



SEMILLAS

SPANISH IMMERSION PRESCHOOL

Operational Policies

5226 Elm Street, 77081
Houston, TX.



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SECTION 1: GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

1.1 Mission, Vision, Pillars, and Core Values

Semillas Preschool is a Spanish immersion early childhood program committed to the holistic development of each child. The program integrates academic growth, character formation, and community engagement within a structured and nurturing environment.

Mission

Semillas Preschool's mission is to nurture children's foundational development by fostering habits that strengthen values, embracing the richness of Hispanic culture, and cultivating a spirit of love, respect, and service toward others.

Vision

Semillas Preschool strives to develop children who are resourceful, confident, and capable of critical thinking, while fostering a connection to nature, culture, and language within a caring and engaging environment that supports creativity, exploration, and independence.

Program Pillars

The program is guided by the following foundational pillars:

Spanish Language and Culture

Children are immersed in the Spanish language throughout daily routines and activities, supporting natural language acquisition, cultural awareness, and communication skills.

Character Development

Semillas Preschool promotes positive guidance and modeling to support the development of confidence, autonomy, responsibility, and social-emotional skills.

Community

The program fosters meaningful relationships among children, families, and staff, supporting the development of social competence and a strong sense of belonging.

Core Values

Semillas Preschool operates under the following core values:

Care

We provide a nurturing and compassionate environment where each child feels safe, valued, and supported.

Integrity

Staff model ethical behavior and guide children to make positive and responsible choices.

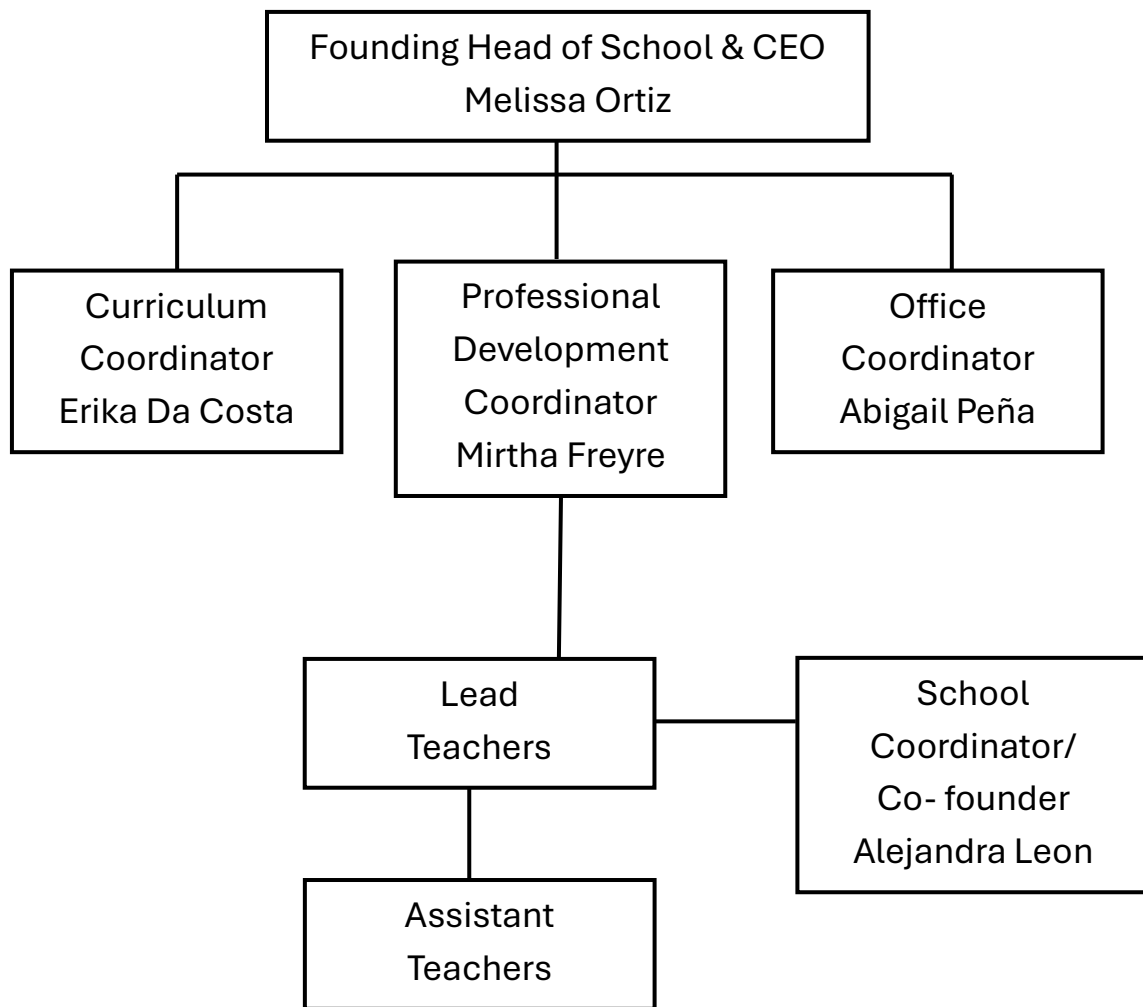
Joy

The program promotes a joyful learning environment that supports emotional well-being, confidence, and curiosity.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART SEMILLAS PRESCHOOL

Torras Foundation- Ownership



1.2 Program Description

Semillas Preschool provides a Spanish immersion early childhood program serving children from 6 months through Pre-K.

The program is designed to support development across all domains, including:

- Social and emotional development
- Cognitive development
- Language development
- Physical development

The educational approach is aligned with research-based practices, including the Children's Learning Institute (CLI) model, and emphasizes:

- Responsive caregiving
- Intentional teaching
- Hands-on learning experiences

Children participate in developmentally appropriate activities that promote:

- Exploration
- Creativity
- Critical thinking

The program incorporates enrichment opportunities such as:

- Gardening activities
- Physical development programs
- Early literacy experiences
- Faith-based and values-centered activities

Semillas Preschool maintains a structured daily routine that supports consistency while allowing flexibility to meet individual needs.

Family partnership is considered an essential component of the program. Ongoing communication and collaboration with families are maintained to support each child's development.

1.2 A Curriculum, Daily Activity Plans, and Physical Activity

Semillas Preschool provides a developmentally appropriate, Spanish-immersion early childhood curriculum designed to support the whole child through responsive caregiving, intentional teaching, hands-on learning, language development, social-emotional development, early literacy, mathematics, science, art, sensory experiences, nature-based learning, character formation, and opportunities for independence and self-help skills.



The curriculum and daily routines are adapted to the age, developmental level, individual needs, and abilities of the children in each classroom.

Benefits of Physical Activity and Outdoor Play

Semillas recognizes physical activity and outdoor play as essential components of healthy childhood development. Regular physical activity supports gross- and fine-motor development, strength, coordination, balance, cardiovascular health, sensory development, social interaction, confidence, concentration, self-regulation, and overall physical and emotional well-being.

Outdoor play also provides children with opportunities for exploration, movement, creativity, social interaction, connection with nature, and developmentally appropriate risk-taking in a supervised environment.

Daily Schedules and Written Activity Plans

Each classroom will maintain a developmentally appropriate daily schedule and written activity plan.

