

Williams School Handbook

February 2009 Edition

(This handbook supercedes any previous edition of the Williams School handbook and becomes effective immediately.)

Welcome! It is our privilege to have your child enrolled at the Williams School. Please read through this handbook as it contains specific information and requirements of the Williams School and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

This handbook is designed as a comprehensive reference for you but is not intended to address every facet of the Williams School operation. After receiving it, please sign and return the handbook verification form stating that you have received this information. This verification will be kept in your child's file. Signature of receipt of any policy information (this handbook) is required by the minimum standards of the TDFPS.

For the purposes of this handbook, “parent” signifies the legal custodial parent or the adult designated by the custodial parent.

Williams School Board

The Board sets policy for the Williams School. Nine rotating board members, nominated and approved by Williams Memorial UMC, each serve for a three-year period. The outgoing chairperson serves as a consultant. The Board and the Williams School Director meet every other month and as needed. For more information about the Board, contact Elizabeth Ann Duke, Chairperson, at 903-838-0748.____

Our Programs

The Williams School and Mother's Day Out programs are ministries of WMUMC. We provide a loving Christian environment for educational and social opportunities. The Williams School offers two separate school sessions. The traditional year follows the Pleasant Grove Independent School District (PGISD) calendar. Preschool hours are 8:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. when school is in session. The Williams School is open Monday – Friday, 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for those who choose extended care. There is also a nine-week summer option.

Our Staff

Each member of Williams School, including the Mother's Day Out program has completed adult, infant/child CPR and first aid training, submits to a criminal history check, and completes at least 15 hours training each year. Staff members include qualified teachers, mothers with experience in childcare, and college students majoring in education or a child-related field.

Preschool Teachers

Your child's teachers are here to guide and nurture your child. When talking with teachers:

- Let us know each morning about significant events that may help us understand your child's mood and behavior at the start of the day. The more information teachers have, the better they can teach and care for your child.
- Please schedule a conference with the teacher for extended discussions. Teachers are very busy at arrival time focusing on a smooth transition into the classroom for each child.
- Please make arrangements to talk with the teacher privately if you can't discuss something in front of your child. We try to include children appropriately in our conversations and not "talk over their heads."
- Please check your child's folder/backpack daily. Important information from the Williams School Director, as well as notes, newsletters, artwork or other items from the teacher will be enclosed.
- Parent conferences are an important time to discuss your child's growth with his/her teachers. We encourage both parents to attend these conferences during the year.

Security

Safety is our highest priority. Please enter and exit through the school entrance located at the back of the educational wing. Church volunteers cover the only other entrance that is unlocked during school hours.

If your child receives services from PGISD or any other school/agency, you must provide Williams School with notification releasing your child to the representative of that school/agency. The representative must also sign in and sign out in the office while visiting the school.

Red Cross Evacuee Plan

Williams Memorial United Methodist Church is a designated Red Cross Shelter which means the church may be housing evacuees when there is a need. The evacuees will be located in a separate building from Williams School. When evacuees are present, Williams School will go into "shelter mode." In addition to the usual exterior doors that are always locked, our entrance will be locked. Personnel will be located at those doors to let in only people authorized to be in the building. We will continue to play outside on weather appropriate days as required by Licensing Requirements. Additional personnel will be available for supervision. No one will be permitted on our playground during our hours of operation.

As soon as the Director and staff know that there will be evacuees, calls will be made to the telephone number listed as the child's home to inform parents.

Mother's Day Out and Toddler Care

The Williams School offers a Mother's Day Out program for infants/toddlers (age 8 months by September 1st, up to the age of 23 months as of September 1st) on Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. MDO will also follow the PGISD calendar.

Preschool and Extended Care

During the traditional school year, the preschool implements the DLM early childhood curriculum, which is published by McGraw-Hill/SRA. The DLM curriculum is approved by the Texas Education Agency for use in preschool and kindergarten programs. It provides development in language, math, science, social skills, music, art, Spanish and motor development through thematic units. A companion to the curriculum includes activities that focus on teaching children Christian concepts. Offering blessings before snacks and lunch are also part of each day. The preschool promotes the growth of each child's basic Christian development during weekly chapel conducted by staff members of both Williams School and Williams Memorial UMC.

