



# Parent Handbook

### **Mission Statement**

Rachel's Little House believes in a high-quality program designed to meet the needs of the whole child. Our commitment to nurture each child's active learning, through a well-trained staff, makes us an extension of the home and family.

### **History**

Rachel's Little House (hereinafter referred to as "the Center") is a non-profit facility, established under the guidance of Rachel Snyder in 1971 as a mission project of the Presbyterian Women's Association.

The Center is under the direction of a Board of Directors, which represents a cross-section of the community with leaders from various professions and expertise.

### **Philosophy**

The program is designed to meet the needs of the "whole child". This includes the areas of social, physical, emotional, cognitive, creative, and language development. The environment is carefully planned to provide quality care and education for young children. This approach recognizes the uniqueness of each child and provides for individualized experiences to help children reach their maximum potential. Young children learn differently than older children; therefore, young children are given opportunities to:

- Practice decision-making by selecting activities from a variety of learning centers (books, home-living, discovery, blocks, and manipulatives).
- Express themselves creatively through art, music, dramatic play, movement, and use of unstructured materials.
- Develop appropriate concepts and thinking skills through the exploration of a wide variety of concrete materials.
- Experience warm positive interactions with children and adults.
- Verbalize feelings in a supportive, accepting environment that encourages independence and self-control.
- Enjoy and participate in language experiences through conversations, stories, puppets, books, songs, discovery play, and creative dramatics.
- Participate in many physical activities to develop fine and gross motor skills through puzzles, discovery play, arts, and crafts, climbing equipment, exercise, tricycles, and balls.

The daily schedule is organized to meet the children's needs for a balance of active and quiet play, large and small group interaction, and indoor and outdoor activities.

### **Enrollment Procedures**

The Center welcomes families of all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. The Center accepts children with special needs provided they can benefit from our program and our staff can effectively work with them. If your child has special needs, please inform us prior to enrollment so that a plan of care may be initiated for your child.

Enrollment forms may be picked up at the Center from the Director or staff on duty. Upon full completion of the enrollment forms listed below, the child/children will be enrolled.

- State Admission Form
- Discipline and Guidance Form
- Biting and Aggressive Behavior Policy Form

- Doctor's Statement for any child not enrolled in public school.
- Copy of the child's current immunization Record
- Photo/Video Release Form

During the enrollment process, the director will ask the parent/guardian to register their fingerprints in our biometric database. Fingerprints are used to drop off and pick up your child/children. Please stop and register your child using your fingerprints even if the door is open as this process is used to sign your child/children in and out each day. Upon arriving to drop off your child/children or pick them up you will:

- Touch the "Start Here" Smiley Face
- Place your finger on the Fingerprint Reader Pad
- Tap the rectangle box with your child's name to start/stop their time. There will be a rectangle box for every child on your account, so please make sure that you tap only the boxes of the child/children you are checking in/out.
- Tap the green check mark in the lower right corner.
- Tap the Finish button in the lower left corner to unlock the door. You will have 5 seconds to open the door once you tap the finish button.

If you need assistance, please press the blue intercom button to the left of the screen.

### **Hours of Operation**

RLH is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Drop-off time is from 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. for breakfast, and if your child is already fed, you have until 9:00 a.m. to drop off.

A consistent daily schedule and step-by-step routine give children a predictable day. Schedules and routines in a daycare setting and at home help children: feel in control of their environment.

Teachers have a routine and a schedule that they follow every day to help your child feel confident and secure. They also have a lesson plan ready each day to meet your child's needs. That is why it is important for your child be there before drop-off time. Children will not be allowed to stay if they arrive after 9:00 a.m. unless they have a doctor's note or special arrangements have been made with the Director.

The Center will be closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day After Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day

Any additional days will be posted at the center and written notification of days closed will be sent home.

Parents of children remaining at the center after 6:00 p.m. will be charged a \$10.00 late fee. If a parent does not call within the hour and the Center's efforts to reach the parent or emergency contacts listed by 7:00 p.m. are unsuccessful, DFPS will be notified.

