

## Operational Policies of Aggieland Country School (ACS)

### Operational Calendar

The school year extends from **August 17, 2023, to May 24, 2024**, with the exceptions of holidays and staff in-service days as listed in the annual calendar. During the school year the school is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Tuesdays are early release days: school ends at 2:30 pm on Tuesdays. Extended Care school hours: before school hours are offered from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and after school hours are offered from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

### Enrollment and Parent Notices

Refunds of tuition payments require 30 days written notice by parents prior to a child's withdrawal from school. The refund will be prorated. *Tuition payments are non-refundable for withdrawals made after March 15th of the school year.* Parents will be notified of any changes in policy or admission information. Parents must sign and date any updated information.

### Payment guidelines

Monthly tuition is due on the 5th of each month, *except in August* when it is due on the 15th of August. Invoices will be sent out around between the 26th and 28th of each month. Dates may change if there is a long weekend, or a long holiday. You will be informed via email of the above-mentioned changes. Late payments will accrue a processing fee of \$50 for each delay.

We offer a 10% sibling discount on tuition only. Before and after school care are not included in this discount.

### Discipline and Guidance

The school's Discipline and Guidance Policy follows guidelines set by the Texas Administrative Code, as follows:

- 1) Discipline must be:
  - a) Individualized and consistent for each child
  - b) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding
  - c) Directed towards teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.
- 2) School staff may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
  - a) Use of primarily praise and encouragement

- b) Use of clear and positive language to reinforce daily the behavioral expectations
  - c) Redirection of behavior using positive statements
  - d) Use of brief, supervised separation from the group, or ‘time-out’, when appropriate for the child’s age and development, limited to no longer than one minute per year of the child’s age.
- 3) Harsh, cruel or unusual treatment of any child is prohibited, including the following:
- a) Actual or threats of corporal punishment
  - b) Punishments associated with food or naps
  - c) Pinching, shaking or biting
  - d) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
  - e) Putting anything in or on a child’s mouth
  - f) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child
  - g) Use of harsh, abusive or profane language
  - h) Placing a child in a dark or locked room, bathroom or closet with doors closed, and
  - i) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child’s age.
- 4) In the event that a student is not willingly cooperating or treating themselves and others with respect or kindness, our certified teachers use several methods to assist in preventing misbehavior.
- a) Social and Emotional Learning: This is woven into the classroom curriculum to teach students age-appropriate social skills. This is mostly known in Montessori as Grace and Courtesy.
  - b) Mindfulness Practices: mindfulness generally refers to a state of mind that is achieved by focusing, without judgment, on the present moment. Primarily, this is taught through breathing exercises, or other activities intended to promote mindfulness in order to help students manage their focus and/or anger and develop peaceful conflict resolution skills.
  - c) Restorative Practices: This helps the student understand the effect their behavior has on other students and ultimately assists the student to learn peaceful conflict resolution.
- 5) After working on prevention methods, if the misbehavior persists the teacher will send a written notification to the parent or guardian.
- a) After 3 written notifications from the teacher to the parent, or at the discretion of the teacher, the issue will be forwarded to the Director.
  - b) The Director may recommend finding other resources to facilitate the care required by the student. Other resources may include recommendations from child specialists or finding an alternate school.

Aggieland Country School is committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Violence in any form is strictly prohibited, and we are establishing this zero-tolerance policy to ensure the well-being and protection of everyone within our school community. We believe in fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and non-violence, and we are dedicated to addressing incidents of violence promptly, fairly, and consistently.

Policy Guidelines:

1) Definition of Violence:

- a) Violence refers to any intentional act that causes physical harm, injury, or psychological distress to oneself, another person, or property.
- b) Examples of violence include, but are not limited to, physical fighting, bullying, assault, harassment, threats, possession of weapons, and damaging or vandalizing school property.

2) Reporting and Investigation:

- a) Any student, staff member, or witness who observes or experiences violence must report the incident immediately to a teacher, administrator, or designated school personnel.
- b) All reports will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and documented appropriately.