Learning Opportunities

- ❖ Language Arts – Finger plays, nursery rhymes, poetry, stories, etc. are combined to enhance the child's vocabulary and encourage a love for books.
- ❖ Math – Opportunities are presented that allow the child to learn through direct experiences such as measuring, sorting, comparing and ordering. Play-based lessons provide opportunities for the child to develop skills in counting and number recognition. Concepts such as weights and measures are also discovered through play at the sand table.
- ❖ Social Studies – Activities focus on learning about self, home, family, friends, transportation and community life.
- ❖ Creative Drama – The centers of family living, tools, dramatic play, and puppets are favorite places for the children to experience role-playing and creativity. These centers also enhance social skills and expand verbal skills.
- ❖ Art – Art at the preschool level is a creative process that encourages each child and supports each child's uniqueness. The children finger paint, paint at easels, do paper tearing, cut with scissors, etc. These projects encourage creativity and help develop a child's fine motor skills.
- ❖ Music – Songs, tapes, compact discs and instruments are all used to develop the child's appreciation for music. The child's listening skills and ability to follow directions are enhanced through music.
- ❖ ArtsSmart – As an Arts Smart school, we are in partnership with the Texarkana Regional Arts and Humanities Council (TRAHC). Our teachers and staff attend workshops on encouraging creativity and connecting with students in different ways. Additionally, we host several performances with regional and nationally known artists during

the year. Past events have included the Bubble Man (showing the physics of bubbles), the TWU Dance Troupe and the Singing Zoologist.

- ❖ Science – Hands-on activities encourage exploration of nature. Stories about animals from spiders to whales broaden a child’s exposure and knowledge of God’s creatures.
- ❖ Nutrition/Food – Snack time provides an opportunity to learn good eating habits, and table manners. Participating in the preparation of some snacks teaches simple math concepts such as measuring, observing how food is made and then, the best part, enjoying a snack the children have helped prepare.
- ❖ Gross motor activities – Indoor and outdoor play areas contribute to the development of the child’s gross motor skills. Social development is nurtured as children interact with each other in supervised and small group games.

Enrichment Programs

- ❖ Story time – a volunteer dedicates time each week to read to the 3 and 4-year-old classes in the Children’s Library.
- ❖ Spanish – Spanish is integrated in the curriculum for the two, three and four-year-old classes. Additionally the four-year-old classes have a separate Spanish lesson each week.
- ❖ Computers – The three and four-year-old classrooms have computers for both individualized and supervised learning.

Chapel

The children attend chapel each week. Church and school staff share Christ’s love through Bible stories, songs and prayer.

Schedule and Hours

Our traditional year calendar is congruent with the PGISD calendar. Parents should pick up their children promptly at the specified time. If there is a delay due to an emergency, please call the school office immediately (903-838-9517). There will be a late fee of \$1.00 for each minute after the scheduled pick-up time.

Bad Weather Closings

The Williams School will have the same weather closing as PGISD. Separate weather closing announcements will not be made. Therefore, if PGISD announces a delayed and/or cancellation of school, the Williams School will also be delayed and/or cancelled. (For example if PGISD opens at 10 a.m., all the Williams School programs (including early arrivals) will also open at 10:00 a.m. Preschool will conclude at 11:30 a.m.)

Relocation Plan

If, for any reason the education building (including the surrounding grounds) is deemed unsafe, Williams School students will be re-located to Pleasant Grove Elementary School, 6500 Pleasant Grove Road, Texarkana, TX.

Preschool and Extended Hours

An extended care option is available for our preschool students. With extended care, the Williams School is available to receive students as early as 7:15 a.m. The school closes at 5:30 p.m.

An early morning option (7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.) is also available for preschool students who leave at 11:30 a.m. There is a nominal monthly fee for this option.

Preschool students who do not choose the early arrival option may not arrive before 8:00 a.m. The school day starts at 8:15 a.m. and concludes at 11:30 a.m. Parents may drop off their child at the drive-through drop off site between 8:00 – 8:15 a.m. Staff will be available to escort children from cars at these times.

Parents or other designated adults must sign every child in and out each day. A drop-off clipboard will be available to parents who choose the option of having a staff member escort their children to/from the building. **All other parents must sign in and sign out their child(ren) at the sign-in sheets located outside the school office.**

Summer Session - Preschool

For the nine-week summer session, we offer all-day hours only: 7:15 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Each week the children experience a theme-based adventure, such as ocean life, occupations, and modes of transportation. Stories, crafts, music, dramatic play, math skills, and games are included in the week's activities.

