect on their actions
- Opportunities to participate in celebrations and traditions of the Latin culture, to expand each child's worldview
- Teachers, parents, and other adults who support children by encouraging and challenging their reasoning, problem-solving, and creativity

Our goal is to prepare each child with an excellent early childhood education coupled with the benefits of the Spanish language and cultural awareness. An education at Spanish Schoolhouse creates a platform for future academic success. Equally important, it empowers children with a cultural awareness that brightens the future... for them and for the world!

## ***At Spanish Schoolhouse, it's all about Language, Love, and Learning!***

### **Open Door Policy**

We have an “open-door” policy and invite you to drop-in at any time. Stop in and visit the school whenever you wish. However, early childhood education is very important to us, so we ask that you do not disturb the classrooms. In order to minimize disruptions in the classroom, please contact the office to arrange a time.

### **Christian-based School**

Please note that we are a Christian-based school. Although we do not teach Bible stories or discuss the Bible, we do celebrate Christmas and Easter in our classrooms. In addition, the children say a prayer before eating lunch and/or naptime. If you would like more details, please ask in the office.

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

Applications for enrollment are accepted regardless of race, religion (creed), color, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), family/parental status, political beliefs, or national origin (ancestry).

## **Enrollment & Fees**

### **Required Forms**

The school must have all necessary forms completed and **on file before** the first day of school to comply with state regulations. Forms may be emailed, mailed or brought to the school during regular business hours. These forms include:

1. Child Admission/Registration Form (Completed through the family profile on the SSH website)
2. [Health Statement](#) – Signed by physician
3. Immunization records
4. Allergy Emergency Plan, if applicable (required for any diagnosed food allergies)

Please see the “Hearing and Vision Screening” section on Page 12 regarding the required Hearing and Vision forms for children who are 4 years-old by September 1.

### **Updating Information**

For the safety of your child, it is very important that we have current contact numbers and emails, emergency contacts, and allergy information. Please be sure to update your student's information

on our website immediately if there are any changes. You may log in to your account and update your profile at any time. Please note that you will be required to re-sign your child's admission form acknowledging any changes made.

## Registration Fee

The annual non-refundable registration fee will be due upon registration each school year to secure your child's spot. If you drop your child before the start of the school year or at any time during the school year, **all registration fees are non-refundable.** If registering at multiple locations, please refer to page 5.

## Tuition Policy

Spanish Schoolhouse tuition is an annual fee divided into 10 equal monthly payments. All tuition is due the first day of the month, beginning August 1. The tuition payment is the same amount each month, regardless of illness or holidays. **Please be aware that you will not receive a statement each month.**

**How to Pay:** Payments may be made online monthly, or by enrolling in the Auto-Pay system. A PayPal account is required to sign up for Auto-Pay. To sign up, navigate to the "Make Payment" page and check the "Auto-Pay" box. The website will prompt the remaining steps to complete sign up. Checks are also accepted at the school.

**Late fees:** On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the month, any unpaid tuition will incur a late charge of \$15.00 per child. If tuition is unpaid by the 10<sup>th</sup>, an additional fee of \$20.00 will be added to your tuition, and **the student will not be permitted to attend school until full payment, including late fees, is received.**

**Important August Tuition Note:** *If payment is not received by August 3, your child's spot CANNOT BE GUARANTEED.* We reserve the right to drop your child's unpaid enrollment to allow wait-listed families to enroll and/or be admitted. Wait-listed families will be contacted beginning August 4. If you need to withdraw your child before August, the last **date to drop or change enrollment is July 1.** Please refer to Withdrawal Policy below for financial obligation information.

## **Withdrawal Procedure, Enrollment Modifications, and Transfers**

If you need to make any changes to your enrollment including withdrawing and/or transferring, Spanish Schoolhouse has certain procedures we ask our parents to follow.

**Withdrawal Policy: Written notice required** A 30-day written notice by email is required for withdrawal and you are financially obligated for tuition during this 30-day period. If a written notice is not given, tuition equivalent to 30 days will be charged to the account. Please note that verbal notice is not sufficient for withdrawal.

**Enrollment Modifications:** To modify an enrollment, specifically to reduce the number of days or hours, a 30-day written notice is also required before the changes will go into effect. A 30-day notice is not required if you wish to increase your enrollment days/hours. Please submit your request in writing and you will receive confirmation based on space availability.