3) Disciplinary Actions:

- a) Disciplinary actions will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the severity of the offense, the intent, the age of the child, and any mitigating circumstances.
- b) Responses may involve restorative practices, counseling, positive behavior reinforcement, suspension, expulsion, and other appropriate measures.
- c) The disciplinary measures will be proportionate, respectful, and aligned with the needs of the child, school policies, and will follow due process.

4) Prevention and Education:

- a) Our school will provide ongoing education, prevention programs, and resources to promote a positive and respectful school climate.
- b) Students will be educated about conflict resolution, empathy, bullying prevention, and the consequences of violence through age-appropriate curricula and initiatives.
- c) Staff members will receive training to recognize signs of violence, intervene effectively, and implement appropriate prevention strategies.

5) Support and Intervention:

- a) Students involved in violent or harmful behavior will receive the necessary support and interventions to address underlying issues.
- b) Individualized plans, teacher-student and teacher-parent counseling, peer mediation, and mentorship opportunities will be provided to promote positive behavioral change and personal growth.

6) Collaboration and Communication:

- a) Parents, teachers, staff, and students will be engaged in the development, review, and understanding of this zero-tolerance policy.
- b) Clear and transparent communication channels will be established to inform the school community about the policy, its expectations, and updates.

7) Review and Evaluation:

- a) The effectiveness of this zero-tolerance policy will be regularly reviewed and evaluated.
- b) Data on incidents, disciplinary actions, and feedback from lead teachers will be collected to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.

By implementing and enforcing this zero-tolerance policy, we are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the well-being, academic growth, and character development of all students.

Emergency Plans

Fire Drills: Fire drills will be conducted once a month.

Tornado Drills: Tornado drills will be conducted once every three months.

### Illness and Exclusion Criteria

Children cannot be admitted to school if:

- 1) They are too sick to participate comfortably in school activities, including outdoor play.
- 2) The illness results in greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- 3) They have an oral temperature of 101 degrees or greater (armpit of 100 degrees), accompanied by behavioral changes or other signs or symptoms of illness. They must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- 4) They have symptoms or signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
- 5) A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that s/he is no longer contagious.
- 6) Teacher's discretion.

### Dispensing Medications

We prefer medications be given at home; however, staff will administer medicine to a child under the following conditions:

- 1) A licensed pediatrician and Parents must sign an authorization form stating times that staff should administer the medicine on a Request for Administration of Medication at School form. Medicine is in the original container, not expired, and labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to the school.
- 2) Medication must be administered according to dosage directions or as amended by a physician.
- 3) In the case of a child with periodic and recurring medical problems, such as asthma or allergic reactions, medication may be provided, with appropriate documentation, to be administered on an 'as needed' basis. Authorization is good for a six-month period and must include symptoms for which to watch.

### Immunization, Hearing and Vision Requirements

We are required by law to maintain on file each child's current immunization records, and a statement signed by a physician that the child has been examined within the year and has been cleared for participation in the school activities. **Children 4 years of age and older must complete Vision and Hearing Screening, results of which must also remain in the child's file.**

## TB Testing

A TB test is presently not required in Brazos County for children.

## Procedures for Conducting Health Checks

When needed, a trained staff member will conduct a health check of each child. This health check should be conducted whenever a change in the child's behavior or appearance is noted.

The health check will address:

- 1) Reported or observed illness or injury affecting the child or family members since the last date of attendance.
- 2) Reported or observed changes in behavior of the child (such as lethargy or irritability) or in the appearance of the child from the previous day at home or the previous day's attendance at school.
- 3) Skin rashes, impetigo, itching or scratching of the skin, itching or scratching of the scalp, or the presence of one or more live crawling lice.
- 4) A temperature check if the child appears ill.
- 5) Other signs or symptoms of illness and injury (such as drainage from eyes, vomiting, diarrhea, cuts/lacerations, pain, or feeling ill).