Summer Session – Mother's Day Out

The MDO summer session will be nine weeks. MDO will be closed Monday, July 27th and Wednesday, July 29th due to Vacation Bible School. The times remain the same: Monday and Wednesday from 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Enrollment and Registration - Preschool

- Enrollment is open to children between the age of two and five years of age as of September 1st, in the current school year that begins in August.
- Enrollment is open each registration period first to children currently enrolled in the Williams School and then to members of Williams Memorial UMC and siblings of currently returning students. Open registration begins after this period.
- A registration form must be completed by the child's parent or the parent's designated representative at registration. A registration fee for the traditional year and summer session is \$150. If a student is starting with a summer session, there will be an extra registration fee of \$40 for

the first summer session. **All tuition and fees once paid are non-refundable.**

- Registration for the upcoming summer and the next traditional year session occurs in March of each year.
- In the event that a class is full, the child's name may be placed on a waiting list. Openings will be filled from the waiting list in the same order as in registration. Currently enrolled students are given first preference, (regardless of date entered on waiting list) followed by church members and siblings of current students, then open registration. Waiting lists are kept through the current school session, **but not rolled over to the next registration period.**

Enrollment and Registration – Mother's Day Out

- Enrollment is open to children between eight months and 23 months of age as of September 1, 2009.
- Enrollment is open each registration period first to children currently enrolled in the Williams School and then to members of Williams Memorial UMC and current siblings. Open registration begins after this period.
- A registration form must be completed by the child's parent or the parent's designated representative at registration. Mother's Day Out registration is \$90. If a student is starting with a summer session, there will be an extra registration fee of \$35 for the first summer session. **All tuition and fees once paid are non-refundable.**
- Registration for the upcoming summer and the next traditional year sessions occur in March of each year.
- In the event that a class is full, the child's name may be placed on a waiting list. Openings will be filled from the waiting list in the same order as in registration. Currently enrolled students are given first preference; (regardless of date entered on waiting list) followed by church members and siblings of current students, then general public. Waiting lists are kept through the current school session, **but not rolled over to the next registration period.**

Procedures for Enrollment

In addition to payment of the registration fee and tuition, the following forms must be filled out and received by the Williams School office by the date stated at registration in order for your child to begin school.

- Registration form and fee
- Admission Information form
- A copy of all required immunizations/TB test records or TB form (required unless already on file)
- Health Statement signed by a physician (required unless already on file)
- Signed receipt of Williams School handbook
- First Tuition Payment

Tuition and Fees

The full monthly tuition is due in advance, on the 1st day of each month during the summer sessions and the 15th of the month during the traditional school year. All fees and tuitions once paid are non-refundable. Make all checks payable to: The Williams School. Mail or bring payments to the school at 4000 Moores Lane, Texarkana, Texas, 75503. Please write the child's name in the memo section of the check. Place your payment in the marked folder located on the administrative assistant's desk, unless you pay by mail or by automatic bank draft. Information about automatic bank draft is available in the office.

No monthly statement or receipt of tuition will be provided unless specifically requested each month. During the traditional year, tuition is due the 15th calendar day of each month and is considered late after the 20th calendar day of each month. A late fee of \$10.00 will be added to any payments not received in the school office by the 20th day of the month in which payment is due. Any check returned for non-sufficient funds must be replaced with cash/money order in addition to a \$15 processing fee. Subsequent tuition payments must be made by cash/money order for the remainder of the school session. Monthly tuition is based on the 180-day school session divided into ten equal payments. Any payment more than 10 days late (25th of the month) will be considered cause for dis-enrollment.

Summer preschool tuition is based on a 9-week session (MDO is based on 9-week session) divided into three equal payments, due June 1st, July 1st and Aug.1st. Summer tuition payment not received by the 5th of the month will result in dis-enrollment for the remainder of the summer. Any child enrolled for the summer and who is also registered for the fall session, but whose account is not up-to-date by August 5th, forfeits his/her enrollment spot for the fall session. If space is available, the child may re-register for the fall session when the account is paid in full.