### **Tuition**

The fees charged are set where the Center's income and fundraising efforts offset our monthly expenses for building upkeep, toys, operating supplies, staff, and administrative costs. The Center makes every effort to keep rates as low as possible; however, due to rising costs and the Center's efforts to maintain a quality environment for the children, rates are subject to change. Notification of any changes would be given, in writing, two weeks in advance.

A supply fee of \$30.00 will be charged to your account each semester in August and January. Your current balance can be seen on the screen when you sign your child in/out. Please be sure to check your balance and make payments in a timely manner. Payment policy is as follows:

- Account balances for the previous week must be paid each Monday, or the first day of your child's attendance each week. For example, if Wednesday is the first day your child attends that week, you would pay for the previous week on Wednesday. You will find the amount due by looking at the ProCare Computer screen in the foyer.
- Families using drop-in care must pay on the day that care is provided.
- For each day, your account is past due, a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be added.
- Childcare cannot be provided to any family with a balance exceeding \$350. Once the balance has been paid in full, childcare can be reinstated.
- If an account is 30 days past due, the Board of Directors will begin the process of turning it over to a collection agency.

Please note that we always accept payment in advance of care. You do not have to wait until after care is provided. If the care is terminated, or you withdraw your child and you have a credit on your account, a refund will be given.

#### Rates

The following information is R.L.H.'s definition of the following terms **Full-Time**, **Part-time**, and **Drop-Ins**.

- Children who attend R.L.H. **Full-Time** are those children that attend the center for up to four (4) days out of the five (5) operating business days.
- Children who attend R.L.H. **Part-Time** are those children that attend the center for three (3) days out of the five (5) operating business days and have a *consistent schedule* throughout the semester. If the children attend an additional day from those three (3) days, the family will be charged a drop-in rate of \$50 for children under 18 months and \$40 for children over 18 months for that fourth (4) day.
- Children who attend R.L.H. as **Drop-Ins** are those children who attend for one (1) to two (2) days out of the five (5) operating business days.

**Please take the time to look at the chart below for more information regarding the changes.**

<b>Tuition</b>	<b>Infant (8weeks-18months)</b>	<b>Toddler (18months-13-year-old)</b>	<b>Preschool-School Age</b>
<b>Full Time</b>	\$185/week	\$160/week	\$17/day (3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.)
<b>½ Day</b>	N/S	\$135/week	
<b>Part-Time (3 days out of 5)</b>	N/A	\$100/week	\$85/week (7:30a.m.-12:30p.m.) (11:30a.m.-4:30p.m)
<b>Drop-In</b>	N/A	\$50/day	\$22/day (3:30p.m.-6:00p.m.)
<b>Little Learners</b>			\$145.00

#### **Things to remember:**

*Each family could submit a consecutive week each semester for your child to be off (for vacation, Holiday etc.). During that week, you will not be charged. If you do not use a week during the semester, the week will not be rolled over to the next semester.*

*Fall semester (August through December) Spring semester (January through May) Summer (June and July)*

*During summer vacation if you check your child out but want to have a spot back in August you will be charged \$160 for children over 18 months and \$185 for children under 18 months for both June and July to hold your child's spots for the fall. You will be able to bring them for at least five days during those months and will not be charged extra.*

### **Discipline and Guidance**

When a Child demonstrates inappropriate or disruptive behavior, it becomes necessary for staff to intervene. The following actions will be taken in addressing challenging behaviors at our center to ensure the safety to everyone.

Discipline will be:

- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and
- The child will be told that his behavior is inappropriate. The teacher will first talk to the child about the behavior and try to guide the child into using more appropriate ways to communicate.
- The child will be redirected and, if necessary, given a short time away for the rest of the class.

The Center staff will only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage 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

### **Aggressiveness**

Aggressive Behavior & Intervention Policy Purpose: To protect the safety and well-being of all children and staff by addressing aggressive behaviors promptly, consistently, and in partnership with families.