## Grievance Procedures

Grievances about the staff or unresolved issues of concern regarding parents or children may be addressed in writing and sent in an email to [director@aggielandcountryschool.com](mailto:director@aggielandcountryschool.com). The matter will be kept strictly confidential.

## School Visitors

This is for the health and well-being/safety of all our students and staff, ACS staff will make every effort to schedule school tours after normal school hours with authorized school personnel. Visitors are asked to get in touch with Aggieland Country School staff at [info@aggielandcountryschool.com](mailto:info@aggielandcountryschool.com) to set up a time for their visit.

## Special Events:

We have special events on certain days of the week. Special event participation of children who do not attend school on that specific day of the week will depend on the teacher-student ratio on that day. We maintain a strict teacher-student ratio for each day, and we do not want to compromise the safety of the children by changing that ratio on a certain day.

## Parental Participation

We highly recommend parents contact our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and volunteer in school events to engage in our community. Please email [pto@aggielandcountryschool.com](mailto:pto@aggielandcountryschool.com) for more information.

#### Procedures for the Release of Children

Children will be released to a parent or designated person in writing by the parents. The staff is authorized to request proof of identity of such persons. Please send an email to [info@aggielandcountryschool.com](mailto:info@aggielandcountryschool.com) or contact your child's teacher by 9:00 am, or earlier on the day if your child is to be released to another adult with **the child's name, adult's name, adult's license number and relationship to child.**

#### Meals and food service practices

It is highly recommended that packed lunches use a cooling pack etc. to ensure food stays at an appropriate temperature. Please use containers that your child can easily open and provide utensils that your child can use. Please send a snack and lunch with your child. Children staying for the after-school program will need to bring an afternoon snack.

We recommend that snacks should include one serving from the fruit or vegetable group, or one serving from the grain group. Please avoid sending children to school with sugar-filled drinks and/or snacks.

#### Food Allergy Policy:

*Parents may not send foods that contain peanuts to school in their child's lunch.* Children will not share any of their personal food items. If your child has a medical food allergy, please get in touch with your child's teacher and set up an allergy management plan with them.

#### Weather Notification: Opening/Closing:

We will send notification of school closures. We follow College Station ISD on school closures due to bad weather conditions.

#### Transportation:

Transportation for field trips is provided only by parents. No transportation is arranged for or provided by the school.

#### Field Trips:

Field trips are organized by the school, with pertinent information posted at school. Children will attend the field trip only if accompanied and transported by the parents or a designated individual. Staff will carry emergency medical information, release forms, first aid and a cell phone. Transportation regulation above will be followed.

#### Animals:

The school maintains classroom pets from time to time, which will be kept in safe and sanitary conditions. Staff and children must wash their hands after coming in contact with the animal, its cage, water bowl, or feed, etc. The elementary class maintains a chicken coop with chickens in a gated area of the playground. The staff is responsible for the care and cleaning of the animals. Proper hygiene, i.e., hand washing, will be enforced.

#### Water Activity:

Water activities are periodically offered on Fridays during summer camp and on the last day of the regular school year. Activities may include sprinklers, wading pools, hoses and/or slides. Additional supervision is provided in these circumstances, such that there is one adult for every 6 children. A permission slip must be signed allowing children to participate.

#### Access to Licensing and Regulation Reports:

The school posts the letters and forms from the most recent licensing inspection (or investigation), and the Notice of Availability for Review. This includes:

- 1) Licensing Minimum Standards applicable to child-care centers
- 2) Fire Inspection report
- 3) Sanitation Inspection report
- 4) Licensing Inspection report

Parents may ask to see these materials during operational hours; they are kept (and must remain) in the office for viewing.

#### Licensing and Abuse Hotline:

The following phone numbers and websites will be posted:

Licensing Office - 800-647-7418

Child Abuse Hotline - 800-252-5400

Protective and Regulatory Services: [www.dfps.state.tx.us/childcare](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/childcare)