A tuition discount is granted for families with more than one child in the Williams School. The first child in the family pays full tuition. Each additional child in the same family will receive a 5% discount on monthly tuition.

Withdrawals

The Williams School requires a two week advance notification in writing prior in the event you withdraw your child from the program. Until the office receives written notification, the child will continue to be charged monthly tuition.

Dis-enrollment

The Williams School reserves the right to dis-enroll any child who:

- Does not have the required forms on file
- Shows signs of difficulty in adjusting to the school programs

- Falls more than 15 days behind in payment of tuition (see special note for students registered for summer and fall in the Tuition and Fees section above)
- Has repeated disciplinary problems as defined by the suspension policy in this handbook
- Is in the 4-year-old class and regularly arrives more than 45 minutes late (9:00 a.m.). Teachers work diligently to prepare their students educationally, socially and emotionally for a confident and smooth transition to kindergarten. These efforts are compromised for all the children when one or more students interrupt the rhythm of the morning.

Sign-in & Sign-out

Everyone who brings a child to school must sign their name on the designated sign-in sheet located just outside the office or the drop-off clipboard located with the staff member supervising drive through drop-off and pick-up. The adult who picks up a child from school must also sign the child out at this location. Only adults can sign-in or sign-out.

Texas licensing regulations require that every child must be signed in and out each day. To ensure their safety, parents must deliver their child directly to a teacher or staff person. **Please do not leave a child alone in his/her classroom.** Children may not wander in the school unsupervised.

Parents are responsible for their child(ren) once received from staff at dismissal. This includes the child's behavior/safety.

A child can only be released to the parent or adults (ages 18 and up) designated in writing by the parent. If a staff member is unfamiliar with the parent or other adult, she will direct the person to the office so that confirmation can be made that the person is authorized to pick up the child. A valid picture I.D. may be requested at this time. The Williams School reserves the right to delay the release of a child to any person, who may, in the director's or acting director's opinion, be in a position of endangering the child. This may include but is not limited to someone who gives the appearance of being under the influence or impaired by alcohol or controlled substances; and/or otherwise unable to adequately provide for the safety of the child. In this event, the director or acting director will contact the police department to request assistance.

Arrival and Dismissal

Preschool begins at 8:15 a.m. Please help your child develop good habits of punctuality by arriving on time each morning. Late arrivals disrupt classroom activities and interfere with learning. Children who arrive after 9:00 a.m. should be taken to the classroom by a WS staff member. Children may be picked up at 11:30 a.m. outside the school office. If you need to pick up your child during preschool hours or during naptime, a staff member will collect your child and bring him/her to the office.

If you choose to walk your child in and out of the building, please:

- Park in the BACK church parking lot and enter through the doors of the education building
- **NEVER LEAVE A CAR RUNNING AND/OR PARKED IN THE DRIVE-THROUGH.** (If your car is left “running”, your car may be moved by our staff, and you may pick up your keys in the school office.
- Never leave a child/children alone in a vehicle.

An early morning drop-off is available from 7:15 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. for children in extended care. Parents are responsible for delivering children to the age appropriate room for early morning supervision. Children will be taken to their classroom at 8:10 a.m. Parents of children who are not signed up for extended care but wish to have their children arrive before 8 a.m. will be charged an early arrival fee.

Preschool children may be dropped off and/or picked up for preschool at the drive-through covered entrance. A staff person will be at the drop-off location from 8:00 to 8:15 a.m. each morning. At 11:30 a.m., teachers will escort children who have not been picked up but are due to leave at that time to the drop off/pick up area. Parents may receive their children in the drive-through area with the assistance of a staff member.

At dismissal time, please wait in hallway until your child’s teacher dismisses your child to you. Children will only be released to persons listed by you on your child’s admission information form. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than the individuals authorized by you on the admission information form, please notify the staff in advance, in writing. Advise the alternate person picking up your child that they will be asked to show a photo I.D. to the staff person releasing your child if we are not acquainted with them.

Any child still waiting for his/her parent after the 11:30 dismissal time will be returned to a classroom until picked up. A \$10 late fee will be charged.

Parents are responsible for their child(ren) once received from staff at dismissal. This includes the child’s behavior/safety.

What your child needs at school.