The written activity plan will:

- Identify the classroom and the dates covered by the plan.
- Include the specific daily activities planned for the children and the times at which the activities will occur.
- Include a balance of active and quiet activities, individual and group experiences, and indoor and outdoor activities.
- Include child-initiated activities in which developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are accessible to children and children may choose their activities independently.
- Include caregiver-initiated activities selected or directed by caregivers, with at least two caregiver-initiated activities each day that promote movement.
- Include opportunities for language and communication, cognitive development, sensory exploration, fine-motor development, gross-motor development, social-emotional development, creativity, and self-help skills.
- Include regular meals and snacks.
- Include supervised nap or rest periods, as developmentally appropriate.
- Provide sufficient time for children to participate in activities according to their developmental abilities and individual pace.
- Avoid unnecessarily prolonged periods in which children are required to remain seated, standing, or waiting.

Daily schedules and written activity plans are posted in information board of each class. Activity plans will be available for review by parents and Child Care Regulation upon request.



Infants- 6 months through 12 Months (Orugas)

Infant routines are flexible and individualized according to each child's developmental needs, feeding instructions, sleep needs, and tolerance for activity.

Infants will receive daily opportunities for:

- Supervised tummy time and floor play
- Reaching, grasping, rolling, sitting, crawling, pulling up, and other gross-motor development.
- Sensory exploration.
- Music, language, books, and responsive caregiver interaction.
- Fine-motor exploration.
- Child-initiated exploration in a safe and developmentally appropriate environment.
- Outdoor play and fresh-air opportunities, weather permitting and as tolerated by the infant.

Infants 6 months through 12 months will be offered a minimum of two daily times for outdoor play, weather permitting. The duration of outdoor play will be based on the individual infant's tolerance.

Feeding, diapering, and sleeping routines will remain individualized and will be provided according to the child's needs following the written parent or health-care professional instructions.

Transition to Toddlers – 13 months through 17 Months (Colibri)

Infants 13 months through 17 months will receive a minimum of two daily times for outdoor play, weather permitting, totaling 60 minutes each day.

Daily activities will include opportunities for sensory exploration, language development, fine and gross motor development, social-emotional development, child-initiated exploration, music and movement, and developmentally appropriate self-help skills.

Toddlers – 18 through 36 Months (Mariposas, Grillos, classrooms)

Toddlers will receive:

- Two daily activities, total 60 min of outdoor play, weather permitting of moderate-to-vigorous active play throughout the day.

Moderate-to-vigorous active play may occur indoors, outdoors, or through a combination of both and may include outdoor active play, gross-motor activities, Music and Movement, Stretch and Grow, movement games, dancing, and other developmentally appropriate movement experiences.

Toddler activities will also provide daily times for sensory development, small-muscle development, language development, social-emotional development, child-initiated exploration, creativity, and self-help skills.



Pre-Kindergarten-Age Children (3 years and 4 years old- Libelulas and Abejas classrooms)

Children who are three or four years of age before the beginning of the current school year will participate in a developmentally appropriate Pre-K program that includes:

- Two daily times for outdoor play, weather permitting, with a total of 60 minutes of outdoor play each day
- 90 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous active play throughout the day.

The daily schedule will provide both morning and afternoon opportunities for outdoor active play whenever weather conditions permit.

Moderate-to-vigorous active play include outdoor play, Music and Movement, Stretch and Grow, gross-motor games, dancing, creative movement, and other developmentally appropriate physical activities.

Pre-K activities will also provide daily opportunities for:

- Language and communication development.
- Early literacy and shared reading.
- Early mathematics and thinking skills.
- Science and exploration.
- Art and creative expression.
- Fine-motor development.
- Sensory learning.
- Social-emotional development.
- Child-initiated learning centers and exploration.
- Self-help and independence skills.
- Individual and small-group learning experiences.

Learning experiences will be hands-on, developmentally appropriate, and balanced with movement, active play, exploration, and child-initiated learning.

Physical Activity Settings

Physical activity will take place in:

- Classrooms.
- The school gym
- Age-appropriate playgrounds.
- Outdoor sensory playground.
- Nature and garden areas

All physical activity areas will be used in accordance with applicable supervision, child-to-caregiver ratio, health, and safety requirements.

Clothing and Footwear for Physical Activity



Children must wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that allows them to move freely and participate safely in indoor and outdoor physical activities.

Children must wear secure, closed-toe shoes with non-slip or rubber soles that are appropriate for walking, running, climbing, balancing, and other gross-motor activities.

Families are responsible for providing weather-appropriate clothing so children may participate safely in outdoor activities when weather conditions permit.

Inclement or Extreme Weather

Semillas will evaluate weather and environmental conditions before and during outdoor play to determine whether outdoor activity may safely occur.

The following factors will be considered when determining whether extreme weather or environmental conditions present a significant health or safety risk:

- Actual outdoor temperature.
- Heat index or “feels like” temperature.
- Air-quality conditions or alerts.
- Severe weather watches or warnings.
- Lightning or thunderstorms.
- Heavy rain or unsafe wet conditions.

Outdoor play may be shortened, modified, relocated, or suspended when any of these conditions may present a significant health or safety risk.

Indoor alternatives may include Music and Movement, Stretch and Grow, gross-motor games, dancing, movement songs, obstacle courses, balance activities, ball activities, guided movement games, and other developmentally appropriate physical activities

- Winter: Outdoor play take place when the outdoor temperature is 32°F or above, provided weather conditions are otherwise safe.
- Summer: Outdoor play take place when the outdoor temperature is 90°F or below, provided weather conditions are otherwise safe.

Temperatures below 32°F during winter or above 90°F during summer may result in outdoor play being shortened, modified, or moved indoors based on the safety and comfort of the children. Semillas Preschool follows the Childcare weather watch chart under extreme weather watch.

Curriculum Documentation and Implementation

Daily schedules establish the general structure of the classroom day. Written weekly or monthly activity plans identify the specific learning experiences and activities that will take place within each scheduled curriculum block.

Teachers are responsible for implementing the activity plan while remaining responsive to the developmental needs, interests, health, safety, and individual pace of the children in their care.



1.3 Hours of Operation

Semillas Preschool operates Monday through Friday.

- Office Hours: 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
- School Program Hours: 7:00 AM – 5:45 PM

Children may not be dropped off prior to 7:00 AM.

Parents are expected to arrive by 9:00 AM to ensure participation in core instructional activities.

1.4 School Calendar

Semillas Preschool is a year-round preschool. Our program operates continuously from August through July, providing consistent educational experience throughout the year. The school calendar includes:

- First and last day of school
- School holidays and closures
- Staff development days
- Parent meetings and conferences
- Special events and celebrations

Semillas Preschool follows local school district (HISD) closures in the event of severe weather.

Families are notified of closures via the school platform email and text.

The school calendar is available on the web page, school platform, and is posted on the parent's information board, it is subject to change with prior notice.

1.5 Nondiscrimination Policy

Semillas Preschool does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its admissions or program practices, in accordance with applicable laws.

1.6 Open Door Policy

Semillas Preschool maintains an open-door policy in accordance with Texas Minimum Standards.

- Parents or legal guardians may visit the facility and access their child at any time during hours of operation
- All visitors are required to follow established check-in procedures

To support classroom structure and child independence, extended or prolonged presence in classrooms is discouraged unless approved by administration.



1.7 Visitors

All visitors, including prospective families, guests, vendors, contractors, and service providers, must:

- Enter through the designated main entrance and report directly to the front desk before entering any other area of the facility.
- Present a valid government-issued photo identification.
- Sign the Visitor Log, including their full name, date, arrival time, purpose of the visit, and the person or area being visited.
- Always Wear a Semillas Preschool visitor badge in a visible location while on the premises.
- Return the visitor badge and record their departure time before leaving the facility.