#### **1. Initial Notification & Early Intervention**

When a child displays aggressive behavior, parents/guardians will be notified. If aggressive behavior continues, staff will: Create the following steps and intervention plan, Schedule a parent conference

**2. Same-Day Serious Behavior:** If a child demonstrates three (3) aggressive acts that cause harm to a child or staff member in one day: Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. The child must be picked up and removed for the remainder of the day.

#### **3. Progressive Consequences**

If these same-day removal incidents continue: After the third same-day removal: The child must be temporarily removed for three (3) days. A conference with the Director is required before returning. The Director must approve reinstatement. If aggressive behavior continues after reinstatement: The child will be suspended for two (2) weeks. Reinstatement requires a parent meeting and Director approval. If aggression continues after the two-week reinstatement: The child will be suspended for thirty (30) days. Reinstatement again requires Director approval. If aggression continues after the thirty-day reinstatement: The child will be permanently removed from the program. Two-Month Reset Policy If the child shows significant improvement and aggressive incidents do not continue consistently, the disciplinary cycle will reset every two (2) months. The Director will determine whether a reset is appropriate based on documented behavior patterns. Severe or Unacceptable Physical Harm Any act of physical aggression that is severe,

dangerous, or unacceptable may result in immediate permanent suspension. Examples include:  
Intentional actions causing injury requiring medical evaluation  
Aggression involving objects used as weapons  
Repeated or extreme harm that puts others at serious risk  
Family Partnership  
Families are expected to participate in meetings and follow-through plans to help reduce aggressive behaviors.

### **Discipline and Guidance – Challenging Behaviors Policy**

Documentation of the behavioral incidents will be kept on file and the parents will be notified of the behavioral issues at pick up time or by phone.

- **Initial Consultation:** If your child is exhibiting behavior that is continually and increasingly disruptive you will be called to the office for an initial consultation to discuss strategies to solve the behavioral issue. The best solution toward solving the problem will be agreed upon by the center director, teacher and parent or guardian. A behavior log will be completed for the next week. A copy of completed behavioral log will be given to the parent to show child's progress.
- **Second Consultation:** If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parent will again be asked to meet with the director and teaching staff involved. Another attempt will be made to identify the problem, and establish a new, or revised, approach for solving the problem.
- **Disenrolled:** When the previous attempt has been followed and no another progress has been made towards solving the problem, the child may be disenrolled from the center at the discretion of the center director. The center director can terminate any child for physically harming another child, or teacher, repeatedly without going through the consultation process.

There will be 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.

### **Accommodation for Families**

This section outlines our program's policy and process in supporting families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, differing abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in a language easily understood by the general public and in the parent's primary language. Please notify the Director if you or your child require accommodations and we will ensure that we do our part in making sure you needs are met.

Ways that RLH will partner with families:

- If specific therapies are needed during the day while the child is in our care, we will provide space to accommodate sessions.
- Participants in all comprehensive care meetings if needed.
- Complete supporting documentation from authorized medical professional for any accommodations related to child's physical or developmental needs.
- Provide material and resources in parent's/ child's primary language.
- Provide opportunity for cultural inclusiveness by hosting cultural events throughout the year.

#### **Child Transition Meeting Policy**

At Rachel's Little House, we prioritize smooth transitions for children moving to a new classroom. To ensure continuity of care and individualized support, teachers must hold a transition meeting before a child moves up.

Guidelines:

1. Timing: The meeting should take place at least one week before the transition.
2. Participants: The current teacher, receiving teacher, and any necessary support staff.
3. Discussion Topics:
  - The child's development, learning style, and interests.
  - Social-emotional needs and peer relationships.
  - Any behavioral strategies or accommodations.
  - Communication with parents about the transition.

Documentation: Key information should be recorded and shared with the teacher receiving reference

#### **Health Policies**

The State of Texas and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) requires all children enrolled to have a current immunization record on file at the Center, unless the child is enrolled in a pre-kindergarten program or public school.

If the child is enrolled in a pre-kindergarten program or public school, the parent can provide:

- a copy of the immunization record, or
- a signed statement that the child's immunization record is current and on file at the pre-kindergarten program or school that the child attends. The statement must be dated and include the name, address, and telephone number of the pre-kindergarten program or school listed in the statement.

