



Parent Handbook

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1. Welcome

Welcome to Carpe Diem Private Preschool. We sincerely hope this will be the beginning of a rewarding and trusting relationship between your family and us. This handbook is meant to serve as a guide to what you should expect from us. It also details what your responsibilities are. Of course, always feel free to visit with a Carpe Diem staff member if you have any questions or concerns about these policies and procedures.

From all of us at Carpe Diem, please accept our thanks for placing your trust and your child with us. Welcome to our family!

2. Our Philosophy

At Carpe Diem Private Preschool, we're dedicated to one thing—giving your child the best start on life by laying the foundation for a lifetime of learning. From our dedicated staff and inspired array of programs, to our secure, state-of-the-art facilities, every element of Carpe Diem is designed to enrich your child's mind, body, and spirit. So much so that we've met or exceeded the stringent requirements set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The fundamental reason and long-term goal for the kind of developmentally appropriate, child-centered, experiential learning we advocate is not only to help children to develop personal integrity and fulfillment, but also to enable them to think critically, work cooperatively, solve problems creatively, and make the life-long decisions necessary to participate fully in society. Our meaningful curriculum for all age levels provides experiences which enable children to make sense of what they are learning and to connect or integrate their knowledge in ways that lead to rich conceptual development.

3. Our Faculty

We believe that a school's excellence is ultimately measured by the quality of its staff, which is why we're extremely selective when it comes to our faculty. Our classes are led by degreed teachers who are supported by well-educated, experienced assistant and specialty teachers. All our teachers and administrators are required to participate in diverse workshops, seminars, and continuing education courses annually.

Every employee at Carpe Diem, from Director to Housekeeper, is held to the highest standards and must complete a rigorous pre-employment screening process. This includes a thorough background check, education and experience verification, and drug testing.

All staff members are required to have emergency response training and current first aid and CPR certification. Fire, severe weather, and evacuation drills are practiced regularly. You can be sure your child is always in the best hands while he/she is at Carpe Diem.

4. Peace of Mind—Our Security Procedures

We kept two things in mind when designing Carpe Diem facilities—safety and atmosphere, which is why every part of all our campuses has been designed to make you and your child feel secure and comfortable. Our buildings are equipped with sprinkler systems and fire alarms, which are directly connected to the City of Allen, Frisco, Richardson, and Southlake Fire Departments.

You'll notice our commitment to your child's safety begins the moment you step inside our lobbies. In order to access the schools' interior classroom area, everyone must first participate in a "fingerprint scan" located inside the lobby. You and the people you permanently authorize to pick up your child, after verification of their identification, will be entered into our computerized fingerprint scan security system during the enrollment process or at any time after your child begins to attend Carpe Diem.

Only after someone's fingerprint has been correctly identified will that person be allowed to enter the interior hallways. Once inside, you'll find only students, staff, parents, and other authorized adults are permitted to enter our classrooms during regular school hours. However, we've carefully positioned large hallway windows to allow for complete observation of every classroom by visitors and/or staff.

We've installed state-of-the-art webcam systems that are linked to www.carpediempreschool.com, which enable parents and other people you choose to watch the children right from their computers at home or at work. At Carpe Diem, your child is always just a couple of clicks away.

Our website is developed and tested using the latest version of Internet Explorer for Microsoft Windows desktop operating systems. It utilizes common ActiveX plug-in controls, such as Flash, Acrobat, and Axis Streaming. Accessing the Carpe Diem website using other operating systems and/or Internet browsers may produce unexpected results.

Our three age-appropriate outdoor playgrounds at each campus have also been designed with concern for safety as well as imaginative, physical play. In fact, each play system, including all fall zone materials, complies with the demanding guidelines of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Plus, we've installed six-foot fences around the perimeter of all our playground areas.

If a medical or any other type of emergency situation occurs, we will take whatever steps are needed, including calling 911 if necessary, to obtain an appropriate and expeditious response. Parents will always be contacted as quickly as possible and advised of the situation. **Please make sure your child's registration information is up-to-date at all times.** It is extremely important we have your and all your emergency contacts' current home, work, and cellular phone numbers. It's important to us to take proactive steps to protect your child's well-being at all times, but from time to time, accidents do occur. All injuries will be documented carefully and you will be fully informed.

