

The Apple Tree Operational Policies

The Apple Tree Daycare & Preschool
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The Apple Tree Daycare & Preschool offers a nurturing environment for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children. Our goal is to provide a variety of age-appropriate activities that will support each child's social, emotional, intellectual and physical development.

1. **Hours of Operation**

Our hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, year-round. We follow the Cameron Independent School District Calendar for holidays, which include:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
Spring Break - One Week in March
Easter Friday
Memorial Day
The 4th of July
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day (also the Wednesday before, and the following Friday)
Christmas Day

We will close our center whenever inclement weather interferes with safe travel. We will close our facility when the CISD close. Please listen to KMIL for details of weather and school closing.

Sign in & Out: Upon arrival at The Apple Tree, there are sign in and out sheets on the reception counter in the entrance. Please sign your child in and out every day.

Late Pick Up Fee: We realize that an unexpected event may delay your arrival at The Apple Tree in the evening. However, we close promptly at 5:30 p.m. There is a \$5.00 per-minute late fee if you pick up your child after 5:30 p.m. The late pick up charge must be paid within five working days of the late pickup.

2. **Release of Children**

We will only release children to the child's parent(s) or to persons who have been designated in writing by the parent(s). Please notify us in advance when someone other than a parent will be picking up your child. This person must produce a picture ID, e.g., a valid Driver License, which will be photocopied for our records.

3. **Illness and Exclusion Criteria**

We cannot care for children who: Cannot participate comfortably in the center's normal activities Has an illness that requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children Has uncontrolled diarrhea Has an oral temperature of 100.4 degrees, or armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees Has had two or more episodes of vomiting Has a communicable disease

The child can be returned to care if they are symptom-free for 24 hours, or if their physician provides a written statement verifying the child is no longer contagious.

We do understand that it is inconvenient, and difficult to miss work, but if we call you and ask you to pick up your sick child, we expect you to do so as quickly as possible.

4. **Procedure for Dispensing Medication**

Prescription Medication: We prefer, when possible, that the parent give the first and last dose of medication at home. If more medication is required, we have a Medication Form for you to fill out and sign, which authorizes the designated person to administer the medication in your absence. We will need the original prescription container box – with your child's full name, physician's name, pharmacy telephone number and date. We keep a copy of this in your child's file.

Over-the-Counter Medication: If the medication is over-the-counter, it must be age appropriate, and, the same paperwork as prescription medication applies. (See above section on Prescription Medication.)

5. **Procedures for Handling Medical Emergencies**

In the event of a critical illness or injury we will take the following actions: Administer first aid or CPR Call 911 and/or take the child to the nearest emergency room Contact the child's parent or designated emergency contact(s) if parent cannot be reached Contact the child's physician

Children often receive minor cuts, scrapes and bruises during the course of their active play. Staff members will complete an "Ouch!" report for each minor injury which will be given to you at the end of the day.

We will contact you immediately in the unlikely event your child sustains a more serious injury. Texas State Licensing Rules require us to complete a written report on serious injuries or incidents. You will receive a copy of the Incident Report and will be asked to sign the Report.

6. **Procedures for Parental Notification**

Good communication is important to us. Please keep your child's teacher informed about any significant events happening in your child's life.

We send the student's folders home weekly, which will include notes about upcoming events. We hope to be able to begin a monthly newsletter for the Fall of 2004.

7. **Discipline and Guidance**

At The Apple Tree, we emphasize the teaching of appropriate behavior, not the punishment of "bad" behavior. Discipline at our center is along Licensing Guidelines: Individualized and

consistent for each child; Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Our staff members only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following: Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior; Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and 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 is no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited: Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment; Punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training; Pinching, shaking, or biting a child; Hitting a child with a hand or instrument; Putting anything in or on a child's mouth; Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child; Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language; Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet with the door closed; and Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

8. Meals and Food Service

We serve breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack to the children. Please serve your child a snack or meal if they are arriving too late to participate in breakfast or lunch.