Each class day, your child will need a backpack or tote bag containing an extra set of clothes (appropriate to the season). This set should include socks and underwear. A coat or jacket might be needed for outdoor play on cool days. (We play outside in appropriate weather when the temperature/wind chill is 45 degrees or higher.) **All clothing and shoes must be marked with your child’s name. If items are unmarked, WS staff may label the items with your child’s name.** Your child will also use the backpack to take home projects and notes. If your child stays during the afternoon hours, lunch must be sent from home with the exception of special days, for example pizza Wednesday, when buying lunch is an option. Please provide a small blanket(s) or bedroll and special “lovey” if desired for naptime. (Don’t forget to label blanket or bedroll) The school provides individual cots.

Naptime

All children except the younger MDO class will observe a scheduled rest time after lunch. Each child will have a designated cot to use during this time. Please send a blanket, nap mat or other item to make the cot more comfortable. The blanket or bedroll must be enclosed in a clear re-sealable plastic bag with your child's name on the bag and on the individual items. These bags can be purchased at Target and Wal-mart. If your blanket or bedroll is not sent in a re-sealable clear plastic bag, one will be provided to you at the cost of \$4. The additional charge of \$4 will appear on your next tuition statement. Do not send blankets or bedrolls considered irreplaceable by your family. These need to be taken home at the end of each week and laundered.

The length of naptime depends on the age of the child with a maximum of two hours. Each child who is awake after resting or sleeping for one hour may participate in a quiet activity on their cot until rest time is over for the other children.

Appropriate Dress

Children will participate in a variety of activities at school that include outdoor play, painting, creative art, sand and water play, and snack preparation. Children should be dressed comfortably and casually in play clothes. Please be sure that your children are wearing shoes that are appropriate for indoor and outdoor play. Some of our children have fallen because shoes have slipped off their feet while running on the playground or gym. "Flip-flops," high wedge heels, and slip-on shoes are discouraged for this reason. We provide waterproof smocks for children to wear when participating in messy activities, but mishaps can occur in spite of our efforts to protect clothing. Please send an extra change of clothes including socks (appropriate for the season) in case of spills or other accidents. Parents who would like their child's hair combed or brushed after naps should include those items clearly marked with the child's name. The staff cannot use brushes or combs that do not belong to that individual child. Children enrolled in the MDO program should bring a change of clothes, bibs, disposable diapers, and disposable baby wipes.

Snacks and Meals

All children, except for the younger MDO class, will be offered a morning and afternoon snack. We strive to provide appealing and nutritious foods. Snack menus are posted monthly on the black bulletin board outside the school office. Licensing regulations prohibit us from sharing meals and snacks provided for a child by his/her parent with other children.

Parents may bring "treats" on special occasions such as a birthday to be shared at their scheduled snack time. The parent must check with the child's teacher BEFORE bringing treats. Some of our children have serious allergies. Parents must pre-arrange a treat with the teacher. This allows the teacher enough time to make necessary arrangements for other children.

If a child has a food sensitivity or allergy, parents must alert the school office and provide an alternative food/drink for their child. If the allergy is to a food/drink required by the school to provide, such as milk, a signed statement from a physician is required to exempt the child from receiving the food/drink. Likewise, any special diets require a signed statement from a physician.

Parents are required to send a lunch for any child who is enrolled beyond 11:30 a.m. Please send two napkins in your child's lunch – one to be used as a placemat and one for face and hand wiping. Also, to avoid confusion, please label lunch kits, thermos bottles, and lids. Due to time constraints, we can only heat foods that require microwave heating of one minute or less per child. No carbonated drinks may be brought to school. The Williams School is not responsible for the lunch's nutritional value or for its meeting the child's daily food needs. Foods that pose choking hazards such as popcorn, cannot be sent in lunches. If sending grapes, apples or hotdogs, please slice them.

To encourage independence and self-esteem, Williams School does not allow children in the 3 and 4-year-old classes to drink from sippy cups. Sippy cups can be used to transport drinks from home to school. Once at school, the drink will be poured into small plastic cups as needed for the child.

Please feed your child breakfast before he/she arrives at school. Students arriving before 7:50 a.m. may bring food into the early arrival classroom. The child must eat his or her breakfast at a designated table in the room. Children arriving after 7:50 a.m. are expected to have had breakfast and be ready to start the school day.

Seasonal Deliveries

All seasonal deliveries (for example Valentine's, birthdays) with the exception of items intended for sharing with the entire class, must be left in the office until your child leaves for the day.