5. Open Door Policy

We welcome parents to visit their child throughout the day if they choose to do so, but we do ask you not to disturb the class during naptime. However, if it is necessary for you to pick-up or drop-off your child during naptime, please let us know in advance, so we can help you minimize interruptions to the daily routine. If you would like to have lunch at Carpe Diem with your child, we ask you to arrange it with his/her teacher beforehand. Parents who are interested in enrolling their child or children do not need an appointment to take a tour. We happily welcome visitors at any time.

6. Our Goals for Children

Carpe Diem's goals for children address all the domains of child development—emotional, social, cognitive, creative, and physical.

Children enrolled in Carpe Diem Private Preschool will:

- develop a positive self-concept and attitude toward learning, self-control, and a sense of belonging.
- develop curiosity about the world, confidence as a learner, creativity and imagination, and personal initiative.
- develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with adults and peers, understand perspectives of other people, and negotiate and apply rules of group living.
- understand and respect social and cultural diversity.
- know about the community and social roles.
- use language to communicate effectively and to facilitate thinking and learning.
- become literate individuals who gain satisfaction, as well as information, from reading and writing.
- represent ideas and feelings through pretend play, drama, movement, music, art, and construction.
- think critically, reason, and solve problems.
- construct understanding of relationships among objects, people, and events, such as classifying, ordering, number, space, and time.
- construct knowledge of the physical world, manipulate objects for desired effects, and understand cause and effect relationships.
- acquire knowledge of and appreciation for the fine arts, humanities, and sciences.
- become competent in the management of their bodies and acquire basic physical skills, both gross motor and fine motor.
- gain knowledge about the care of their bodies and maintain a desirable level of health and fitness.

Child-to-Teacher Ratios:

To ensure individualized instruction and essential nurturing attention, our child-to-teacher ratios and group sizes are significantly lower than the standards required for state licensing by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Instead, we follow the highly regarded NAEYC guidelines. All our child-to-teacher ratios and classroom

group sizes that vary according to children's ages, are published on our Tuition Rate Sheet, which is available by contacting our schools by phone or by e-mail. This information is also included in the folder you receive when you take a tour.

Curriculum and Assessment:

Any preschool can help a child learn basic skills like letters, numbers, or shapes. But at Carpe Diem, we help children learn *how* to learn. We encourage children to question why and discover the answer for themselves. This approach inspires our students to think more creatively, thus strengthening their problem-solving abilities. What's more, our programs include character-building activities that teach children the importance of fairness, integrity, and honesty.

We believe highly appropriate curriculum and assessment should be planned based on the best knowledge of theory and research about how children develop and learn, with attention given to individual children's needs and interests.

Our curriculum is an organized framework that represents a broad range of relevant content and skills that children need to learn, the processes through which children achieve these identified goals, what teachers do to help children achieve them, and the context in which teaching and learning occur.

The most effective curriculum develops knowledge and skills in a meaningful context, not in isolation. For example, children learn numerals and number concepts best by counting and manipulating real objects, not by filling in workbook pages. Children learn letters and their sounds by using them in their names, signs, or stories that are engaging to them rather than by tracing them on a page or reciting the alphabet repeatedly.

We use assessment, the process of regularly and systematically observing and documenting what children do and how they do it in light of realistic and attainable content goals, as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child from toddlerhood on, including curriculum planning for groups and individual children and communicating with parents.

The following are our basic assumptions about the interactive process of teaching and learning:

- Children learn best when their physical needs are met and they feel psychologically safe and secure.
- Children construct their own knowledge through repeated social interaction with adults and other children or through physical experiences with objects.
- Children's learning reflects a recurring cycle that begins in awareness and moves to exploration, to inquiry, and finally, to utilization.
- Children learn through play.
- Children's interests and "need to know" motivate learning.
- Human development and learning are characterized by individual variation.