Breakfast is at 8:30 a.m.

Lunch is at 11:30 a.m.

Afternoon snack is served after nap time, about 3:00 p.m.

We provide nutritious food to the children. Please do not send additional food with your child. We cannot serve special meals or diets without written approval from your physician or registered dietician.

9. Immunization

For information about immunizations, visit www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize.

To protect your child and the other children at The Apple Tree, your child must have all vaccinations required by the Texas Department of Health. You must provide an immunization record upon enrollment and provide updates to that record whenever your child receives more immunizations.

10. Tuberculin Testing Requirements

TB tests are not required at this time.

11. Vision and Hearing Screening

Texas State law requires vision and hearing screening for four-year old children, within 120 days of their fourth birthday. Please provide copies of these results to The Apple Tree.

12. Enrollment Procedures

The Apple Tree enrollment process requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to complete a number of forms

with information on their child and themselves. This information helps assure the safety of your child, and includes: An Enrollment form - with information about the child's physician, emergency contacts, your contact information during the day while they are in our care, special needs, others who may be picking up your child and their telephone numbers, and other important information. A Health Statement for all pre-school children, from their physician. A copy of their current immunization record. Child Care Services Application (if needed). Signature page of The Apple Tree Operational Policies (last page of this document). Changes to the Operational Policies will be in writing. You will receive notification of any procedural changes before they go into effect. Signature page for Discipline & Guidance Application for the Federal Food Program through The Apple Tree. Signature page for "Sleep Position Policy" for children under 23 months of age.

We maintain confidentiality of this information. Please give us updated information whenever there is a change. We will ask you to complete a new admission form every August to be sure we have the most up-to-date information possible.

13. **Transportation**

We do not offer any transportation. The after school children arrive at The Apple Tree on the Cameron Independent School District bus.

14. **Water Activities**

Your child cannot participate in any water activity without your approval and written permission. During the summer months we have a weekly "Sprinkler Day" for the children. Please send a swimsuit and towel with the children on Fridays in the summer.

We have made arrangements at a local swimming pool for children three years and older to swim once a week. The pool will provide a lifeguard. The teachers who accompany swimming activities have water safety certification and all our staff members have CPR and First Aid certification. There is a \$5 pool fee for each child, and \$2 transportation charge, each time they go to the pool. Parent volunteers are welcome to join us.

15 **Field Trips**

Your child cannot participate in any field trip without your approval and written permission. You will be notified in advance of any field trip. No child under three may go on any field trip. Exceptions are younger siblings in the care of parent volunteers.

We go on several field trips each year and they vary according to availability: they could include seeing theatrical productions at the Cultural Activities Center in Temple; a veterinary field trip to visit Dr. Valerie (small animals) and Dr. Barton (large animals); and a May visit to The Cameron Zoo in Waco. We have also visited the Winnie I. Nursing Home at Halloween and Christmas, and were able to walk there. Other interesting places are being considered, and we are able to take the field trips because of the participation of the parent volunteers.

Guest Presentations: During the year we have various guests visit The Apple Tree and share their specialties with our students. These include a Native American Storyteller; a Dental Hygienist; the Cameron Volunteer Fire Department; The Zoo Man; the Cameron Police Department; The Bug Man; Cowboy Tom and the Amazing Wonder Horse, Fancy; and other teachers and business leaders from the community. If you would like to present a program, please let your child's teacher, or the director, know of your interest.

16. **Animals**

Our mascot, Buddy the Dog, is a frequent visitor. Buddy is a 3-year old black Labrador, Shepard mix, has been to an 8-week behavior training, “dog school”, is current with his vaccinations, and received a certificate of good health from his vet. His vaccinations, health records, and certificates are available for review in the director’s office as required by Texas Health and Safety Code. Buddy spends a lot of time at The Apple Tree in the director’s office, out on the playground with the director, and goes with the students on local field trips.