Visitors must remain accompanied by an authorized Semillas Preschool staff member while in classrooms, playgrounds, or other areas used by children.

Visitors may not:

- Be left responsible for a child or group of children.
- Provide direct care or supervision.
- Perform caregiver duties.
- Be counted in the child-to-caregiver ratio.
- Discipline or redirect a child, except when immediate action is necessary to prevent injury.
- Photograph, record, or obtain identifying information about any child without prior authorization from the administration and the child's parent.
- Access confidential child, family, employee, or school records.

All visitors must follow Semillas Preschool's health, safety, confidentiality, emergency, conduct, and sanitation procedures. The administration may deny entry or end a visit when an individual's behavior, condition, or actions may present a risk to the health, safety, privacy, or well-being of children or staff.

Government Officials and Emergency Personnel

Authorized representatives of Child Care Regulation, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, or the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services must present official credentials and will be admitted without unnecessary delay.



Semillas Preschool will provide authorized representatives access to the areas, individuals, and records necessary to conduct an inspection or investigation. Staff may document the representative's arrival but may not interfere with, prevent, or delay the official visit. Law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and other emergency responders will be granted immediate access when responding to an emergency.

SECTION 2. SCHOOL COMMUNICATION.

- Families will receive information regarding school events, activities, reminders, and important announcements through:
 - Brightwheel notifications
 - Email communications
 - Weekly newsletters
 - Monthly newsletters
- Copies of newsletters and important announcements will also be posted on Parent Information Boards throughout the school.
- Emergency notifications, school closures, weather-related updates, and other urgent communications will be communicated through Brightwheel, email, and telephone when necessary.

2.1 Parent Information

- A monthly Newsletter will be sent from the school to all parents, informing them of upcoming events and the latest activities children have been engaged in.
- Every Friday, a folder will be sent home containing artwork, printed work, and/or documents.
- The Monthly Theme Calendar will be posted each month on our website, displayed in each classroom, and available at the Parent Information Center located in the hallways.
- The Semillas Preschool Parent Handbook is available on our website at any time throughout the year.
- Activity plans and daily schedules for each age group will be posted in each classroom in the Parent Information Board
- Any concerns regarding progress reports, assessments, or discipline will be addressed via email directly to both parents by the school director.

2.2 Parent Involvement and Procedures for Parents to Participate in Center Activities

Semillas Preschool maintains an open-door policy for all enrolled families, encouraging parents to actively participate in all school events. At the beginning of each school year, a



volunteer sign-up list will be posted for parents to participate in volunteering in special events, decorating the school, etc.

SECTION 3: ADMISSIONS, ENROLLMENT & RECORDS

3.1 Admissions Criteria

Semillas Preschool admits children based on the following criteria:

- Availability of space within the appropriate age group
- Completion of all required enrollment documentation
- Determination that the program can meet the developmental needs of the child

Admission is not considered finalized until all required documentation has been received, reviewed, and approved by administration.

Semillas Preschool reserves the right to deny or discontinue enrollment if the program is not able to adequately support the needs of the child within the scope of services provided.

3.2 Enrollment Requirements

Operational Policies and Enrollment Acknowledgment

On or before the child's date of admission, a parent or legal guardian must sign the applicable child-care Enrollment Agreement, Operational Policies Acknowledgment.

The signed document will be maintained in the child's record. When siblings from the same family are enrolled at the same time, Semillas Preschool may maintain at least one signed copy for the family as permitted by Texas Minimum Standards.

It's mandatory that the following documentation is on file prior to the child's first day of attendance.

Picture of your child and family will be required.

- Admission Information Form HHS 2935
- Admission Information Semillas
- Enrollment contact and Financial Policies Semillas
- Child Assessment Form 7293
- Medical Information Form- notarized
- Health Statement – signed by the child's physician
- Immunization records- signed by the child's physician or a notarized immunization exemption affidavit
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Care
- Allergy Action Plan, if the child has a diagnosed allergy (Physician's signature is required)



- Asthma, Seizure, or other Medical Action Plan, if applicable (Physicians signature is required)
- Permission and Authorization Form
- Release of Liability
- Teacher Information Sheet
- Operational Policies Acknowledgment
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgment
- Potty Training Policy - Required for children enrolled in the 3-year-old program
- Hearing and Vision Screening- For children enrolled in the 4-year-old-program

Incomplete Enrollment Files

Children will not begin attendance until all required enrollment documents have been submitted and approved.

3.3 Record Management and Confidentiality

Semillas Preschool will maintain complete and current records for all children, employees, and caregivers in accordance with Child Care Regulation requirements.

- Children's records will be reviewed before enrollment and updated monthly throughout the year. We ask parents to notify the school immediately of any changes to emergency contacts, authorized pick-up people, medical information, allergies, immunizations, physician information, custody documents, or any other required information. The school utilizes a digital calendar and tracking system that generates reminders for the office, of the upcoming due dates, renewals, immunizations, background checks, and other required documentation.
- Children's records are maintained in the office, at a designated area. Parents or legal guardians may review their child's records upon request and with prior notice to the administration. Classroom teachers may access children's records when necessary to support the child's care, safety, and educational needs.
- Employee and caregiver records will be maintained in individual personnel files. Staff records are maintained in a secure location and kept in locked storage to ensure confidentiality and restricted access. Only the Director, authorized administrative staff, and licensing representatives, may access staff records when required for operational or regulatory purposes.
- Each child and employee file contains a file checklist on the cover identifying all required documents and renewal dates. Administrative staff conduct monthly file



reviews to verify that records are complete, and compliant with licensing requirements. The school utilizes a digital calendar and tracking system that generates reminders for upcoming due dates, renewals, immunizations, background checks, and other required documentation.

3.4 Background Check Documentation and Tracking

Background checks will be submitted upon hire and renewed every five years as required by Child Care Regulation. Semillas Preschool will document each background check submission through the Child Care Regulation online system and will keep confirmation of submission, eligibility status, and any related communication in the employee's personnel file.

The Director or designated administrative staff will maintain a background check tracking log for all employees, caregivers, substitutes, and any other individuals required to have a background check. This log will include the person's name, position, date of hire, date the background check was submitted, date eligibility was confirmed, due date.

Renewal dates will also be tracked through an internal calendar with reminders set in advance of the five-year renewal deadline to ensure renewals are submitted on time. No employee, caregiver, substitute, or required individual will be allowed to work unsupervised with children until the required background check has been submitted, reviewed, and eligibility has been confirmed according to licensing requirements.

3.5 Absence Reporting

Parents need to notify the school when their child will be absent.

- Notification should be provided through the school's communication system or directly to the office
- If a child is absent due to illness, the illness policy will apply

For absences of two or more consecutive days, a doctor's note is required for the child to return to school. (Detail information in Section 7 of the OP)

3.6 Immunizations and Health Requirements

Children will not attend without proper immunization documentation in accordance with state requirements.

- The child's immunization record needs to remain current throughout the entire period of enrollment, not only at the time of enrollment.
- The statement "Exemptions will need a notarized affidavit" should be clarified: exemptions for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, require the



applicable affidavit, while a medical exemption must be supported by a physician's statement.

TB Testing Requirements

To this date, the Texas Department of State and Health Services does not currently require TB testing for children attending or employees working in a licensed center.

3.7 Attendance Policy

Upon arrival at Semillas Preschool, the parent or authorized adult must check the child in through the Brightwheel platform by scanning the child's assigned QR code. The parent or authorized adult must also record the child's arrival in the written sign-in log located at the entrance of the child's classroom.