7. Daily Procedures

Hours of operation:

Carpe Diem Private Preschool is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Our core curriculum hours are 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. Each class's daily schedule is posted on our website. Our holiday closings are listed in section 28 on page 14. The school year holiday calendar is also posted on our website

Drop-off/check-in procedure:

For expeditious morning drop-off from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. for children in our preschool A, preschool B, and pre-kindergarten classes, we have a staff member available to assist your child from your vehicle to the lobby and they will further assist your child to the classroom. However, should you wish to accompany your child to his/her classroom, please be courteous to other parents and park your car in the parking lot rather than block the porte-cochere drive-through area. After 8:30 a.m., you will need to park and escort your child into the building. **The porte-cochere and the designated fire lanes are NO PARKING zones at all times, even in inclement weather conditions.**

Children in our infant, toddler, and 2's Transition classes must always be checked in by the adult who brings them to school and cannot be dropped off at the porte-cochere.

All children must be signed in. There is a log book in each classroom. A teacher will sign-in the children who use the valet drop-off and our after-schoolers who we transport from their elementary schools.

Pick-up/check-out procedure:

When you pick up your child, please park your car and come into the lobby. You enter the main school area using your fingerprint scan and proceed to your child's classroom. You do not need to notify us if you are picking your child up early, unless it will be during naptime. At our Richardson campus, we offer lobby pick-up between 3:30 and 6:30 p.m. Parents should call ahead to have their child come to the lobby.

Please note we will only release your child to individuals you have designated as an "Authorized Person" on your child's enrollment form or by using our "Authorization for Release of a Child" form. Giving a note or verbal permission to your child's teacher is unacceptable. In an emergency, if you need to make arrangements over the phone to give permission for someone who has not been authorized to pick up your child, please ask to speak to an administrator. That person will assist you in completing the "Authorization for Release of a Child" form by fax or by telephone. In all cases in which you authorize the release of your child to a person who has not picked up your child before or who is unknown to the administrator on duty, we require that person to provide picture identification.

All children must be signed out in the classroom log book by the person who is picking up the child or by his/her teacher. For security reasons, parents and children are not allowed to enter or leave the building through the staff door next to the kitchen.

8. Your Child's First Day

You have probably visited us on one or more occasions and our intent is for you to have a smooth and informative enrollment and orientation process. In addition, we want you and your child to feel as comfortable and welcomed on your first day at Carpe Diem as possible. We understand no matter how well prepared and excited a family may be, the newness can also be a little scary for everybody. We don't consider any questions or concerns you may have unimportant or silly.

Please come to our lobby where our administrators will greet you warmly, assist you to check-in using our fingerprint scan system, escort you to your child's classroom, and help you get your child settled. Sometimes saying goodbye isn't easy. We recommend you keep it reassuring, short, and sweet. Prolonging the inevitable often does not help the situation—ten minutes or so should do it; however, we won't rush you and respect your right to decide how to best handle this situation with your child.

We suggest that if you have any business or final paperwork to attend to, you should do it after you return to the lobby, because we don't want to keep your child waiting beforehand. We will be glad to take your phone call later in the day if you need reassurance about how your child is doing. And don't forget about our webcam service. Please know if we ever think you need to be told about anything concerning your child, we are going to call you, if necessary, or speak with you at drop-off or pick-up times, so that you can help us decide a course of action.

9. Meals and Snacks

At Carpe Diem we serve healthy, nutritious meals and snacks. Our weekly menus, both regular and vegetarian, are posted in the classrooms as well as on our website. Breakfast is available from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks are provided, and lunch is served family-style between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Children are encouraged to try new foods, but may refuse what they do not want to eat. Withholding food is never used as a form of discipline. We reserve the right to substitute any menu item if the listed item is unavailable. You will be told about substitutions, which are a rare occurrence, on your child's Daily Report Form. .

Parents may provide a labeled sack lunch and/or snack for their child if there is a particular food he/she does not prefer or to substitute for food he/she may be allergic to. We cannot refrigerate or heat children's sack lunches, so for safety's sake, please plan accordingly. We ask you not to send soft drinks, candy, or gum. When parents choose to provide a child's meals and/or snacks from home, it is with the understanding Carpe Diem is not responsible for their nutritional value or for meeting the child's daily food needs.

If your child is allergic to any foods, you must let us know. We strongly urge you to monitor our menus for possible reactive foods. In particular, if your child has an allergy that can cause a life-threatening reaction such as anaphylactic shock, we require you to work with our Director to make sure we have an agreed-upon plan for emergency situations.