Buddy will be participating in Intermediate Behavior Training, and then will qualify to take the Canine Good Citizen Certification test given by the American Kennel Club. Additionally, Buddy is training for the Visiting and Therapy Pets Program, through Delta Society.

From time to time, we will have fish, hamsters, an ant farm, or various other animals at The Apple Tree. The children never handle the animals, with the exception of petting Buddy, the dog.

17. **Procedures for Questions and Concerns**

If you have a question or concern that cannot be addressed by your child’s teacher, please contact the director to arrange a meeting, or call to discuss your concern.

18. **Procedures for Parents, Family Members and Friends to Visit**

Parents are welcome to visit their children at any time without an appointment. We do suggest, however, that visits not be made between 12:00 and 3:00 – this is lunch and nap time.

19. **Procedures for Parental Participation**

Parents, Guardians and Family Members are always welcome to go along on field trips or to participate in activities at The Apple Tree. We have several special days and parties, such as our Fall Festival Feast and Halloween Parade; Christmas; Valentine’s Day; Easter Egg Hunt; and Pre-School Graduation! We welcome your attendance and participation at these parties.

If you volunteer on a regular or frequent basis, we will ask you to provide information for a criminal background check, the completion of a notarized affidavit about your background, and will have you attend and orientation for daycare operations.

We are always looking for ways to improve our programs at The Apple Tree, and welcome your suggestions and participation. If you have a special interest or hobby, please talk to your child’s teacher or the director about scheduling you for a special presentation in conjunction with our curriculum.

20. **Procedures for Reviewing Standards and Reports**

A copy of the Minimum Standards is available for review in The Apple Tree office. Our most recent Licensing Inspection Report is always posted on the bulletin board at the reception desk. You may also review them at www.txchildcaresearch.org.

21. **Procedures for Contacting Child Care Licensing**

The Department of Family and Protective Services regulate our facility. You can find out more about the regulations of child care facilities at www.txchildcareresearch.org.

The local office number is (512) 388-6200.

You may report the suspected abuse or neglect of a child by calling the child abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400. If you want to file a report on line, this number will give you the site information.

22. **Other Information**

Staff Requirements. All staff are over 18 years old and have at least a high school education. Before anyone can work at The Apple Tree, they must attend an 8-hour Pre- Service Training. Then each year they must complete 15+ hours of training in child development, educational theory and child-safety issues. Also each year they receive a one- hour training in SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome; and Bi-Annually are re-certified in CPR and First Aid.

Donations: We always need toys, books to read, and Dramatic Play (dress up) items like hats, gloves, vests, scarves; used telephones and play food.

Choking Hazards: Remember that anything that can pass through the opening in a toilet paper core is too small for us to have in the classrooms.

We have an annual fund raising for new equipment, and would happily consider donation of equipment and used furniture any time of year. Just let one of the teachers know, or contact the director.

Seasonal Clothing: All children must have a seasonal change of clothing at The Apple Tree. Infants under 18 month should have two changes of clothing.

Shoes: Children should wear closed toe shoes to avoid accidents. Children play outdoors every day, weather permitting.

Nap Time: Except for non-walking infants, each child naps on a mat we provide. Please provide a travel-sized blanket and pillow, labeled with your child's name, to remain here. They may also bring a soft "snuggles" or "lovey" for comfort at nap time.

All other toys should be left at home to avoid squabbles over ownership.

More Sources for Information:

The ABC's of Safe and Healthy Child Care <http://www.cdc.gov/>
Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Control

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs <http://www.naeyc.org/>
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) <http://www.aap.org>

Redirection Connection and INCAF [www.INCAF.com](http://www.incaf.com)
<http://www.redirectionconnection.com/newsletter.htm>

We look forward to caring for your child.

Signature Page

A) I have received a copy of the **Operational Policies of The Apple Tree.**

Signature, Parent/Guardian/Staff

Date