In addition to the immunization record, the Center must also have a written statement, from a health-care professional who has examined the child within the past 12 months, indicating the child is able to take part in the child-care program.

#### **Oral Health Policy**

At Rachel's Little House, we recognize the importance of oral health in a child's overall well-being. While we do not provide teeth brushing at daycare, we promote healthy habits and awareness to support good dental hygiene at home.

1. Oral Health Education: Teachers will incorporate age-appropriate lessons on oral hygiene, including the importance of brushing, flossing, and visiting the dentist.
2. Healthy Eating Practices: We will encourage children to drink water regularly and limit sugary snacks and beverages to promote strong, healthy teeth.
3. Hygiene & Safety: Children will be reminded not to share utensils, cups, or other items that may spread germs affecting oral health.

4. Parent Communication: Families will receive occasional reminders and resources on oral health best practices, including recommended dental checkups.

#### **Vaccine Preventable Diseases**

At this time, the Center does not require any specific vaccinations for caregiver's; however, we strongly encourage them to have an annual Flu Shot to protect themselves and those present at the Center.

In addition, caregivers that are routinely involved with the infants and toddlers are encouraged to get the Whooping Cough vaccination. To help prevent the spread of illnesses, hand washing is performed routinely throughout the day, as well as wearing protective gloves while handling bodily fluids. This includes but is not limited to diapering, administering first aid, and wiping noses. Caregivers will remove gloves and wash hands immediately after each task to prevent cross-contamination to other children.

#### **Illness**

**Exclusion for Illness:** Any child showing symptoms of illness, such as, fever, diarrhea, red eyes with discharge, a rash, severe coughing, etc., will be isolated and a parent/guardian will be notified. The child must be picked up immediately. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be notified.

Any child who has been kept home by the parent or sent home by the Center with an armpit temperature of 100 degrees or higher, or shows symptoms of illness, must remain at home for a full 24 hours after fever and symptoms have subsided.

**Communicable Diseases:** Parents will be notified when a child has been exposed to a communicable disease within the Center.

Notices will be posted at the front door and at each classroom door throughout the center. Parents should likewise notify the Center when children are exposed to a communicable disease outside the Center.

Readmission of a child recovered from a communicable disease will be upon written approval of the child's physician. This statement must be given to the Center Director and placed in the child's file.

**Medication:** Due to stringent state guidelines on administering medications in childcare settings, medications will not be administered by the Center. If a child requires medication while in care, the parent or their emergency contact person will need to make arrangements to go to the Center to dispense the medication to the child.

#### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

All children enrolled in the Center that are 4 years of age, and not enrolled in public school, will have their hearing and vision screened by the nurse at Canadian Elementary School. The results of the screening will be shared with the parents and kept on file at the Center.

#### **Safety**

**Accidents:** Parents will be advised of any and all accidents as well as anything unusual concerning their child. Accidents requiring first aid while at the Center will be recorded on an Accident Report Form. In cases of an extreme emergency, the parent will be contacted by phone. If the parent cannot be reached, or depending on the severity of the accident, the child will be taken to the emergency room of the Hemphill County Hospital.



**Release of Children:** For the safety of the children, parents or authorized persons are required to use the front doors (main entrance) for entry and exit of the building when dropping off and picking up children. Children **may not** be picked up or dropped off using the back doors and playground exits.

The Center will release children ONLY to the parent or person(s) designated by the parent on the enrollment form.

In an emergency when a parent must ask someone else to pick up the child, the parent **MUST** inform the school by note or phone call. The person picking up the child **MUST** show his/her drivers' license to the Center staff for identification.

A child will not be released to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The Center cannot deny a custodial parent listed on the enrollment form from visiting the center or leaving the center with their child/children without a Court Order stating otherwise.

**Intruders:** If a person gains entry into the Center who poses an immediate threat to the children or staff, each room will be alerted by receiving a "code red" warning over the intercom phone system.