Our menus do not include tree nut or peanut products. Parents may not bring any food items to Carpe Diem that have these ingredients.

10. Outdoor Play

This is a special time of the day to release energy and simply enjoy the physical rewards of active play. Carpe Diem is equipped with commercial state-of-the-art outdoor play systems, with more-than-required cushioning material in the fall zone areas of the systems. In addition, our spacious indoor activity rooms are the ideal place to allow for physical play when we cannot go outdoors due to inclement weather or ozone alerts.

We actively monitor the air quality and temperatures for the day, and keep children indoors when the air quality is hazardous or when it's too hot or too cold. In the hot summer months, we schedule our outdoor playtimes early in the day to take advantage of the cooler morning temperatures. Please make sure your child brings a coat, jacket, and/or Carpe Diem sweatshirt to wear when he/she will use the playground on breezy and chilly days.

In addition, sunscreen is a very effective protection against the sun's rays. If you would like us to apply sunscreen on your child prior to outdoor play, we will gladly do so year round provided you supply us with your preferred sunscreen brand. Please make sure to write your child's name on the container with a permanent marker and give it to your child's teacher for safe storage. Under no circumstances may sunscreen be left in a child's backpack.

11. Naptime

Every day, after enjoying our lunchtime meal, the children have a 1½ to 2 hour naptime. While all children are encouraged to take a nap, they are never forced to sleep and may have a quiet, peaceful rest time instead. Your child may bring a blanket, pillow, and/or stuffed animal for naptime, but they must be small enough to be stored in his/her backpack when not in use.

12. How We Communicate With Parents

We understand that an important part of your life is finding out about your child's day and progress at Carpe Diem. In our infant classes through pre-kindergarten, our daily Parent Report form, in addition to the on-going, informal conversations you will have with your child's teacher(s), is one way of sharing with you what, why, and how we do things. We encourage you to read these report forms and, when he/she becomes verbal, talk with your child about his or her accomplishments, further reinforcing the pride and competency your child will surely have.

Our administrators and teachers are very special people who spend a great deal of time with your child and they want to build mutually trusting relationships with you. We know you will use good judgment and not monopolize the teachers' time while they are supervising children. If you ever have any concerns, call us or stop in the lobby and we'll address them immediately. All our staff members can also be contacted through our voice mail and e-mail systems. They will respond as quickly as possible. We usually do not put parent calls directly through to the classrooms because that would distract the teachers' attention from the children. If you want to arrange a meeting or conference with a teacher or an administrator or both, all you have to do is ask and a mutually agreeable time will be arranged.

We also have a Parent Resource Center page on our website, a Facebook page, and informative parent information bulletin boards in our hallways and classrooms where we post monthly newsletters and calendars, daily schedules, menus, reminders, weekly curriculum highlights, and monthly teacher newsletters. In addition, we have parent/teacher conferences scheduled three times throughout the school year, special programs and family events, holiday celebrations, parent education workshops, and ways for parents to volunteer their special interests and talents.

From time to time usually before parent/teacher conferences, so you can let us know how we're doing, you'll be asked to take a few moments to complete a short questionnaire. We always welcome and encourage your involvement, comments, and suggestions.

13. Our Discipline and Guidance Philosophy

We believe the best way to prepare children to live successfully and productively is to help them develop self-control, resolve conflicts, and become increasingly responsible for their actions and behaviors. Adults must model desirable behavior in order for children to learn to understand, acknowledge, and cope with their feelings. We accomplish this through the use of positive guidance techniques that offer developmentally appropriate choices and set clear and consistent rules and consequences. We know children must be involved with each other, with teachers, and with materials and equipment to learn how to work and play harmoniously.

Sometimes children may be separated from the group for short periods when they need a quiet place away from the overwhelming emotions of peers and play. At Carpe Diem, this cooling-off period, often called "Time Out," is only used judiciously and as a last resort for serious behavior problems. We firmly believe children should never be made to feel humiliated or rejected. Physical, verbal, or emotional punishment or abuse is never allowed. If we have concerns about a child's behavior, we will inform his/her parents as soon as possible and collaborate on a plan of action for positive change.