The classroom teacher will monitor attendance through the classroom tablet and, upon receiving the child, will verify that both check-in procedures have been completed. Once the child has been properly checked in and physically received by a caregiver, the child will be under Semillas responsibility.

A child may not be left in the classroom, hallway, reception area, or any other part of the center without being personally transferred to an authorized caregiver. Parents must ensure that a staff member has acknowledged and received the child before leaving the premises.

Teachers are responsible for verifying the number of children in their care and for updating classroom attendance records whenever a child arrives, departs, or transitions to another classroom or supervised area.

At departure, the parent or authorized pickup person must check the child out through Brightwheel using the child's QR code and record the departure time in the written sign-out log located at the classroom entrance. The teacher releasing the child will verify that both check-out procedures have been completed before the child leaves the center.

A child will remain under the responsibility of Semillas Preschool until the child has been released directly to a parent or authorized pickup person and the required check-out procedures have been completed.

Center-Wide Attendance Verification



The administrative office will monitor children's arrivals and departures through Brightwheel throughout the day. Classroom caregivers must ensure that every child physically present in the classroom has been properly checked in through Brightwheel and recorded on the written attendance log.

As an additional child-accountability and safety measure, center-wide attendance verification counts will be conducted at 9:30 a.m. 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. and at any other time determined necessary by the Director or person in charge. The administrative office will record each classroom's reported count and the center-wide total on the office attendance accountability board.

It does not replace the center's official child attendance records, Brightwheel check-in and check-out records, written classroom attendance logs, or the caregiver's continuing responsibility to know the identity and number of children in their care.

3.8 Withdrawal and Re-Enrollment

- It is mandatory that a withdrawal notice is submitted in writing
- Financial obligations during the notice period are to be fulfilled, detail information is provided in the financial contract agreement upon enrollment

If a child is re-enrolled:

- Enrollment is subject to availability
- A re-enrollment fee will take place

3.9 Founding Family Early Withdrawal Policy

Participation in the Semillas Preschool Founding Families Program includes special enrollment benefits and requires a financial commitment to reserve the child's space.

If a Founding Family decides to withdraw from enrollment after accepting the Founding Family offer and submitting an advance tuition payment, but before the child begins attendance at Semillas Preschool, the following policy will apply:

- The \$250 registration fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.
- Of any tuition amount paid in advance, 60% will be retained by Semillas Preschool as a Founding Family Early Withdrawal / Commitment Fee.
- The remaining 40% of the advance tuition payment will be refunded to the family.
- The 60% retained amount reflects the family's enrollment commitment and the school's reservation of a limited Founding Family space that was removed from availability for other prospective families.
- Upon withdrawal, the child's reserved space will be released and all Founding Family benefits, privileges, and special tuition considerations will be permanently forfeited.



- The Founding Family opportunity will not be reinstated, transferred, reserved, or offered again to the family or child after withdrawal.
- If the family wishes to apply to Semillas Preschool again in the future, the application will be considered as a new enrollment and will be subject to space availability, current tuition rates, registration fees, and all policies in effect at that time.
- Future enrollment will not include Founding Family status or any benefits previously associated with the Founding Families Program.

SECTION 4: DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

4.1 Semillas Preschool Discipline and Guidance Philosophy

Semillas uses Positive Discipline and the Language of Virtues as the foundation for discipline and guidance.

Making mistakes is a natural part of childhood and the learning process. Children will not be labeled as “good” or “bad.” Instead, caregivers will address the specific behavior, help the child understand its effect, and guide the child toward a safer and more respectful choice.

Caregivers will intentionally recognize and name virtues demonstrated by children, including kindness, respect, responsibility, patience, honesty, compassion, courage, cooperation, perseverance, gentleness, and self-control. Virtues will also be used when redirecting behavior.

Examples of the Language of Virtues include:

- “Let us practice kindness by using gentle hands.”
- “You are showing patience while you wait for your turn.”
- “Let us show respect by listening while our friend is speaking.”
- “You showed responsibility when you put the materials away.”
- “It takes courage to use your words and ask for help.”
- “Let us practice self-control and take a breath together.”

Caregivers will model the same virtues and behaviors expected from children. Guidance will be calm, respectful, consistent, and appropriate to each child’s age, developmental level, communication abilities, temperament, and individual needs.



4.2 Methods of Discipline and Guidance Used by Caregivers

Semillas caregivers will use positive, individualized, and developmentally appropriate methods of discipline and guidance that promote self-esteem, self-control, self-regulation, and self-direction.

Caregivers will:

- Establish clear, consistent, and age-appropriate classroom expectations.
- State expectations positively by explaining what the child may or should do.
- Model respectful language, gentle behavior, cooperation, and problem-solving.
- Use the Language of Virtues to recognize positive behavior and guide children toward appropriate choices.
- Praise and encourage positive behavior, effort, improvement, and acts of kindness.
- Offer appropriate choices within clear and consistent limits.
- Redirect children toward safe, constructive, and developmentally appropriate activities.
- Use visual cues, gestures, classroom routines, songs, stories, and reminders to reinforce expectations.
- Help children identify and communicate their feelings and needs.
- Teach children to use words, gestures, or other appropriate forms of communication to resolve conflicts.
- Support children in taking turns, sharing materials, asking for help, and solving problems.
- Use co-regulation strategies, including calm voices, breathing, sensory support, proximity, reassurance, and connection with a trusted adult.
- Adjust the environment, schedule, activity, or transition when these factors may be contributing to the behavior.
- Provide additional supervision when necessary to protect the safety of the child and others.
- Intervene immediately when behavior creates a risk of injury or harm.
- Help the child reconnect with the group and repair the situation when developmentally appropriate.

Communication and guidance will be provided in language the child can understand. Caregivers may use Spanish, English, gestures, visual supports, or other appropriate communication strategies based on the child's developmental and communication needs.

Semillas does not use punitive or isolating time-out. When appropriate for the child's age and development, and when necessary to promote safety or help the child regain



regulation, a caregiver may guide the child to a calm space or use a brief, supervised separation from the group.

Any supervised separation will:

- Be used as an opportunity for co-regulation rather than punishment.
- Be limited to no more than one minute for each year of the child's age.
- End as soon as the child is ready to return safely to the activity.

Food, water, rest, toileting, outdoor play, physical activity, comfort, or access to basic care will never be withheld or used as a reward or punishment.

4.3 Response to Challenging, Aggressive, or Unsafe Behavior

When challenging behavior occurs, caregivers will first ensure the safety of all children. The caregiver will then respond calmly and use appropriate guidance strategies, including redirection, co-regulation, clear limits, the Language of Virtues, and support with communication and problem-solving.

The caregiver will consider factors that may have contributed to the behavior, including:

- The child's age and developmental level.
- Communication or language needs.
- Hunger, fatigue, illness, discomfort, or overstimulation.
- Changes in the child's routine or family circumstances.
- Classroom transitions.
- The arrangement of the environment.
- Competition for toys, materials, space, or adult attention.
- Sensory or emotional regulation needs.
- Patterns, triggers, or circumstances surrounding the behavior.

4.4 Documentation and Parent Communication

Caregivers will document behavior when it:

- Results in or presents a significant risk of injury.
- Involves aggression toward another child or adult.
- Represents a serious safety concern.
- Occurs repeatedly or demonstrates a concerning pattern.
- Requires significant intervention from a caregiver or administrator.
- May require additional support or changes to the child's care plan.



Documentation may include a Behavior Report, Incident Report, classroom observation record, daily communication note, or other school-approved form.