Parties

For the safety and consideration of all of our children, the following guidelines have been developed for class parties.

- No balloons or inflatable balls of any kind will be permitted.
- Only treats/trinkets that are age-appropriate should be included.
- The Williams School does not permit items relating to any cartoon character that is violent or offensive in nature.
- Treat bags prepared for "take home" cannot be opened until a child leaves school.
- Because lunch follows our parties, only light snacks can be served (**for example, during parties pizza, hamburgers, chicken nuggets are not served**).
- The teacher will discipline a student that misbehaves unless the parent takes responsibility for the child's behavior and disciplines the child first. The parent must supervise siblings of students attending a party at

all times. For their safety, younger siblings who are not Williams School students must remain in a stroller during the party. Parties are not an excuse to break school rules.

Potty-Training

Teachers of the 2-year-old classes expect that some of their children will be potty-trained and some will not be trained at the beginning of the year. If you are training your child, please let the staff know so we can follow your procedure and routine at school. **All children must be potty-trained before entering the three and four-year-old classes.** We do not have the facilities or supplies required to change children in these classrooms. We realize that accidents will happen. Accidents by definition are unusual incidents and should only happen infrequently.

Potty-trained children

- No longer wear diapers (disposable or cloth) or disposable underwear (Pull-Ups)
- Can tell the teacher when they need to go to the bathroom
- Can attend to their own hygiene. (Four-year-olds are expected to independently wipe themselves, flush the toilet and wash their hands with soap.) A teacher will assist when needed. This is a procedure that protects all concerned. If a child in the 3 or 4-year-old class is not completely potty trained as described above when preschool starts, you may choose one of the following options:
 - * You may withdraw your child from preschool and place their name at the top of our waiting list. Registration and supply fees are non-refundable; however, if your child is placed in a class at a later date within the same school year, no further registration fee would be required for that school year.
 - * You may continue to pay tuition to hold your child's spot until potty training has been completed.

Items from Home

Unless requested by the teacher (for example show and tell items), your child may not bring toys or other items from home to school. An exception is made for soft cuddly toys during rest time. Such items will only be allowed during rest time. The staff does not take responsibility for broken or lost items from home. Please do not send items considered irreplaceable by your family. In past years, some children have come to school with coins and other objects in their pockets. Because this poses a serious choking hazard, children cannot bring coins or other small objects to school.

Absences

Please notify the school office (903-838-9517) as soon as possible when your child will be late or absent for any reason. If you are taking vacations or trips while school is in session, please notify the office as far in advance as possible. Our students are part of the Williams School family and are very much missed when absent. If a child is absent three or more days, a note may be required. Please see Illness and Exclusion Policy.

Illness and Exclusion Policy

The Williams School is a “well-child” facility. The school reserves the right to determine if the illness results in a greater need for care than the caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.

State licensing prohibits the Williams School from caring for a child who is ill based on the following criteria:

- The child has one of the following:
 - ~ an armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater
 - ~ an oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater
 - ~ symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled (two episodes) diarrhea, vomiting, unexplained rash, behavior changes or other signs of illness or pink eye.
- The illness or condition prevents the child from participating comfortably in the school’s activities including outdoor play. Children will be taken outside for play each day if the temperature/wind chill is 45 degrees or greater with no precipitation or strong wind.

If the child has a reflux condition that may cause non-viral vomiting, a statement from the health-care professional describing the condition and possible effects must be provided to the school office.

If a child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease or misses three or more days due to illness, the Williams School requires documentation from a health-care professional that indicates the child is no longer contagious and is well enough to participate in normal activities before the child can return to school.

A child who exhibits symptoms of illness will wait in the office until he or she is picked up.

A child must be symptom free (diarrhea, fever, vomiting), without medication, for 24 hours before returning.

Emergency Contact Availability

Because the school is a “well-child” facility, (we are not equipped to care for ill children for any sustained period of time), the Williams School requires that the emergency contact person(s) be locally available. The individual(s) must be available to receive a phone call from the school and be at the school to pick up the ill child within 45 minutes of notification.