At that time, all children will be relocated to the safe room. The director or the person in charge will divert the intruder away from the children and the police will be called.

#### **Gang Free Zone:**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of the center is considered a gang-free zone where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

#### **Child Abuse and Neglect:**

To help prevent child abuse, you need to understand what it is. It's any mistreatment of a child that results in harm or injury.

Types of abuse include:

Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Neglect

Children who are abused might show physical signs or sudden changes in their behavior or school performance. These signs don't prove that children are being abused, but they could be a signal that the children or their families need help.

**General signs of abuse and/or neglect in children include but are not limited to:**

- Nervousness around adults or afraid of certain adults,
- Reluctant to go home,
- Very passive and withdrawn or aggressive and disruptive,
- Tired a lot, or they might complain of nightmares or not sleeping well,
- Fearful and anxious,
- Missing school a lot,
- Begging for food, stealing food, or stealing money for food,
- Lacking needed medical or dental care,
- Being frequently dirty,
- Using alcohol or other drugs,
- Saying there is no one at home to take care of them.

#### **Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect**

- Get to know your neighbors and communicate with them regularly.
- Ask for help when you are stressed.
- Offer help to families when you know they are under stress.

- Seek out faith leaders, doctors, and teachers for community resources.
- Be involved in your child's life and maintain open communication with them.

More detailed information about recognizing and preventing child abuse and neglect, as well as community resources can be found at [HelpAndHope.org](http://HelpAndHope.org) or in our parent education area located in the front hallway of the Center.

The Center is committed to protecting the well-being of children, and therefore our staff are trained annually in recognizing and preventing child abuse and neglect. Any evidence of unusual bruises, marks, burns, or unusual behavior will be noted in writing by the Center's staff and will be placed in the child's file. Additionally, we are under ethical and legal obligation to report instances of suspected abuse or neglect. All suspicious indicators will be documented and reported. The center is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse and neglect. It is not our responsibility or intention to offer interpretation or explanation of our observations - the investigation is handled by the State. Failure of educators to report is a crime.

Parents of children who have been a victim of child abuse or neglect are encouraged to communicate their needs to the director in order for a partnership to be formed and the family can be provided every resource available.

***If you suspect child abuse or neglect, contact the:***

**Texas Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400** or report online at [TexasAbuseHotline.org](http://TexasAbuseHotline.org).

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

**Fire and Bomb Threat Evacuation Procedure:** There will be a long continuous blast from the fire alarm. Children will be evacuated according to the diagram posted in each room or as directed by the police. In the event of fire, the children will be escorted to Canadian Elementary, 500 Dogwood Street. In the event of a bomb threat, the children will be escorted to Canadian Church of Christ, 1013 South Fourth Street.

**Tornado and Earthquake Procedure:** In the event of a tornado or earthquake, the children will be moved into the safe room/cafeteria, located in the center of the building.

**Blizzard and Power Failure Procedure:** If public schools close due to inclement weather, the Center will be closed also. In the case of a power failure for an extended period of time, parents will be notified to pick their children up immediately.

In all emergency situations, parents will be contacted following the children's secured safety. Each caregiver will have a list of the children in their care and will conduct a head count upon leaving the room, during transfer, and as soon as everyone has reached the safe relocation space. The director or person in charge will print the emergency contact report with each child's emergency contacts prior to leaving the Center for any emergency. If there is an electrical outage during the emergency, then each caregiver will take the emergency contact list with them which is located in each classroom. Staff will carry cell phones in order to communicate with each other, emergency personnel, and parents. Snacks, water, and activities will be provided to the children after safety has been secured to reduce anxiety and fears during the emergency. All staff will remain with their children until they have been picked up safely by their parents.

### **Center Closings**

If Canadian ISD is closed for inclement weather, the Center will be closed also. Closure will be posted on the Rachel's Little House Facebook page as well as The Canadian Record Facebook page. If CISD has a

delayed start, RLH will open 30 minutes before the CISD start time. In addition, if Canadian ISD closes for illness, such as a flu epidemic, the Center will also close.