Reports must contain objective and factual information, including:

- What occurred before the behavior.
- The observable behavior.
- How the caregiver responded.
- Strategies that were used.
- The child's response to the intervention.
- Any injury, first aid, or follow-up that was required.

Caregivers must avoid labels, assumptions, diagnoses, blame, or subjective statements. The identity of another child involved in an incident will remain confidential.

Parents will be informed of significant or recurring behavioral concerns according to the school's parent-notification procedures. Reports involving individual children will be maintained confidentially and placed in the appropriate child records when required.

Minor, developmentally typical behavior that is successfully addressed through routine classroom guidance does not require a formal Behavior Report for every occurrence. However, caregivers must communicate patterns or emerging concerns to the Director.

4.5 Behavioral Support Plan

When a child demonstrates recurring, aggressive, unsafe, or significantly disruptive behavior, the Director and caregivers will review the child's needs and the strategies already implemented. The response will be individualized and based on the nature, frequency, intensity, duration, developmental appropriateness, and safety impact of the behavior.

The Behavioral Support Process will include:

1. Observation and Documentation

Caregivers will document:

- The specific behavior observed.
- The frequency, duration, and circumstances of the behavior.
- Patterns or possible triggers.
- The child's strengths and individual needs.
- Strategies already used.
- The child's response to each strategy.



2. Director Review

The Director will review the documentation and conduct observations of the child, classroom environment, routines, activities, and transitions.

3. Parent Conference

The Director and teacher will meet with the parents to:

- Discuss the school's observations.
- Receive relevant information from the family.
- Review the strategies already attempted.
- Identify consistent strategies that may be used at home and school.

Following this meeting, a written Behavioral Support Plan will be developed.

4. Written Behavioral Support Plan

The Behavioral Support Plan will identify:

- The behavior or behaviors being addressed, described objectively.
- The child's strengths and support needs.
- Specific and measurable behavioral goals.
- Prevention and environmental strategies.
- Communication and co-regulation supports.
- Virtues and positive language to reinforce.
- Consistent responses to challenging behavior.
- Additional supervision or transition support, when appropriate.
- Responsibilities of the school and family.
- The method that will be used to document and monitor progress.
- The date the plan will begin.
- The date the plan will be reviewed.

The plan will be shared with the parents and the caregivers responsible for its implementation. The first review of the plan will take place within two weeks of implementation.

5. Implementation and Monitoring

Caregivers will implement the agreed-upon strategies consistently and document the child's behavior, the interventions used, and the child's progress.



6. Review and Adjustment

The Director, caregivers, and parents will review the plan. The plan may be continued, revised, adjusted, or concluded based on the child's progress and ongoing needs. With the parent's written authorization, the school may recommend consultation with the child's pediatrician or another qualified professional.

An outside specialist or one-to-one support person may be considered when appropriate and mutually agreed upon.

Any person providing services on campus must receive prior approval from the Director and comply with all applicable background-check, confidentiality, visitor, access, and supervision requirements.

4.6 Incident of Unacceptable or Unsafe Behavior

When a child engages in serious or unsafe behavior that places the child, other children, or staff members at risk, including attempting to leave the classroom or school premises, throwing objects, hitting, kicking, or intentionally injuring others, the following progressive steps will be implemented:

1. **First Incident:** A Behavior Report will be completed and sent home to the parents for review.
2. **Second Incident:** The teacher or Director will speak with the parents to discuss the behavior, explain the school's behavior policy, and review the remaining steps that may be taken if the behavior continues.
3. **Third Incident:** A formal conference will be held with the parents. A Behavioral Support Plan and specific action steps will be reviewed or developed. Parents will be advised that the child will be sent home if another serious or unsafe incident occurs. The parents will sign an acknowledgment confirming that the policy has been discussed and understood.
4. **Fourth Incident:** The parents will be contacted, and the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day.
5. **Fifth Incident:** The child will be suspended in accordance with the school's Suspension and Termination of Enrollment Policy.

When a behavior presents an immediate or significant danger to the child or others, Semillas Preschool may advance directly to a later step in this process to protect the safety and well-being of all children and staff members.



When a biting incident presents an immediate or significant safety risk, the Director may apply the safety measures established in this section.

4.7 Biting Policy

Biting can occur during early childhood when children are still developing language, impulse control, emotional regulation, and social skills. Biting may be developmentally based and is not necessarily an intentional or malicious act.

Semillas Preschool will respond to every biting incident promptly while considering the child's development, the circumstances of the incident, and the safety of all children.

When biting occurs, caregivers will:

- Intervene immediately and calmly.
- Separate the children safely without using shame or harsh language.
- Attend first to the child who was bitten and provide appropriate first aid.
- Comfort and support both children after first attending to the child who was bitten.
- Use simple, clear language, such as, "Biting hurts. We use our words to communicate," or gentle hands."
- Redirect the child who bit and help the child communicate the underlying need appropriately.
- Notify the families of the children involved while maintaining confidentiality.
- Observe possible triggers, patterns, times, activities, or environmental factors.
- Implement preventive strategies and provide closer supervision when needed.

Preventive strategies may include:

- Providing duplicate materials.
- Reducing crowding.
- Supporting classroom transitions.
- Offering appropriate sensory or oral-motor alternatives.
- Teaching functional communication.
- Increasing caregiver proximity and supervision.

Each biting incident will be documented and recorded on the child's Biting Incident Tracking Log.

The record will include:

- The sequential number of the biting incident.
- The date and time of the incident.
- The activity and location where the incident occurred.
- What occurred immediately before the incident.
- The caregiver's response.



- Whether the bite broke the skin or required first aid.
- Possible triggers or patterns.
- Preventive strategies implemented following the incident.

When biting is repeated, severe, or presents an ongoing safety concern, the Director, caregivers, and parents will collaborate to develop and implement the individualized Behavioral Support Plan.

Suspension or termination of enrollment will occur based on:

- The child's age and developmental needs.
- The severity and frequency of the incidents.
- Whether the incidents caused or presented a significant risk of injury.
- The effectiveness of the interventions and preventive strategies implemented.
- The family's participation in the Behavioral Support Plan.
- The school's ability to meet the child's needs while maintaining a safe environment for all children and staff members.

4.8 Suspension and Termination of Enrollment

- A child presents a continuing and significant risk to the safety of the child or others despite documented intervention and support.
- The school is unable to meet the child's needs safely and appropriately after an individualized review and consideration of reasonable supports.
- The family declines or repeatedly fails to participate in an essential safety or Behavioral Support Plan.
- Required enrollment, health, emergency, custody, or licensing documentation is not provided or maintained.
- Tuition or other required fees remain unpaid according to the school's financial policies.
- There is continual or serious noncompliance with arrival, departure, or late-pickup requirements.
- A parent, guardian, or authorized person engages in threatening, abusive, violent, harassing, or unsafe conduct.
- A family repeatedly or seriously violates the Parent Handbook, enrollment agreement, safety requirements, or other school policies.
- Continued enrollment would prevent the school from meeting applicable health, safety, licensing, or legal requirements.

The Director may require a parent to pick up a child or may impose an immediate temporary suspension when a child's behavior presents a serious or immediate safety risk that cannot be safely managed that day. When immediate action is not required, the Director will communicate the decision and effective date to the parents in writing.



4.9 Prohibited Discipline and Guidance Practices

Semillas Preschool prohibits harsh, cruel, humiliating, frightening, abusive, or unusual treatment of any child.