**Multiple Spanish Schoolhouse Registrations:** Holding a spot for your child at multiple SSH locations will generate a non-refundable registration fee at each location. If you choose to register your child at multiple locations, please note that you must notify us in writing of your final campus decision by July 1. This allows us to offer unused spots to other families and removes your obligation to pay the August tuition at the additional locations, per our Withdrawal policy.

**Transfers:** Transfers to another Spanish Schoolhouse campus are dependent upon space availability. Please contact the director of your current school if interested in transferring. A 30-day written notice is requested but not required, to plan for staff.

## **Available Discounts**

We proudly offer the following discounts at SSH Allen

5% pre-pay discount- Pay the annual tuition in full by 7/1 to receive a 5% discount

10% Sibling Discount- The highest tuition in each family is charged at the full rate and additional siblings enrolled at the same time receive a 10% discount.

Military Discount

ISD Teacher Discount

Police/Fire/EMT Discount

## **Missed Days**

Spanish Schoolhouse does not offer a reduction in tuition for illnesses, vacations, scheduled holidays/breaks, or weather/emergency closings. Additionally, because we must maintain our student: teacher ratios, we cannot offer make-up days for any missed days, apart from the two scheduled weather make-up days which are listed on the school calendar.

## Returned Checks

There will be a \$35.00 charge for all returned checks. Please pick up the check and replace it with a money order or cashier's check within 2 business days of being notified of its return. Your account will be put on a money order or cashier's check basis after two returned checks.

# Hours of Operation

## School Hours

The school year runs August 15, 2022 – May 30, 2023. Summer camps are held in June and July and may be registered for separately. Spanish Schoolhouse is open Monday – Friday. Regular Preschool and Kindergarten school hours are 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. Extended care hours are 7:00 am – 6:00 pm. Please make every effort to arrive promptly, as the first hour of the day includes morning activities and Circle Time, which are fundamental for learning and socialization.

Please note that children cannot be dropped off earlier than 8:55 am unless enrolled in the extended program. To ensure the safety of our students, all parents and students must enter the school through the main entrance. All visitors during school hours must check in at the school office.

## Closures/Bad Weather Policy

Our school follows the Allen ISD Calendar for major breaks, holidays and weather closures. A school year calendar will be provided to you in August and may be viewed on our website.

Please note: If the ISD is closed due to bad weather, we will also be closed. In addition, if the ISD opens late, we will open at the same time as the elementary schools. In the event of bad weather, please check the local TV stations/websites for information on ISD closings. Spanish Schoolhouse will offer a maximum of two (2) make-up days for bad weather.

## Late Pick-Up Fee

Spanish Schoolhouse staff will remain with students until all children are picked up. The following fees apply for late pick-ups:

- For the regular program (9 am-2 pm), there will be a 10-minute grace period due to carpool. After 2:10, a late fee of \$1/minute will be assessed.
- For families enrolled in Stay & Play extended care, there is no grace period. A late fee of \$1/minute will be assessed if the child is not picked up by 6 pm. All late fees are per family, not per child.

The parent or individual picking up the children will be asked to sign a form acknowledging that the late fee will be added to their account. Repeated late pick-ups or non-payment of late fees may be cause for removal of the child from the program.

## Arrival & Departure

### Sign In & Out

When your child arrives at school, you will sign him/her in through a program called HiMama. A computer will be available to parents for sign in purposes. When your child leaves each day, he/she will be signed out through the same application. This is a state requirement and is the *parent's responsibility, unless using carpool*.

### Release of Child to Authorized Individuals

If anyone other than the parent is picking up the child, they must be listed on the "Release of Child" section on the admission form and will need to show a driver's license. The staff will make a copy of the license and keep the copy in the child's folder.

### Carpool

Carpool (drive-through line to pick-up or drop-off your child) is available for your convenience in the afternoons. After the carpool process is complete, the teachers will sign your child out on the HiMama app.

PM – A pick-up carpool lane will be available between 2:00 pm – 2:10 pm

You are welcome to walk up to pick up your child instead of using carpool, but please refrain from long conversations with the teachers, as their focus needs to be on the safety of the children during the carpool process.

Please do not park your car in the carpool area to walk up to pick up your child as this will cause a traffic jam. If you are using carpool, a staff member will help get your child and his/her belongings into the car. Thank you for your cooperation.

You will be provided with more specific carpool instructions during the first weeks of school. Your child's safety comes first! Please help us by following the carpool procedures.