#### **Meal and Snack Policy**

All meals meet the nutritional requirements as set forth by the Nutrition and Food Service in the Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers, which follows the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Menus and snacks are planned and prepared with variety, quality, and tastes of young children in mind. The menu will be posted monthly on the Parent Board in the foyer, in each classroom, in the kitchen, and a copy sent home in your child's cubby. The Center's snacks are fruit, raw vegetables, crackers, cheese, cereals, etc. Sugary food will be avoided. The Center serves only 100% fruit juice, milk, or water. Since the Center follows certain guidelines to prepare healthy meals, we ask that parents follow these same guidelines when sending lunch from home for your child. Suggestions for healthy lunches prepared at home can be given upon request or information can be found in the Parent. Education area in the front hallway. The Center will always have milk, fresh fruit, and vegetables available for those who bring a lunch from home. The Center asks that you place an ice pack in your child's lunch box for foods that need to remain cold as the Center cannot guarantee room in the refrigerator on site. Foods sent from home can be heated in the microwave by staff at the Center.

#### **Food Allergies:**

Children are encouraged but never forced to eat their food. If your child has an allergy or special diet, the center must be notified in writing by the child's physician; we must have an Allergy Alert Plan filled, including the symptoms resulting from the allergy, remedies, and precautions to be taken. Food allergies will be posted in the kitchen as well as the child's classroom.

It will be your responsibility to provide and bring all the snacks and lunch if your child is unable to eat the snacks and meals planned for that day. If you choose to bring your child's lunch from home, fruit, vegetables, and milk will still be available to your child.

Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach, education on food allergies and precautions for all staff, and outside food is commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials.

A monthly menu will be provided for your convenience. A variety of nutritious foods are served, giving your child a balanced meal each day. Our menu is subject to change, but we will post the change on the menu. The program rotates the lunch and snack menus to encourage diverse meal planning. Each staff member at our facility is trained and educated on food allergies within the center.

**Birthdays and Classroom Celebrations:** Throughout the year, parents may bring snacks or foods from home for classroom celebrations, birthdays, or other occasions. Food brought from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits/veggies, commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers, or foods prepared in a commercially licensed kitchen.

**Breastfeeding:** Mothers are welcome to come to the Center to breastfeed at any time. A rocking chair is provided in the conference room to provide a comfortable and private setting. In addition, parents are welcome to send breast milk labeled with the date and child's name. Upon request, community resources for breastfeeding education and support can be given.

**Food Education Resources:** Handouts regarding how to introduce solid foods to infants as well as which foods to avoid, information on healthy foods for children, and information on popular food allergies are

available in the Parent Education area in the front hallway. Please let us know if you are interested in any of this information.

#### **Absence Policy**

If your child is enrolled full-time (attends 5 days/week on a regular basis), and will be absent, please call the Center at 806-323-6261 to notify us of the absence. This allows us to make adjustments in our staffing and/or number of drop-ins that we can accommodate.

#### **Infant Policies**

Because parents are the most important people in an infant's life, the Center will provide and request feedback from the parents on a regular basis. Parents are required to complete an 'Infant Care Instructions' Form every 30 days. Since an infant's needs change so often during the first year, this form is used by the Center to meet your child's daily needs, such as feeding, diapering, napping, and playing schedule.

Parents are required to provide the following supplies:

- Diapers,
- Wipes,
- Formula (prepared or powder form and staff can mix), or
- Breastmilk can be sent with child's name and date,
- Bottles with first name and last initial,
- Baby Food,
- Diapering or skin creams needed and listed on the Infant Care Instructions Form ☐ Extra sets of clothing.

When your child is ready for table foods, we will integrate your child into our Center provided meals.

Parents of infant's are **REQUIRED** to give one weeks' notice prior to termination of services. You will be charged for the final week of care leading up to the termination date whether your child attends or not. The termination form can be picked up from the Director's office.

#### **General Information**

**Clothing:** Please dress your child in clothing that allows them to be comfortable during all daily activities and changes in weather. Closed toe shoes such as tennis shoes are preferred to protect feet and prevent tripping during outside play. You must send a jacket/coat during cool/cold weather as we will play outside even in low temperatures.