Dispensing Medication

The Williams School is not required to dispense medication; however, we want to provide this service if at all possible. Medications will only be dispensed twice a day: mid-morning and mid-afternoon. The Williams School will not dispense any

medication that is to be given every twelve hours or twice a day. Medicine must be able to be given orally or topically (skin). For example, medicine in suppository form will not be administered.

Medications must be brought to the office

- Parents must sign an authorization for the school's employees to administer each medication according to physician's directions.
- The medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to the school.
- Medication will be administered in amounts according to the label directions or as amended by a physician.
- Medication will be given only to the child for whom it is prescribed.
- Medication will not be given after its expiration date.

The Williams School does not administer breathing treatments.

Under no circumstance will the Williams School administer the initial dose of any medication to a child.

Immunization Requirements

The Williams School adheres to the Texas Department of Health policies concerning immunizations. The TDH requires that all immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission. A child may be enrolled provisionally for 30 days, if the child has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccines. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule as rapidly as is medically feasible. If at the end of a 30-day period, a student has not received the required doses, the student shall be disenrolled from Williams School.

In addition to the immunizations, The State of Texas requires each child have proof of a TB test or the parent may submit a TB waiver form. Forms are available from the school office.

Health Statement

Upon admission, Williams School requires a written statement from a health care professional who has examined the child within the past year indicating the child is physically able to take part in the school program.

Hearing and Vision Screenings

All children enrolled in the four-year-old classes will be screened for possible vision and hearing problems prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment. A licensed or certified screener or a health-care professional will conduct the screenings. Parents will be notified of the screening results. Children who turn four years of age during the traditional school year will be screened during the spring semester.

Medical Emergencies

For minor illnesses or injuries, the Williams School will make every attempt to contact the parents and/or other emergency contacts. If the child appears to be contagious, he/she will be cared for in the office area until the parents/emergency contacts arrive.

For critical illnesses or injuries that require the immediate attention of a physician, the Williams School policy is to:

- Contact emergency medical services;
- Give the child first-aid treatment or CPR when needed;
- Contact the physician identified in the child's record;
- Contact the child's parent.

Parent Notification

Parents will be notified immediately when a child:

- Is injured and the injury requires medical attention by a health-care professional;
- Has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the school as defined by the Illness and Exclusion Policy;
- Has been involved in any situation that placed the child at risk;
- Is involved in any situation that renders the school unsafe, such as a fire, flood, or damage to the school as a result of severe weather.

For less serious injuries, parents will be notified when they pick up their child. This could include minor cuts, scratches, bumps, and bites from other children requiring minor first aid treatment by employees.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

Discipline will be 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.

A caregiver may 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
- Using brief supervised separation or time-out from the group, when appropriate, for the child's age and development. There will be no harsh, cruel or unusual treatment of any child. Methods of discipline and guidance are limited to redirection of the child, and brief supervised separation or time-out.

Suspension Policy

A child may be suspended from the program for behavior that is not age-appropriate and/or harmful to the other children or the staff (such as biting, scratching, hitting, spitting, etc.). Prior to suspension, the director will notify the parent in writing with an incident report on the first and second occurrences when the child is picked up. If the behavior occurs a third time, an incident report will be completed and the parent will be contacted to pick up the child. At that time, a child who is three years old or more will be suspended from the program for a period of one month. Tuition must continue to be paid to hold the child's spot.

This policy is adjusted for the Mother's Day Out and two-year-olds. After the first incident, the director will work with the parents and teachers to alleviate any further occurrences. After repeated offenses, suspension of these ages will be subject to the discretion of the director and the Williams School Board.

If the behavior reoccurs after suspension, permanent removal from the program for the remainder of the school year can result. Parents may petition the Williams School Board for reinstatement of their child in the program.

Mandates on Reporting Child Abuse

All staff of the Williams School are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse including physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Policy Changes

Parents will be notified in writing of any changes to our operational policies. State licensing standards require that parents sign a statement that they have received any change in policies.

Water Activities

During the summer session, we may have a "sprinkler" day. Parents will be notified ahead of time and permission slips will be required. The children and the sprinkler will be located in a grassy area away from hard, slippery surfaces. No container of standing water will be included in these activities.

Transportation & Field Trips

The Williams School does not transport children in vehicles for field trips at any time. The only possible walking field trips planned away from the school are to Cornerstone or Sterling House Retirement Communities. This is usually limited to the four-year-old classes. A permission slip will be sent home ahead of time. The Williams School will invite professionals (e.g. fireman, police officers, health care professionals) to come to the school for special presentations.