## Parking Lot Safety & Cell Phone Policy

The safety of our students and families is our number one concern. Our parking lot is extremely busy at arrival and departure times. Please follow these rules in the parking lot:

1. DRIVE SLOWLY and be observant.
2. Cell phone usage is prohibited (unless parked).
3. When crossing the parking lot, please hold onto your child's hand.
4. Please Do Not leave children in an unattended vehicle, even for a short period of time.

## Health / Medical Information

Spanish Schoolhouse does not have a medical professional on staff and we are not trained to perform medical assessments. We do make general visual observations regularly to look for obvious signs of injury or of illness such as vomiting, diarrhea, high temperature, etc.

Parents are required to disclose if a child has a physical or medical condition prior to enrollment. A meeting with the director may be requested in order to understand your child's needs.

### Illness

Your child's health is of great importance. To safeguard the health of all children and minimize the spread of germs, we strictly adhere to the following policies.

Do not send your child if they have any of the following:

- An oral, forehead, ear, armpit (axillary) temperature of above 100 degrees
- Uncontrolled diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Significant respiratory symptoms

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified immediately to pick up your child. In such an event, your child will be removed from the classroom and will wait in a designated area (comfortably with a quiet activity) until you arrive.

In order to return to school, **your child must be free of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting for 24 hours (without the use of medicine)**. If your child requires antibiotics, they must have been taken for a full 24 hours prior to their return to class.

If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, such as chicken pox, please notify the school immediately so that we may inform the parents in that classroom. A child with a communicable disease must have a doctor's note to return to school.



We appreciate your full cooperation with this policy, as it will decrease the number of times the children are exposed to contagious illnesses.

## Medication

If your child needs to be given any medication at school, you must request and complete a [Medication Authorization Form](#). The medication log will be completed by staff **each time** a child is given medication. All prescription medication must be in the **original container**, indicating the child's name, type, date of prescribed medication, and dosage amount.

Over-the-counter medications sent by parents must be in their original container and must be given according to the labeled directions only. No medications can be measured in advance or put into other containers. Diaper rash medication will be applied by request only. A signed permission slip must be in the child's file.

We ask parents to apply sunscreen and insect repellent at home prior to arriving at school. Should there be a need to reapply during the day, a Medication Authorization Form must be filled out with instructions and left in the office with the product in its original container.

## Head Lice

Children are sent home from school if live lice are found in their hair. They are allowed to return to school after one medicated treatment has been given. When the child returns to school, a discreet head check may be performed by school personnel to ensure that no live lice remain. At the Director's discretion, the school may escalate to a "no nit" policy, as needed.

## Allergies

A written Allergy Emergency Plan from your child's pediatrician office is required to be on file at the school for any diagnosed food allergies **before the child may attend**. Please note that the Director may prohibit a certain food item in the classroom if a child in that class has a severe food allergy.

## Medical Emergencies

The staff will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. Unfortunately, accidents may occur. We will notify you immediately in the event of illness or accident.

In the unlikely event that a medical emergency arises, the following steps will be taken:

- 1.) SSH Staff members will assess the situation and begin first aid or CPR as needed.  
A second staff member will phone 911 if a true medical emergency exists.
- 2.) Every effort will be made to contact the parents/guardians, or the emergency contact listed if the parents/guardians cannot be reached.

- 3.) A staff member will accompany the student to the hospital and remain with him/her until a parent/guardian arrives.
- 4.) An incident report will be completed and signed by both director and parent within 48 hours of the time the incident occurred.
- 5.) Within 48 hours, Spanish Schoolhouse will inform the Texas Health and Human Services of the emergency that occurred.

### **Promotion of Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity**

Spanish Schoolhouse strongly believes and supports the need for physical activity each day. When children participate in physical activity every day, multiple health benefits accrue. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk for developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance. In addition, cognitive skills and motor skills appear to develop through a dynamic interaction. Research has shown that physical movement can affect the brain's physiology.

At Spanish Schoolhouse:

Children ages two or younger will be offered a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day during the hours of operation.

Children aged three and older will be offered a minimum of 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day during the hours of operation.

Spanish Schoolhouse will promote all children's active play every day. Children will have ample opportunity to do moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping, to the extent of their abilities.