A change of clothing can be needed for a number of reasons, such as bathroom accidents, messy play activities, etc. For the comfort and health of your child, the Center requires all children to have a complete change of clothing at the Center at all times. This includes pants, shirts, and socks. Potty trained children should have at least (2) extra pairs of underwear. All items belonging to your child **MUST** be labeled with their name.

On the rare occasion that your child has an accident and does not have an extra set of clothing, the Center keeps a limited supply available to borrow. Please keep in mind that it may not always be weather appropriate due to size and selection available may vary. Please wash and **return** all borrowed clothing promptly.

**Cubbies:** Each child enrolled has their own cubby labeled with their name for their personal belongings. This is for backpacks, coats, and napping items. For the safety of the children, please do not leave any medications or ointments in the backpacks, as they are stored at the child's level. Please check your child's cubby each day for important notes and your child's artwork that is ready to go home.

**Curriculum/Lesson Plans:** Teachers are responsible for planning development appropriate lessons. Lessons should be based on the Texas Early Learning Guidelines and child development checklist. Lesson plans are due two weeks in advance for the coordinator/director to allow to provide feedback and gather material. Teachers are provided with weekly lesson planning time outside their classrooms.

**Outside Play:** The Center provides active play outside twice each day unless the temperature or wind chill is below 32 degrees. Check the daily schedule in your child's classroom to see what time is scheduled for outside play. If a child is not well enough to go outside, he or she is probably not well enough to be at the Center. Due to the Center's staffing, we are not able to have a staff member stay inside with one child.

**Indoor Plan:** Each classroom must maintain a written plan outlining approved indoor gross motor activities that promote movement, coordination, balance, and physical development. Plans may include activities such as dancing, stretching, yoga, obstacle courses, movement games, or use of large motor equipment appropriate for indoor use.

**Parent Conferences:** Our teacher's first concern and responsibility is supervising the children. If you need to visit at length with the teacher, please schedule a conference. In addition, discussions involving the child should not be discussed in the child's presence but should be held in private.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled to be performed two times a year (Fall and Spring). Teachers will communicate with parents on the date and time when the conference will be scheduled.

The program uses developmental milestones check list two times a year (Fall and Spring) to support and identify developmental delays for children 0-5 years, and make referrals when necessary, and share those completed checklist with families.

If you need to talk about other issues with the teacher, please schedule an additional conference for a later date.

**Field Trips:** On occasion, field trips may be scheduled. Field trip information will be posted at the entrance of your child's classroom and in your child's cubby. Parent's must give written permission for their child to attend.

**Water Activities:** During the summer, water activities are scheduled on Fridays. Children are allowed to play in sprinklers under Staff supervision. Parents must check and sign the permission statement for water activities on their child's enrollment form if they would like for their child to participate.

**Screen Time:** No screen time is offered at the Center. The Center feels it is best to engage the children in hands-on activities while in our care.

**Parent Involvement:** Parents are encouraged to visit the Center at any time during your child's day to observe your child, the Center's operation, or participate in daily activities. You do not have to call or set an appointment; you are always welcome.

All children need to be changed into their daily clothes and shoes when dropped off at daycare. Please encourage your child to walk into their classrooms, making this an easier transition for them.

**Messages:** Speaking to Center staff in person or by phone is the best way to communicate; however, if this is not possible and you need to relay a message to the Center, please send a signed note and give it to the Director or teacher. Verbal messages brought by the child are sometimes misunderstood.

**Birthdays:** A child's birthday will be recognized by singing. Parents may provide simple refreshments to be shared with the class during snack time. Please refer to our Meal and Snack Policy as certain foods are prohibited. You must make arrangements with the teacher 24 hours in advance.

**Lost and Found:** All items left at the Center will be placed in a basket located in the Director's office.

**Animals:** On occasion, parents may bring certain animals to the center to share with the children. Prior to any animal being brought into the Center, parents must make arrangements with the director as some animals are prohibited for health and safety reasons. In addition, documentation of current animal vaccinations and a statement of health from a local veterinarian would be required.