14. Uniforms and Backpacks

Carpe Diem requires children in our preschool A, preschool B, and pre-kindergarten classes to wear Carpe Diem uniforms on Monday through Thursday, with Friday being an opportunity to dress in some other favorite outfit. The uniform requirement does not extend

to children in our infant, toddler, and young 2's/transition to preschool classes or children in our after-school program.

Our uniform consists of either a royal blue or a sky blue Carpe Diem polo shirt for both girls and boys. The shirt is to be worn with your choice of khaki pants, shorts, capris or skirts. A khaki jumper embroidered with the Carpe Diem logo is also available for girls and is to be worn with either a short- or long-sleeved blouse or shirt of any color. We have sweatshirts, jackets, and sweatpants for the cooler months and t-shirts for the summer months.

The only allowed shoes are closed-toed athletic shoes with non-skid, non-marking rubber soles to be worn with socks. Please remember, part of your child's day at Carpe Diem will be spent in very active play, such as running and climbing. Dress shoes, boots, and sandals are unsafe and not suitable for physical activities.

From time to time, toileting accidents or spills will occur at school, which require your child, regardless of age, to have a change of clothes. Therefore, please make sure you always have a complete change of clothes, including underwear and socks, in your child's backpack. If your child does not have any, we will call you to bring some or provide him/her with Carpe Diem sweatpants and/or a polo shirt, which will be charged to your account.

Except for children in after-school care, you are required to purchase our standard Carpe Diem backpack for your child's use. Please make sure the backpack tag is clearly labeled with your child's name. Embroidered monograms or designs are allowed. No other backpacks or bags are acceptable.

You will be given a price list and order form regarding the purchase of your child's uniforms and backpack. The form is also available on our website.

15. Diapering

Children who wear diapers are checked at regular intervals throughout the day. Every effort is made to change each child's diaper at the first sign of wetness or soiling. All diapers and supplies are provided by Carpe Diem. If your child needs a special type or brand of diapers or supplies, you may provide them and they will be utilized.

16. Toilet Training

We recognize that toilet training is an important step in the early development of all children. At some point during the older toddler or 2/3's school year, when you believe your child is ready to begin the process, discuss what you plan to do with his/her teachers. The teachers will have suggestions to assist you. Your child will have the greatest success when parents and teachers work together in a consistent team effort. If the timing's right, it should be a natural progression, not an ordeal to worry about.

Children who are in the toilet training process must have several changes of clothing on hand every day. We recommend your child wear underwear at this time. Switching between underwear and diapers, except at naptime and bedtime confuses children. We believe pull-ups often hinder successful toilet training, so we do not use them.

17. Personal Belongings

It is your responsibility to make sure everything your child brings or wears to school has his/her name clearly written on it in permanent marker.

All children love to bring personal items to school with them, but please understand we have plenty of toys and materials at our schools already. If your child brings an item to school, it may be lost or damaged. The risk is yours and Carpe Diem cannot be responsible for personal belongings. We do our best to keep track of such items; but if it's precious, it's best left safe and sound at home. We will put unclaimed, unlabeled items in our "Lost and Found" basket. If they are not claimed after a month, they will be donated to charity.

Your child must not bring to school any weapon or replica of a weapon or any other item that may encourage overly aggressive play. Small or delicate items, such as coins and ceramics, which could be easily swallowed or broken, should not be brought to school. All items brought to school should fit in your child's Carpe Diem backpack. Please do not bring larger things unless they are something needed for a special "show and tell" assignment/project that has been previously arranged with your child's teachers.

18. Pets and Other Animals

According to state licensing standards, all Carpe Diem parents must be notified 48 hours in advance if animals, whether family pets or those part of a special program such as a visiting petting zoo, are present on Carpe Diem premises. Therefore, please do not bring any animal to school without prior approval from the Director.

19. Health and Immunization Records

State licensing standards require specific medical and immunization information to be on file for each child upon enrollment and at the beginning of each school year thereafter, with the exception of children enrolled in our after-school programs. The Texas Department of Health audits our records regularly. **Your child will be excluded from attendance at Carpe Diem if this information has not been submitted, is not current, or is incomplete.**

State regulations also require children who are four- and five-years-old to have had vision and hearing screenings. Please arrange to have these screenings performed at your child's pediatrician's office and provide us with the results so we can report them to the proper state agency. When your child receives an immunization, it is very important for you to give us a copy of its documentation from your child's health care provider in order to keep his/her records up-to-date.