All children will participate each day in:

- A daily, structured Music and Movement class for 30 minutes to promote gross motor development and rhythm
- Outdoor recess for 30 minutes between 9 am and 2 pm and 30 minutes between 2 pm and 6 pm
- Alternative indoor physical activity will be provided if weather does not permit outdoor recess

Physical activity may take place in the classroom or on the playground when weather permits. Per Texas Health and Human Services Requirements, children must have an outdoor recess time every day, weather permitting.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose and not too tight) that enables full participation in active play. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Hats may be worn to protect children from sun exposure.

Examples of appropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Gym shoes or sturdy shoe equivalent
- Clothing for the weather, such as a lightweight, breathable jacket without any hood and neck strings. *Please mark all personal items* for easy identification.

Examples of inappropriate clothing/footwear include:

- Footwear that can come off while running or that provide insufficient support for climbing.
- Clothing that can catch on playground equipment, such as those with drawstrings or loops.

## Weather Policy for Outside Play

During summer months, we will check the ozone daily and have the following policy: If **GREEN** ozone, children go out in the morning and in the afternoon if the child is enrolled in Stay & Play. If **ORANGE** ozone, children will go out only in the morning, no afternoon outside time. If **RED** ozone, children will not go out in the morning or afternoon.

## Uniform Policy & Extra Clothing

Uniform orders may be placed before school begins, as well as throughout the school year. Spanish Schoolhouse uniforms can be purchased at [www.spanishschoolhouseuniforms.com](http://www.spanishschoolhouseuniforms.com).

A school uniform is required each day, other than the school's designated "Periquito Azul" days. A Spanish Schoolhouse shirt, dress, or jumper must be worn daily with logo visible; bottoms may be long pants, leggings, shorts or skirts in the following colors only: **navy blue, khaki, or denim** (blue only). When needed for extra warmth, a long-sleeved t-shirt may be worn under uniform shirts or dress/jumpers.

Available uniforms Include:

- T-shirts (unisex and girls' cut)
- Polo shirts
- Sweatshirts (hoodie or microfleece)
- Sweaters (V-neck and cardigans)
- White button-down blouses/shirts
- Jumpers or dresses

If a child comes to school without a uniform, the school will lend one to the student one time. If a second instance occurs, please note that we will provide a new one for you to keep and will apply a charge of \$12 to your account.

Please note that SSH summer camp t-shirts are **not** acceptable uniforms for the August – May school year.

Each child will need one complete set of extra clothing at the school for accidents and/or spills. The extra clothes do not need to be uniform items. Please make sure that the extra clothes are

seasonally appropriate. *Please mark your child's name all personal items* for easy identification such as coats, sweaters, gloves, mats, etc.

## **Water Play**

At certain times of the year, the children may participate in water activities, which include sprinkler play, water toys, and water table play.

## **Hearing and Vision Screening**

The state of Texas law requires that all children who are 4 years old by September 1 of the school year must have a hearing and vision screening on file. We will coordinate this service at the school one time per year; however, the screening will be at the parents' expense. Parents may choose to have the screening done by their own pediatrician/physician and then provide us with the results for the child's file. If you are providing screening results, these must be on file with the school no later than November 15. **If the required forms are not received by the deadline, your child may be unable to attend school.**

## **Staff Vaccine Policy**

Texas Health and Human Services requires that childcare centers have a written policy on staff vaccinations. We respect our staff members' rights to make informed decisions about their personal vaccinations, and Spanish Schoolhouse employment contracts do not require that staff be vaccinated.

# **In the Classroom**

## **Classroom Placement**

Texas public schools (and many private schools) allow enrollment into each grade level based on the student's age on September 1. At Spanish Schoolhouse we encourage parents to enroll their children using the same guideline, but in some cases, our schools can extend the cut-off to September 30. Please contact the Director for more information.

**Please note that falsification of your child's date of birth may result in the removal of the child from our program.**

## **Potty Training**

Children in the 3-year-old and 4-year-old classrooms must be potty trained. Diapers are permitted in the 18-month and 2-year-old classrooms only. If children are not potty trained, they cannot progress to the 3-year-old class.

## **Diaper and Wipe Supplies**

Parents of our 18-month and 2-year-old children are responsible for keeping a supply of personal disposable diapers and wipes at the school for diaper changes. **Do not send cloth diapers.** We will send a written notification if your child's items need to be resupplied.

## **18-month-old Walking**

One milestone that is important for your student to reach before school starts is walking. Please be aware that we do require that children in this class be able to walk independently (unless they have a diagnosed disability and prior approval from the director). If your child has not started walking by early August, please contact us about the possibility of moving your child to the waitlist until he/she is developmentally ready.