**Smoking Policy:** Smoking will not be permitted in any area of the building or playground spaces.

#### **Changes That Must Be Reported:**

At enrollment time, you provide information about you and your child on the enrollment records. Any changes to this information **MUST** be reported to the Center. It ensures that accurate information is available during an emergency so that the child's needs can be met. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Changes in the Parent's contact numbers,
- Changes in the Emergency Contact Person,
- Changes in the authorized persons for children to be released, or ☐ Changes in the child's physician or health needs, such as allergies, etc.

Besides reporting the above changes as needed, at least once per year, enrollment forms must be reviewed for updates, or a new form may be completed. This ensures the Center's records contain the most up to date information.

For your convenience, a Change of Information Form can be found in the Parent Education area in the front hallway. You may fill out this form and place it in the white drop box outside of the Director's office at any time.

#### **Termination Policy**

The Center believes that meeting each child's needs requires teamwork between the child, parent, teacher, and administrative staff. The Center reserves the right to discontinue services if the parent demonstrates an unwillingness to comply with Center policies or to work with staff in a cooperative manner. Upon termination, any credits will be refunded.

**Parent Termination:** The Center asks that you give one weeks' notice when withdrawing your child from care.

**Center Termination:** The Center strives to provide the best childcare possible to the enrolled children. To do this, however, it may become necessary for the Center in its sole discretion to terminate a child for one of the following reasons:

- Needs of the individual child cannot be served,
- Parents do not comply with the Parent Policies Handbook, or

Behavior of the child is deemed detrimental to the other children at the Center.

### **Parental Grievance Process**

At Rachel's Little House, we believe that one of our goals is to partner with parents for the success of your child's growth and well-being. However, at times, we do know that situations may arise where a parent is not satisfied with the way that situations might be handled. If a situation arises the following courses of remedy are below:

1. First communicate the issue with the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher will work with the parent or guardian to facilitate a place to remedy the situation. If this does not work, then...
2. The parent/guardian or classroom teacher will notify the Director of Rachel's Little House. A plan will then be put in place by the Director in consultation with the parent/guardian and the classroom teacher for a set duration of time agreed upon by all parties. If the issue is still not resolved...
3. The Director of Rachel's Little House will notify the Board President, and they will contact the parent/guardian about the situation to try to further resolve the issue. If the issue is still not resolved...
4. The issue at hand will be referred to the entire Board of Directors at their next date of meeting. The Board of Directors will take into consideration all the facts, and if necessary, the Board of Directors will meet with the parents.
5. After all of these avenues have been exhausted, the Board of Rachel's Little House reserves the right to make a final decision on the situation in accordance to the policies of Rachel's Little House and state and federal law regarding daycare facilities.

### **Parent Questions/Concerns**

If you, as a parent, have any questions or concerns regarding the policies and procedures of the Center, we encourage you to first contact your child's teacher. If further consideration is needed, call the Director at (806) 323-6261 or stop by the Director's office. If your concern is not adequately addressed by the Director, you may then request contact information for the Board of Directors.

The Center is licensed by the TDFPS and is in compliance with their rules and regulations. Parents may review the licensing minimum standards at any time. Our most recent licensing inspection is always posted on the parent board in the front foyer. Previous TDFPS reports are always kept in the Director's office and can be viewed upon request. If you feel a grievance is not being addressed, parents may contact the TDFPS office at:

Main Number: 806-358-6211 Intake Line: 806-354-5304 [www.hhs.texas.gov](http://www.hhs.texas.gov)

### **Policy Changes**

Policies will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. Parents will be notified in writing of any changes to the Parent Policies.

Parent Resources QR codes:



All About MyPlate Food Groups



Give Your Child's Eyes a Screen-Time  
Break: Here's Why



Razones para darles a los ojos de  
su hijo un descanso de las  
pantallas



Constantly Connected:



Estar constantemente conectado:



Breastfeeding Basic Information



Información Básica de Lactancia



Dental Health