20. When Your Child Is Ill or Injured

If your child becomes ill or injured while at school, we will notify you immediately for you to make arrangements for pick up; and we will do our best to comfort him/her until you arrive. To avoid the spread of disease, state licensing standards require ill children to be isolated from their group and picked up from school as soon as possible, but **no later than one hour after notification**. If emergency medical care is required, we will call 911 for immediate assistance.

To attend school, your child needs to be well enough to function in group care. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she must be excluded from attendance:

- Has or has had a fever at or above 100.4° F. within the past 24 hours, regardless of its cause. This includes fever that you and/or your pediatrician believe is caused when infants or toddlers are teething.
- Is vomiting or has an upset stomach accompanied by diarrhea.
- Has diarrhea that is not able to be contained within a diaper.
- Shows evidence of a communicable disease, such as chicken pox or pink eye.
- Has an undiagnosed rash.
- Has discharge from the eyes, ears, and/or profuse, colored nasal discharge.
- Has unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, or difficulty breathing.

As a courtesy to all Carpe Diem children, families, and staff, please help us minimize the transmission of illnesses. **In order to return to school, your child needs to be free of all symptoms for 24 hours without the use of medication, except for an antibiotic prescribed for an ear or sinus infection, for example.**

To reduce the spread of infections, children and staff wash their hands, using anti-bacterial soap, many times during the day, but especially after toileting and before eating, and we do not allow children to share cups, utensils, etc. In addition, toys, doorknobs, and all other items that are handled or contacted on a regular basis by children are disinfected regularly with an anti-bacterial solution.

21. Medication Policies

We recognize the administration of medications is an important part of helping to maintain your child's overall state of welfare and health. We will administer all prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications according to the following requirements:

- All medications must be in their original containers. For prescription medications, the pharmacy label with the child's and physician's names, the prescription number, dosage, and frequency must be current and legible. For non-prescription medications, the child's name needs to be clearly written on the container with permanent marker. Non-prescription medications will only be administered with a note or fax from your child's pediatrician stating the specific name of the medication, the dosage, and its frequency.
- With the exception of prescription allergy and asthma medications, medicine will not be administered on an as-needed basis. A specific time must be indicated on the

authorization form.

- An “Authorization to Administer Medication” form must be completed in full by the parent and given, along with the medication, to an administrator. Forms are available in the lobby or on our website. Do not give medication or forms to your child’s teachers. For on-going medication, a new form must be submitted every week.
- Clearly indicate it if the medication needs to be refrigerated.
- We recommend you have your pharmacist prepare your child’s prescription in two containers, one for home and one for school, in case you forget to take the prescription medication home at the end of the day.
- Medication can be very dangerous in the hands of children and must never be left in a child’s backpack where it might be accidentally available to any child.

22. When Your Child Is Absent

If your child will be absent due to vacation or illness, please notify the school as soon as possible. **If your child is enrolled in our after-school program, you must notify us by 1:30 p.m., so we can properly inform our bus driver that your child will not need to be picked up.** A \$5.00 charge will be assessed if you forget to cancel after-school pick-up. After three failures to notify us, the charge will double to \$10.00.

23. Solicitation of Carpe Diem Employees

Solicitation of Carpe Diem teachers for work such as private tutoring or baby-sitting on an evening or weekend basis is allowed; however, all arrangements must be made away from the school facilities during non-school hours. This work must not conflict with an employee’s regularly-scheduled Carpe Diem work hours.

24. Severe Weather Days

If either the Richardson and/or Plano Independent School Districts are closed due to unsafe weather conditions, Carpe Diem Richardson will also be closed. Carpe Diem Frisco will be closed if the Frisco ISD and/or Lewisville ISD close. Carpe Diem Allen will be closed if the Allen ISD and/or Plano ISD close. Carpe Diem Southlake will be closed if the Keller ISD and/or Southlake ISD close. Public school closings are announced on local TV and radio channels. If delayed openings are announced, we will make every effort to open Carpe Diem following the ISD’s designated time, but since our staff commutes from different locations, we may not be able to do so. We will post closings and delayed opening times on www.cancellations.com. In the case of a severe mid-day storm, we will notify you by phone and/or e-mail if your child needs to be picked up early.