## **Behavioral Management**

At Spanish Schoolhouse, we strive to develop respectful, responsible and happy learners. Our schools use the Love and Logic® methodology, and our teachers are trained in these techniques. This method helps teach respect for self and others and encourages personal responsibility and academic motivation.

Incorporating Love and Logic®, Spanish Schoolhouse believes in setting limits and providing children with many choices within those limits throughout the school day. Making mistakes is a part of the learning process and our goal is to help students learn and grow from these experiences. When a student makes a choice that is not within the limits, teachers will remind the student of acceptable choices using positive statements and encourage the student to cooperate and take personal responsibility.

If these strategies are not effective, a short "thinking time" in the classroom may be used to help the student regain focus and self-control. The use of physical punishment is **never** permitted. If needed, discipline will be in English, to make sure the student understands.

**When children exhibit behaviors that are atypical compared to their peers (including such things as not reaching developmental goals, or behavior that is aggressive or interferes with the operation of the classroom) the following support plan will be implemented.**

### **Behavioral Support Plan**

#### **1. Observation and Documentation**

- At the first incident, we will send parents a notification in writing describing the atypical behavior. We will send additional notes if the behavior continues.

## **2. Communication**

- If the behavior continues, the director will arrange an Initial Conference (IC) with the child's parents. Director, teacher(s), parent(s) must be present. Together they will create a plan designed to help the student improve his/her behavior.
- During the Initial Conference (IC), a Follow-Up Conference (FC) will be scheduled.

## **3. Working Together (Home/School Team)**

- If the child's behavior has improved and the Home/School team is working together in a positive way, we will continue with the plan and set up a third conference (TC).
- If there are no improvements in the child's behavior, or if the Home/School team is unable to work together positively, the child must be evaluated by an ISD or a behavior specialist (we can provide a referral) within the next 21 days. If behavior causes a safety concern for the child or others, the child may not be able to attend school during this period.

## **4. Decision**

- Once we have received a specialist's evaluation/diagnosis of the child, we will consult with the specialist and the family to determine if SSH's resources are sufficient to support the child, or if another school with specialized resources would be a better fit.
- If we do not receive evaluation results and/or the parents do not take the child to the specialist's appointment, the student will be removed from our program.

Spanish Schoolhouse reserve the right to suspend a child from school either temporarily or permanently.

## **Biting Policy**

Biting is common among toddlers. Children at this stage of development do not always have the words to express themselves. Their expression may come in the form of biting. If your child bites or is bitten, you will be notified in writing. All names will remain confidential. Teachers will use preventative techniques in the classroom as needed to prevent future biting and protect all children.

Biting usually stops by the age of three, as most children have the language skills at that point to express their needs. If a younger child bites persistently or an older child bites, all parties involved will be notified, and the Behavioral Support Plan above will be implemented.

## Discipline Policy Required by the State

We are required by Texas state law to give you the following information regarding discipline: Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

Discipline must be:

- (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
- (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control; and
- (4) A positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:
  - (A) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
  - (B) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
  - (C) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
  - (D) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet; and
- (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age, including requiring a child to remain in a restrictive device.

## Personal Belongings

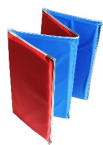
Children should not bring toys or personal electronics from home, as the school cannot be responsible for these items, and they create a distraction in the classroom.

We cannot replace lost articles. When you bring your child to school, all parents are asked to place the student's belongings in the designated space and to not lay them down for the teacher to put away. It is very difficult to remember every child's coat, sweater, etc. Parents are responsible for putting the child's name on clothing, mats, coats, and each item that enters the school. We cannot be responsible for lost items.

Please check to be sure that you have all your child's items before leaving the school. This will help decrease the number of items lost.

## Naptime

After lunch, a nap or rest period is provided for all preschool children. Please provide a rest mat for your child. A plastic, accordion-folding nap mat is preferred for hygienic reasons. These plastic mats are generally sold in the "Back to School" section of Walmart and Target. You may also purchase nap mat rolls at BuyBuy Baby, Amazon or Walmart online at any time of year. These mats have a small attached pillow and blanket. For safety reasons we cannot allow separate blankets, pillows, or sleeping bag like mats with a zipper and/or closed on the sides. A "sleeping friend" may also be brought in your child's backpack.). Mats and personal blankets or other personal items must be taken home each day.