The following practices are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Spanking, striking, hitting, pinching, shaking, biting, pushing, or physically hurting a child.
- Grabbing, dragging, or pulling a child.
- Punishment associated with food, water, rest, naps, toileting, or toilet training.
- Forcing a child to eat or withholding food or beverages as punishment.
- Putting soap, tape, food, or any other object or substance in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, threatening, frightening, or shaming a child.
- Yelling or screaming at a child.
- Using harsh, abusive, insulting, degrading, or profane language.
- Labeling a child as "bad," "mean," "naughty," or similar terms.
- Using sarcasm or making negative comparisons between children.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, closet, or other isolated area.
- Closing a child alone inside a room or space as a consequence.
- Placing a child in a highchair, crib, restraint, restrictive device, or other equipment for time-out or punishment.
- Withholding active play or requiring a child to remain indoors as punishment, except for a brief, supervised separation during active play when necessary for immediate safety and consistent with this policy.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for an inappropriate length of time.
- Using exercise, physical activity, or the denial of physical activity as punishment.
- Requiring public apologies, public confessions, or other actions intended to embarrass the child.
- Using group punishment for the behavior of one child.
- Making threats that cannot or will not be carried out.
- Using any discipline method that is not approved by Semillas Preschool or is inconsistent with Texas Minimum Standards.

Employees whose own children are enrolled at Semillas must follow the same discipline and guidance policy while on school premises and may not use prohibited methods with their own children.

Any employee who observes prohibited treatment must intervene when necessary to protect the child and immediately report the concern to the Director in accordance with the school's child-abuse and neglect reporting policy and applicable law.



4.10 Staff Training and Implementation

All caregivers and employees who work with children will receive an overview of this Discipline and Guidance Policy during orientation and before being assigned responsibility for children.

Training will address:

- Positive Discipline.
- The Language of Virtues.
- Child development and age-appropriate expectations.
- Co-regulation and social-emotional support.
- Redirection and positive communication.
- Prevention of challenging behavior.
- Responding to aggression and biting.
- Documentation and confidentiality.
- Prohibited discipline practices.
- Procedures for reporting concerns to the Director.
- Prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

The Director will provide ongoing coaching and review to promote consistent implementation throughout the school. Employees may not use personal discipline practices that conflict with this policy, even when requested or authorized by a parent.

SECTION 5: SUPERVISION, RATIOS & STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Supervision Requirements

Staff are required to always know:

- The exact number of children in their care
- The location of each child
- The identity of each child present

Name-to-face counts are mandatory:

- Before leaving the classroom
- When arriving at the destination (playground, activity area, etc.)
- Before leaving the destination area
- When returning to the classroom
- Anytime the group transitions to another area of the school
- During a name-to-face count, the teacher visually confirms each child by matching the child's face with their name on the class roster.



- Teachers are required to immediately verify their student count if the number of children does not match the roster.
- Children are never left unattended under any circumstances, including:
 - In classrooms
 - In restrooms
 - In playground areas
 - During transitions
- Staff are positioned in a way that allows full visibility and awareness of all children in their care.

5.2 Responsibility for Supervision

A child is considered under the supervision of Semillas Preschool staff only after:

- The child has been properly signed in, and
- The child has been physically transferred to staff care

Responsibility for the child returns to the parent or authorized individual once:

- The child has been signed out, and
- The child has been released to the authorized individual

5.3 Teacher-Child Ratios

- Ratios are maintained at all times:

At no time may the number of children assigned to a caregiver exceed the maximum ratio established by licensing.

Semillas Preschool operates with lower ratios to support individualized care and supervision.

Age	Minimum Standards	Semillas Preschool
Infants (0-11)	1:4	1:4
12 months-17months	1:5	1:5
18 months- 23 months	1:9	1:6
2 years old	1:11	1:8
3 years old	1:15	1:9
4 years old	1:18	1:10



5.4 Group Size

- Children are assigned to classrooms based on age
- Group size limits are not exceeded at any time

Staff are to ensure that both ratio and group size requirements are maintained simultaneously.

5.5 Staff Supervision of children in the classroom

Staff are required to:

- Actively monitor children at all times
- Position themselves strategically to:
 - Observe all areas of the classroom or playground
 - Prevent blind spots

5.6 Supervision During Transitions

- Before leaving the classroom, the teacher conducts a name-to-face head count to confirm the presence of each child.
- Children walk in a single line toward the transition destination.
- One teacher walks at the front of the line, and the other teacher walks at the back, ensuring children remain together and under continuous supervision.
- At each transition checkpoint or change in direction, children are positioned next to the wall, and the teacher performs another name-to-face head count before continuing.
- Upon arrival at the destination, the teacher conducts a final name-to-face head count to ensure all children are present before entering or beginning the next activity.
- These procedures apply to all transitions within the school, including movement to playground areas, restrooms, common spaces, and any other locations within the facility

5.7 Supervision During Outdoor Play

During outdoor activities:

- Ratios are maintained at all times
- Staff are positioned to supervise all play areas
- Monitor equipment use
- Identify and prevent unsafe behavior
- Ensure children remain within designated boundaries
- Engage with the children, playground time is part of the curriculum and important for gross motor skills development



5.8 Supervision During Rest Time

Staff remain in the classroom at all times and provide continuous sight-and-sound supervision. Children are never left unattended during rest periods.

Rest Area and Napping Equipment

Infants younger than 12 months will sleep in individually assigned and labeled cribs. Children 12 months of age and older, including toddlers and preschool-age children, will rest on individually assigned and labeled cots.

Cribs and cots will have waterproof or washable surfaces. Cots will be set up only during scheduled nap or rest periods and will be stored when not in use so they do not interfere with the children's classroom activity space.

To ensure safe and effective supervision:

- Classroom lighting may be dimmed to a low-light level but will remain on at all times to allow full visibility.
- Window shades may be partially closed to create a calm environment; however, rooms will never be completely dark.
- Staff must be able to clearly see each child's face and monitor breathing at all times.
- Children's faces will never be covered by blankets, clothing, or any other sleep materials.

Each child will be assigned an individual cot or crib designated exclusively for the child's use.

Bedding and Personal Sleep Items

- Parents will be asked to provide a specific blanket for children 12 months of age and older
- All items must be clearly labeled with the child's full name.
- Bedding will be stored individually to prevent cross-contamination.
- Personal bedding will be sent home every Friday and must be returned on Monday.
- Infant crib sheets will be washed daily or as needed.
- Toddler and preschool bedding will be washed every Friday or as needed.

Arrangement of Rest Equipment

- Cots and cribs will be arranged to allow staff to move freely and maintain direct supervision of all children.
- A clear and unobstructed pathway will be maintained at all times.
- Children using cots will be positioned head-to-toe when resting to help reduce the spread of illness.
- Staff will position themselves strategically to ensure full visibility of the entire classroom.



Each classroom will maintain a visible nap map that includes:

- Each child's assigned rest space.
- The child's name.
- The layout and position of all cots and cribs.

Cot and Crib Sanitation

Toddlers and Preschool Classrooms

- Cots will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- School-provided cot blankets will be washed every day for infants and for toddlers every Friday or as needed.
- Parent-provided blankets will be sent home every Friday for washing.

Infant Classrooms

- Crib mattresses will be cleaned and disinfected daily and whenever contamination occurs.
- Crib sheets will be washed daily or whenever soiled.
- Crib sheets will be changed immediately whenever they become wet, soiled, or contaminated.
- Crib sheets will be changed and the crib mattress will be cleaned and disinfected before a crib is reassigned to another infant.
- Blankets, quilts, comforters, pillows, stuffed animals, and other soft items will not be placed inside the crib of an infant younger than 12 months.

Infant Safe Sleep

At Semillas Preschool, we follow the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SIDS/SUID).

- Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep on a firm, flat crib mattress.
- Infants younger than 12 months will not be placed to sleep with soft bedding, including blankets, quilts, comforters, pillows, stuffed toys or animals, soft objects, bumper pads, or crib liners.
- Sleep positioners are not permitted.
- Appropriate sleep clothing, such as a wearable sleep garment, should be used to keep an infant warm.
- Only one infant will be placed in each crib.
- Pacifiers may be used as long as they are not attached to the infant, clothing, a stuffed animal, or any other item.
- Smoking is not permitted.
- Staff will actively observe infants while they are sleeping.



- Awake infants will be provided with supervised tummy time several times throughout the day.
- Infants will not be swaddled or wrapped for sleep.

SECTION 6: ARRIVAL, ATTENDANCE, RELEASE & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

6.1 Arrival Procedures

Arrival Time

Children may not be dropped off before 7:00 AM.

The arrival window is from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM.

To support the flow of the morning and the start of classroom activities, families are encouraged to arrive before 9:00 AM.

At 9:00 AM, the school doors will close so that the academic program can begin without interruption.

Family Visits:

Semillas maintains an open-door policy, which allows families to visit and observe their child's classroom or other areas of the school at any time. Upon arrival, parents or visitors are asked to sign in at the front desk by completing the visitor log.

However, if a child is experiencing separation anxiety, frequent visits or repeated comings and goings may disrupt the child's adjustment to the classroom routine. In these cases, we may recommend limiting visits to support the child's comfort and successful transition

The Importance of Arriving on Time

Arriving on time helps children begin their day calmly and participate fully in the most important learning moments of the morning. Early in the day, children are often at their highest level of attention and readiness to learn. Each classroom begins the day with circle time, an engaging group activity that sets the tone for the day.

Circle time supports:

- Social interaction and community building
- Establishing daily routines
- Developing listening and communication skills
- Early literacy and numeracy practice
- Preparing children for a structured school environment .

Drop-Off Procedures (7:00 AM – 8:50 AM)



Parents or authorized adults must walk their child into the building and into the classroom. Children must never be left unattended at any time. Parents must complete the daily sign-in using the QR code when walking their child into the classroom.

6.2 Sign-In/out

Sign-In Methods/ Sign out

Parents or authorized individuals must complete the sign-in process

- Scanning the QR code located at the classroom
- Signing in on the written Sign-In/Sign-Out Log

Sign-in must be completed:

- Immediately upon arrival
- Before leaving the child in the classroom
- By the parent or authorized individual dropping off the child

6.3 Attendance Verification

Staff are required to:

- Maintain an accurate count of children at all times
- Conduct headcounts:
 - Upon arrival
 - Before and after transitions
 - Before and after outdoor play
 - During and after rest time

Any discrepancy in attendance is required to be addressed immediately.

6.4 Release of Children

If a person not listed in the child's records is authorized to pick up the child, the following procedures are required:

- Parents are required to notify the school in advance.
- Authorization can be provided through the following:
 - A completed Child Release Form, or
 - Written authorization via email, followed by a confirmation phone call

Authorization email requires the following information:

- Child's full name
- Date of pick-up



- Name of the parent/guardian providing authorization
- Full name of the authorized individual

The authorized individual is required to present in person a valid photo ID at the time of pick-up. This information will remain in the children's file.

If all requirements are not met, the child will not be released.

6.5 Custody and Legal Restrictions

Semillas Preschool will comply with all valid court orders signed by a judge regarding custody, possession, and release of a child, in accordance with Texas Minimum Standards. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for:

- Providing complete, accurate, and current court orders
- Ensuring that all custody documents are officially signed by a judge
- Notifying the school immediately of any changes or updates
- Providing updated documentation when modifications occur

A copy of all custody-related legal documentation is required to be kept in the child's file at all times.

- The school will follow the court order exactly as written
- Only individuals authorized under the court order or by the custodial parent may pick up the child
- Any individual restricted by the court order will not be allowed to pick up the child

When Custody is Assigned to One Parent

If a child is under sole custody or if restrictions apply:

- The sole custodial parent must provide a valid court order clearly outlining custody and any restrictions involving the non-custodial parent.
- The court order requires the following details:
 - Who has legal custody
 - Who is authorized to pick up the child
 - Any restrictions regarding the other parent or additional individuals

Without a court order on file, both parents are assumed to have equal rights.

If an Unauthorized Person Attempts Pick-Up

If an individual (including a parent) attempts to pick up a child and is:

- Not listed as authorized
- Restricted by court order
- Or presents documentation not on file



The school will:

1. NOT release the child
2. Escort the individual to the office
3. Notify the Director or designated administrator immediately
4. Request a copy of the legal document presented
5. Review the document carefully before any action is taken
6. Contact the custodial parent listed in the child's file for confirmation
7. Document the incident

The child will remain under school supervision until verification is complete.

6.6 Dismissal Procedures

- Drive slowly and remain observant at all times.
- Parents and authorized adults must hold the child's hand while entering and exiting the school.
- Children must never be left unattended in a vehicle under any circumstances.
- Cell phone use is not permitted while driving or walking through the school premises during drop-off or pick-up.
- At pick-up, the parent or authorized individual must check the child out through Brightwheel using the child's QR code and record the child's departure in the written Sign-In/Sign-Out Log.
- The teacher releasing the child will verify that both check-out procedures have been completed before the child leaves the center.

During Rest Time:

- Parents picking up a child during scheduled rest time must check in at the front office.
- Parents are not permitted to enter classrooms during rest periods.
- An authorized staff member will bring the child to the designated release area.

6.7 Late Pick-Up Procedures

School program hours end at 5:45 PM. The grace period is extended until 6:00 PM.

After 6:00 PM, late pick-up fees will apply as follows:

- First 10 minutes: \$20.
- Each additional minute after the first 10 minutes: \$1 per minute.
- Late pick-up fees are applied per family, not per child.
- The individual picking up the child will be required to sign a late pick-up acknowledgment.



- The applicable late pick-up fee will be automatically charged to the family's account.

Repeated late pick-ups or failure to comply with the school's late pick-up procedures may result in administrative action, including possible termination of enrollment.

6.8 Responsibility for Child Supervision

- School responsibility begins after:
 - Sign-in is completed
 - The child is in staff care
- Parent responsibility resumes after:
 - The child is signed out
 - The child has been released

Parents are responsible for supervising their child at all times once the child has been released.

6.9 School Communications

- Semillas Preschool will maintain consistent communication with parents through the school management platform, email, phone calls, text messages when appropriate, written notices, the child's daily folder, newsletters, and direct communication with the Director or administrative staff.
- The school management platform will be the primary method of communication with families. Through this platform, parents receive announcements, reminders, school updates, event information, photos, classroom communication, and important notices related to the school calendar.
- Weekly newsletters will be sent to families to share what happened during the week, classroom highlights, reminders, and what to expect for the following week. Monthly newsletters will be sent at the beginning of each month to provide families with important dates, school-wide events, special celebrations, curriculum highlights, and other relevant information from the Semillas school calendar.
- Parents will also receive communication regarding special events, celebration days, Open Houses, enrollment reminders, school activities, classroom projects, and any other important dates or announcements marked on the Semillas school calendar.
- For infants, toddlers, and children in the two-year-old program, daily communication will include information related to diaper changes, meals, lunch, snacks, naps or rest time, and other daily care needs. This information will be shared daily through the school management platform and through the child's daily folder or daily form.