25. Children’s Birthdays

We enjoy celebrating your child’s birthday at Carpe Diem. If you would like to bring a simple, yet special treat for the class, please limit it to small cupcakes, muffins, or cookies. For safety reasons, we do not allow candles and/or balloons to be brought to school. We ask you to make arrangements in advance directly with your child’s teachers as to how much to

bring and when. Special birthday treats will be served at our afternoon snack time. We strongly discourage exchanging birthday gifts at school. We also discourage the distribution of birthday party invitations at school, even if you plan to invite the entire class. Because small envelopes are easily misplaced and sometimes don't get home with children, misunderstandings and hurt feelings can be the result. We suggest you mail or e-mail invitations to children using your school directory. If you need a current list, please ask the Office Manager.

26. Carpe Diem Private Preschool Directory

Close to the beginning of every school year, with updates to follow as necessary, we will e-mail our school directory to parents organized by class, which will include the child's name, the parents' names, cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses, and the child's home address and telephone number. We respect your privacy and have asked you on your child's enrollment form to give or withhold permission for us to include this information in our directory. Please be aware, if you do not give permission, your child may not receive party invitations (see above).

27. Field Trips

Field trips are not only fun, but also educational for your child. In our pre-kindergarten and school-age programs, field trips are a planned, regular occurrence. Please be assured that safety while on a field trip is our paramount concern. We only take groups of manageable size at one time in order to maintain a high level of supervision during the trip and while at the destination.

Parents are always welcome to participate and may ride on one of our buses if space permits or drive their own vehicle. Field trip information will be given to you at least two days in advance. Please note there may be additional fees for field trips, depending upon the destination. Such fees will be charged to your account.

Children must be at school and be ready to leave at the designated time. Children are not allowed to meet the class at the field trip location. Uniform shirts or Summer Camp t-shirts, as designated, must be worn on field trips, depending on the time of year.

28. Holidays

Carpe Diem Private Preschool will close in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)

- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Closings will be adjusted when any of the holidays listed above fall on Saturday or Sunday. In addition, we will be closed for one staff development/preparation day per year in August. The date will be announced in advance. There may be other infrequent occasions when we close to allow staff to attend early childhood education conferences.

29. After-School Care and Holiday Care for Kindergarten through 5th Grade

Carpe Diem provides after-school care for children enrolled in selected public elementary schools. We have an exceptionally low child to teacher ratio of 15 to 1 that allows us to guide children in a caring atmosphere and prevents most discipline issues. We also offer full-day care on public school holidays (except for the days we are closed—see above) with field trips and special programs and an exciting Summer Day Camp packed with fun and adventure. We distribute our Summer Day Camp registration information every February for the coming summer.

After-schoolers will be transported to Carpe Diem at the end of their school day in one of our buses. They will follow a regular, well-supervised schedule using a classroom for art, crafts, and special projects; our spacious, indoor activity room; the computer lab with its large software selection; the library for reading and homework; and the challenging outdoor play area specially designed for older children. There will be plenty of time for a nutritious afternoon snack, socializing, playing games and sports, doing art and craft projects, dramatic play, cooking, and playing with puzzles and other age-appropriate toys.

Our after-schoolers are signed-in daily by our staff. They must be picked-up by a parent or other authorized adult (who must be at least 16 years old with picture ID) using our standard procedures described in section 7. Parents must call us by 1:30 p.m. if we are not going to pick-up their child at his/her elementary school, so we can notify our bus driver appropriately. A \$5 fee (\$10 after the third time per school year) is charged when a parent fails to cancel pick-up.

30. Fees, Security Deposit, and Tuition

Application and/or Registration Fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Registration Fee: \$200.00 per child due upon initial enrollment and annually thereafter to re-enroll for the upcoming school year. For wait list purposes when a class is full, we charge a \$50.00 Application Fee with the remaining \$150.00 balance of the Registration Fee due upon enrollment when a space for your child becomes available.