## Food

The school is not responsible for the nutritional value of the lunch provided by the parent or guardian.

- We will provide all children with a healthy morning snack. Children enrolled in Stay & Play will also receive an afternoon snack.
- Students are required to bring:
  - his or her own lunch from home, including utensils. We will offer pizza on Fridays for parents that are interested. Please see the office for details.
  - A spill-proof water bottle or spill-proof cup daily.
  - If sending perishable items, please place an ice pack in the lunch, as we are not able to refrigerate or heat lunches.
  - Please do **not** send food or drink items in glass containers, for safety reasons.
- **According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the following foods are the most common choking hazards for children under 4 years old:**

▪ Hotdogs	▪ Raw Carrots
▪ Hard Candy	▪ Apples
▪ Peanuts/Nuts	▪ Popcorn
▪ Seeds	▪ Chunks of Peanut Butter
▪ Whole Grapes	▪ Marshmallows
▪ Whole Cherry/Grape	▪ Chewing Gum
Tomatoes	▪ Sausages



Please be aware of these potential choking hazards and cut food into small pieces when packing lunch for your child or providing snacks for parties.

### **Classroom Treats**

Special treats will be provided periodically, so ***please provide written notice of any food allergies or food restrictions.***

**For the safety of all children, any outside food brought into the school to be shared with others must be store-bought, in original packaging with the ingredient list.** The exception is for our Thanksgiving Feast in November. For this event, parents may bring homemade food to school. Parents will be notified in advance, so they may send an alternative lunch with their child if desired.

### **Conferences**

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held in the Fall semester, and written progress reports will be sent home in October, January, and May. Additional Parent-Teacher conferences are available as needed or requested by the parents and/or teacher at any time throughout the school year. You will be notified in advance of conference dates.

If any questions or concerns arise regarding our school, curriculum, or staff, the Director is available for conferences throughout the year.

### **Breastfeeding Mothers**

Mothers have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their children. If you require an area for breastfeeding, please speak to the Director and a quiet, comfortable area will be provided for you.

### **Emergency Plans and Drills**

By law, emergency drills are held periodically to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time the drill is held, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do in the event of an emergency. Fire drills are practiced monthly and emergency drills are practiced every three months.

A copy of the school's Emergency Plans is available at the school office if you would like to review it or request a copy.

**Note:** In the event of an emergency in which we must evacuate the school, children will be moved to the following alternate shelter: Legacy ER & Urgent Care 1310 W. Exchange Pkwy.

### **Severe Weather Policy**

#### In Case of Severe Weather Threat

When there is a threat of severe weather, SSH employees will monitor the situation closely. If a tornado or severe storm WATCH is issued for the area, children will not go outside for recess, and teachers will be alerted to the possibility of going into the safe areas. If a tornado WARNING is issued or a tornado is spotted, a warning signal will be sounded, and all students will be directed to the designated safe area and will sit in the protective position. Everyone will remain in the sheltered area until the warning is discontinued.

### Communications

If a severe weather/tornado warning is in effect close to pick-up time, if time (and connectivity) permits, the school will send an email to all parents notifying them that the children are being moved to the safe area and that children will not be dismissed until the warning is lifted. No late fees will be charged. We will also send a Remind text message. If time permits, the school voicemail will be changed to a temporary greeting advising parents of the same. If a parent has already arrived at the school, he/she will be directed to the safe area. Parents are encouraged to stay in the safe area in the building, rather than leave in potentially dangerous conditions.

***Please understand that in an emergency situation, we may not be able to answer the phone, as our first priority is the safety of the children and staff. Please check your email and texts for updates. If the power is out and you do not hear anything from us, please know that we are keeping the children safe.***

### **School Pictures**

School pictures will be taken at least once a year. There is no charge at the time of the session, and purchase of these pictures is optional.

### **Home – School Communication**

Your child will be provided a folder to carry information between home and school. Please check your child's folder daily for schoolwork and important information. Your child's teacher will also check the folder daily for notes from home. **VERY IMPORTANT: PLEASE BE SURE TO SEND YOUR CHILD'S FOLDER TO SCHOOL EACH DAY.**

Please note that most information will be sent electronically, and paper correspondence will be kept to a minimum. You will receive the following regular communications electronically:

- Monthly Newsletter
- Monthly Calendar
- Weekly Email Reminders
- "Remind" Text Messages
- HiMama Reports

In addition to the above, the School Year Calendar and a monthly Events Calendar can be found on our website.