Animals

We love to learn about animals at the Williams School. However, the only animals permitted at the school without parent notification are animals that are contained in an aquarium or similar appropriate container that will not allow the children to have contact with the animal or their dander. The director must first approve any other animal brought to school to ensure that the animal meets licensing requirements. If the director approves the animal, parents will be notified in advance of when the animal will be on the premises. All animals must be registered in the office upon arrival.

Photos/Videos

Children enjoy seeing pictures of themselves and others. The Williams School reserves the right to photograph or video children during school hours for official purposes of classroom activities, informational and promotional use. A parent who does not wish to have his or her child photographed or videoed must notify the Williams School office. Initialing the appropriate spaces and signing the attached receipt of handbook will be sufficient notification.

School Directory

The Williams School reserves the right to provide a directory of student information as it is written on the admission form. This information (child's name, parents' names and address, home phone number and child's birthday) will be available to other parents and staff. Anyone wishing to have his or her child's information withheld from publication should notify the Williams School office in writing. Initialing the appropriate spaces and signing the attached receipt of handbook will be sufficient notification.

Policies and Procedures for Parents

Parents are invited to review and discuss with the director any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the Williams School by contacting the school office for an appointment. Parents are also welcome to visit the Williams School during the normal school hours. For the safety and well-being of our children, it is our policy that parents/guardians only enter classrooms when dropping off and picking up their child. At all other times, parents, volunteers and visitors must sign in and out at the school office or a designated location. This includes class parties or similar special events. A staff member will escort visitors who do not have children enrolled in the school.

At lunchtime, a parent may pick up their child who is enrolled in extended care and take them to lunch, providing the child is returned before naptime. The Williams School policy prohibits parents from eating in the room with their child, as this is a disruption of the normal routine for all the children in the class.

Parents are an important part of their child's school experience. They are encouraged to participate in the school's special events. Room parents and staff coordinate these opportunities. Special occasions include visiting the pumpkin patch, trick or treating and holiday programs/parties.

Licensing Information

The school's most recent licensing inspection reports are posted on the black bulletin board across from the school office. A copy of the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers is in the office and available for anyone to review during normal school hours.

For more information about licensing issues, contact

Texarkana Office of the Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS)
3115 S. Lake Dr., Suite 120
Texarkana, Texas 75501
(903) 791-3406

Williams School Licensing Supervisor
Shirley Dansby
3115 S. Lake Dr., Suite 120
Texarkana, Texas 75501
(903) 791-3406

TDFPS child abuse hotline: 1-800-252-5400

TDFPS Website: www.dfps.state.tx.us

Acknowledgement Receipt of Handbook

I, the undersigned, have received a copy of the Williams School Handbook, last updated February 2009.

Red Cross Evacuee Plan

Williams Memorial United Methodist Church is a designated Red Cross Shelter which means the church may be housing evacuees when there is a need. The evacuees will be located in a separate building from Williams School. When evacuees are present, Williams School will go into "shelter mode." In addition to the usual exterior doors that are always locked, our entrance will be locked. Personnel will be located at those doors to let in only people authorized to be in the building. We will continue to play outside on weather appropriate days as required by Licensing Requirements.

Additional personnel will be available for supervision. No one will be permitted on our playground during our hours of operation. As soon as the Director and staff know that there will be evacuees, calls will be made to the telephone number listed as the child's home to inform parents.

Child's name, printed

Parent's name, printed

Parent's signature

Please initial your selections.

Photos

_____ YES, The Williams School has my permission to photograph my child for the purposes of informational and promotional use.

_____ NO, The Williams School does not have my permission to photograph my child.

School Directory

The Williams School plans to print the following information (as it is written on my child's admission information form) for the purposes of a class directory: child's name, parent's names and address, home phone number, and child's birthday.

_____ YES The Williams School has my permission to use the information indicated for the purposes of a class

_____ NO, The Williams School does not have my permission directory. to use the information indicated for the purposes of a school directory.

Video Release

_____ YES, The Williams School has my permission to video or use photographs in a video presentation of my child for the purposes of informational and promotional use.

_____ NO, The Williams School does not have permission to video or use photographs in a video presentation of my child.