Security Deposit: \$200.00 per child due upon initial enrollment. This deposit will be credited to your account when you withdraw your child, provided thirty (30) days advance notice of withdrawal is given.

Tuition: Tuition is due monthly on the 1st of each month. Arrangements may be made with Carpe Diem for regular payments on a semi-monthly schedule to be paid on the 1st and the 15th. All checks should be made payable to Carpe Diem Private School. Carpe Diem reserves the right to increase tuition and other charges upon one month's prior written notice. Tuition information is available on a separate rate sheet. There will be no reduction of tuition charges if webcam access is unavailable due to technical difficulties beyond Carpe Diem's control.

Late Payment Fee: A 10% late payment fee will be assessed to your account for unpaid balances due on the 1st after the 5th of the month. There is no grace period for balances due on the 15th. A 10% late payment fee will be assessed on the 16th of the month.

- *Late Pick-Up Fee:* All children must be picked up by 6:30 p.m. A late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be charged directly to your account after that time. Please let us know if you will be late, so we can reassure your child. The fee will double if you are late more than five times per school year.

Returned Check Fee: A \$25.00 fee will be charged for any returned check. This fee must be paid along with the replacement payment for the returned check in cash or with a cashier's check or money order. The total amount must be paid in full in order for your child to attend Carpe Diem. After two checks have been returned due to insufficient funds, cash, a cashier's check, or a money order are the only acceptable forms of payment from then on.

Absences: Tuition must be paid in full, without deduction for absences of any duration or for any cause, and without substitution of other days of attendance as "make-up" days. This is necessary due to staffing and operational costs that are incurred on the basis of fixed levels of enrollment. If your child is absent from Carpe Diem for two consecutive weeks without notification to the Director, your child will be considered withdrawn from our school. If you choose to re-enroll your child, depending on space availability, you will be charged another registration fee.

Withdrawal: The obligation for full payment of tuition continues until the date indicated by the parent or guardian as the date of withdrawal. The parent or guardian agrees to furnish Carpe Diem with at least thirty (30) days written notice of such date of withdrawal, and failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the security deposit.

31. Confidentiality Policy

All personal records of children and families are kept in the strictest confidence. Information pertaining to admission, progress, health, or discharge of a child shall be confidential, unless we have written permission for disclosure from the parent or guardian.

32. Licensing Standards and Liability Insurance

Carpe Diem is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS). The Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers, our most recent licensing

inspection report, and Carpe Diem's Certificate of Liability Insurance are available for review in the lobby. The locations and phone numbers of all TDFPS offices are listed at www.dfps.state.tx.us. The Child Abuse Hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.

33. Supplemental Information

Carpe Diem Private Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in the admission of children to our programs or in the administration of our policies and procedures.

Carpe Diem reserves the right to exclude the new enrollment of or terminate the existing enrollment of a child at any time, including, but not limited to, children whose behavioral and educational needs cannot be met at Carpe Diem without fundamental alterations of or undue burden to our existing programs, procedures, or practices, as deemed by Carpe Diem, and/or children whose fees and/or tuition payments are in arrears.

This Parent Handbook contains general information concerning the policies and procedures of Carpe Diem Private Preschool. The policies and procedures described herein are not intended to be and should not be interpreted as a contract between Carpe Diem Private Preschool and any other person. This information does not constitute a legal document, nor does it constitute a contract. It does not confer any legal rights, nor does it create any contractual obligations, expressed or implied.

Carpe Diem reserves the right to change, revise, supplement, or delete any of our policies and procedures, including all those covered herein, at any time. Changes will be effective on the dates determined by Carpe Diem.

Parents must never leave a child unattended in a vehicle in the Carpe Diem parking lot. Please lock your vehicle when you enter the building to drop-off and pick-up your child. Never leave anything of value visible in your vehicle. Carpe Diem Private Preschool is not liable for the theft of or damage to any property.

Carpe Diem reserves the right to change, revise, supplement, or delete any of our policies and procedures, including all those covered herein, at any time. Changes will be effective on the dates determined by Carpe Diem and will be communicated to parents by e-mail.