## HiMama App

We use a program called HiMama which is a tool to keep you connected and informed about your child's experience in our school. This app is used to record various activities and for signing your child in and out each day. For everything from naps to snacks, it will provide you with a history of your child's experience in our program with photos stored safely and securely in a journal format. Updates of your child will automatically be sent to you via email. **A permission form must be signed in order to receive communication. Permission forms are valid for one year.**

# Parent Information and Involvement

## Parent Involvement

We invite and encourage parent involvement in our school! Our volunteer coordinator is responsible for collecting volunteers' names at the beginning-of-year volunteer meeting as well as throughout the year. Classroom parties, fundraisers, and special events are a great way to volunteer at our school. Shortly after the school year begins, the volunteer coordinator will have a meeting to create volunteer committees. Specified "room parents" will help the volunteer coordinator arrange events and assist the teachers and/or office.

***Please note that all volunteers must complete a criminal background check and be cleared before being able to volunteer in the school. Fundraisers***

Please note that participation in fundraisers is OPTIONAL.

While tuition and fees supply our operating budget, fundraisers allow the purchase of additional equipment and supplies which enrich our program. Participation in our fundraisers is completely voluntary. We appreciate and welcome your participation at whatever level is comfortable for your family.

## Candy in the Classroom

Spanish Schoolhouse values children's health and would like to encourage healthy habits. Therefore, Spanish Schoolhouse will not give candy to the children in the classroom. We also ask that parents who are arranging parties please provide healthy choices. Some good alternatives are goldfish crackers, pencils, erasers, etc.

## School Policies

In the event of a policy change, you will be notified of the new policy by email. If you have any questions or concerns about a policy or procedure, please feel free to discuss this with the Director when you are at the school or to schedule a time for a private conference.

## **Licensing Information**

Because we are licensed by the state of Texas, there are standards by which we must abide. To view a copy of the standards or the most recent inspection report for our school, please ask the Director. This information will be available for your review at all times. You can also contact the Texas Health and Human Services at 1-800-735-2989 or visit the website at <https://hhs.texas.gov/>. Addresses are as follows:

Ft. Worth Area:	1501 Circle Dr., Suite 310, Fort Worth, Texas 76119	(817) 321-8604
Dallas Area:	8700 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, Texas 75247	(214) 951-7902
Denton:	535 S Loop 288, Suite 2001, Denton, TX 76205	(940) 381-3447
Plano:	550 E. 15th St., Suite 120, Plano, Texas 75074	(469) 229-6900 x6901
Houston Area:	1330 E. 40th St., Houston, Texas 77022	(713) 692-3236
Austin Area:	14000 Summit Dr., Suite 100, Austin, TX 78728	(512) 834-3426

## **Gang-Free Zone**

We are required by the state of Texas law to inform parents that our school is in a gang-free zone. A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang-related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include schools. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of all schools. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

## **Prevention and Response to Child Abuse and Neglect**

Spanish Schoolhouse employees are required to obtain a minimum of 24 hours of training each year relevant to the age of the children for whom they provide care. At least one hour of annual training must focus on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, in accordance with the Texas Health and Human Services, Rule 746.13089 of the Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers.

Employees and parents may find information on child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect and techniques for prevention of abuse and neglect, at <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Reporting/resources.asp> and <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Reporting/recognizing.asp>.

Coordination between Spanish Schoolhouse and appropriate community organizations will always be through and upon advisement of the Department of Family and Protective Services, and our current Child Care Licensing Representative.

For assistance and intervention for a child who is a suspected victim of abuse or neglect, please contact DFPS at 1-800-252-5400 or 1-800-4-A-CHILD or [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org).

### **Parent and Student Access to Educational Records**

By law, both parents, whether married, unmarried, separated or divorced, have equal access to a student's records until the student becomes 18 years of age and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes. If a parent's parental rights have been terminated, access to the student's records is also terminated. Legal guardians have the same rights as do parents.  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

### **Tax Statements**

According to the Internal Revenue Service, a childcare expense for working parents is tax deductible. Your payments and our Tax ID number are available on the website. Log in to your account and click the "Payment History" tab at the top of the screen to view and print your payment history.

**For any compliments, concerns, or questions, please contact your school or Customer Service at 972-618-2500 or at [info@spanishschoolhouse.com](mailto:info@spanishschoolhouse.com)**