- If a child is hurt, becomes ill, or requires immediate parent communication, the school will notify the parent promptly through phone call, school management platform message, email, depending on the situation. An incident or illness report will be completed when required and kept in the child's file.
- In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease, families will be notified through the school management platform and email while maintaining the confidentiality of the affected child or staff member. Notices also be posted the affected classroom at school when required.
- Policy changes, emergency notices, closures, health-related updates, and other important operational information will be communicated to families through email, written notice, posted notice, to ensure parents are informed in a timely manner.

6.10 Procedures for Parents to Review and Discuss Questions or Concerns with the Director

Semillas Preschool values open and respectful communication between families and school leadership. Parents or guardians may review the school's policies and procedures and discuss any questions, concerns, or requests for clarification with the Director.

If a parent or guardian wishes to discuss a question or concern regarding Semillas Preschool's policies, procedures, or school operations, the following process will be followed:

1. Contact the school Director by email to request a meeting or phone conversation.
2. Include a brief description of the question or concern so the school can prepare appropriately.
3. The school will respond within 24 business hours to arrange a conversation.
4. Meetings may take place in person, by phone, or virtually depending on the nature of the question or concern and the family's preference.

SECTION 7: HEALTH, ILLNESS & EXCLUSION POLICIES

7.1 Daily Health Checks

Semillas Preschool staff conducts daily health checks to monitor the well-being of all children.

- Each child is observed upon arrival for signs of illness or distress, injury, a existing injury report will be filled out by the teacher in case is needed
- Staff are trained to identify symptoms including:
 - Fever
 - Lethargy



- Unusual behavior
- Visible signs of illness

If a child presents symptoms that may indicate illness:

- The child will be returned home
- The parent or guardian will be notified immediately

7.2 Illness During the School Day

If a child becomes ill while in care:

- The child will be separated from the group and cared for in a designated supervised area.
- The child will be provided with an appropriate quiet activity and monitored closely.
- The parent or legal guardian will be contacted immediately.
- The parent or legal guardian must arrange for the child to be picked up within one hour of notification.
- If the parent or legal guardian cannot be reached after reasonable attempts, Semillas Preschool will begin contacting the authorized emergency contacts listed in the child's enrollment record until an individual is reached who is able to pick up the child.
- The child will remain supervised and appropriately cared for until released to a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult.

Parents are responsible for maintaining current and accurate contact and emergency contact information at all times.

7.3 Exclusion Criteria

A child will be excluded from care if any of the following conditions are present:

- Fever of 100.1°F orally or 100°F axillary or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Persistent coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing
- Unusual lethargy or inability to participate in activities
- Rash or skin condition that may be contagious
- Eye discharge or signs of infection
- Open sores or wounds
- Diagnosed communicable disease



- Any condition that requires more care than staff can provide without compromising supervision
 - The illness does not allow the child to participate comfortably in the child-care center
- Children will not be permitted to remain in care under these conditions.

7.4 Return to School Requirements

A child may return to Semillas Preschool when:

- The child has been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing or symptom-masking medication.
- The child is able to participate comfortably in normal classroom activities.
- When applicable, the child has received prescribed antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours or has met the applicable return-to-care requirements for the diagnosed illness.

A doctor's note or other medical clearance may be required when appropriate based on the child's illness, symptoms, diagnosis, communicable disease requirements, or other health and safety considerations.

For an absence of two or more consecutive days, a doctor's note will be required

Children diagnosed with a communicable disease must also meet all applicable Texas Department of State Health Services and Child Care Regulation return-to-care requirements.

7.5 Communicable Disease Control

When a communicable disease is reported:

- Families of potentially exposed children will be notified promptly through email and Brightwheel.
- Confidentiality of all individuals involved will be maintained.
- Additional notices may be posted at classroom entrances to reinforce communication regarding exposure or classroom-specific situations, including temporary classroom closures.
- Children diagnosed with a communicable disease must remain home until all return-to-care criteria have been met in accordance with Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and Child Care Regulation requirements.

Communicable Diseases Requiring Exclusion (Texas DSHS – 25 TAC §97.7)

Respiratory and Viral Diseases

- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Measles (Rubeola)



- Rubella (German measles)
- Mumps
- Influenza
- COVID-19
- Pertussis (Whooping cough)
- Diphtheria
- Tuberculosis

Bacterial Infections Common in Children

- Streptococcal infections (Strep throat)
- Scarlet fever
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
- Bacterial meningitis

Gastrointestinal Diseases

- Salmonellosis
- Shigellosis
- Escherichia coli (E. coli) infections
- Hepatitis A
- Viral gastroenteritis with vomiting or diarrhea

Contagious Skin and Parasitic Conditions

- Impetigo
- Scabies
- Ringworm (Tinea infections)
- MRSA or other contagious skin infections

Other Serious Communicable Diseases

- Hepatitis B
- Poliomyelitis
- Rabies exposure
- Anthrax
- Arboviral encephalitis (e.g., West Nile virus)

Important Requirement Under Texas Law

Under 25 TAC §97.7, schools and childcare operations report or exclude children when:

- A suspected or confirmed communicable disease is present that could spread to others.
- A disease outbreak occurs in the facility.
- A rare or unusual disease pattern appears in a group of children.

Children may return to school only when they are no longer contagious, meet public health exclusion criteria, or provide medical clearance when required.



7.6 Head Lice Policy

Head lice are common among school-aged children and may be present regardless of personal hygiene or hair cleanliness.

In accordance with Texas health guidelines, if live lice are identified on a child, the child will be excluded from the classroom, and the parent or guardian will be contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible.

If a case of head lice is confirmed in a classroom:

- All children and staff in the affected classroom may be checked for signs of lice.
- The child identified with lice will remain in a designated area under staff supervision until the parent or authorized adult arrives.
- Families of children in the affected classroom will be notified through email communication.

A child may return to school after appropriate treatment has been administered. Parents are strongly encouraged to remove all nits (lice eggs) after treatment, as eggs that remain in the hair may hatch and lead to reinfestation.

Upon the child's return to school, staff will conduct a discreet head check to confirm that no live lice are present before the child rejoins classroom activities.

7.7 Illness or Injury While in Care

If a child becomes ill while attending the program:

- The classroom teacher will immediately notify the Director or office staff.
- The child will be separated from the group and cared for in a designated supervised area.
- Staff will continue to monitor the child's condition and provide appropriate comfort and care.
- The parent or guardian will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed in the child's enrollment records will be contacted.
- The child will only be released to a parent, guardian, or authorized adult.

An Illness Report will be completed documenting:

- The symptoms observed.
- The child's temperature, when applicable.



- The time the symptoms were first observed.
- The care provided.
- The time and method of parent notification.
- The name of the person contacted.
- The time the child was picked up.

The information will also be recorded in the Health Office Log.

Minor Injuries

For a minor injury, such as a bump, scratch, small cut, or bruise:

- A trained staff member will assess the child and provide appropriate first aid.
- The child will remain under supervision and will be monitored for any changes in condition.
- The parent or guardian will be notified promptly by telephone, Brightwheel message, or in person.
- An Incident/Injury Report will be completed by the staff member who witnessed or responded to the incident.

The Incident/Injury Report will include:

- The child's name.
- The date, time, and location of the incident.
- A description of what occurred.
- The injury or symptoms observed.
- The actions taken by staff.
- Any first aid provided.
- The date and method of parent notification.

The report will be reviewed and signed by the classroom teacher, Director, and parent or guardian. A copy will be provided to the parent or guardian, and the original will be maintained in the child's file.

7.8 Serious Injury or Medical Emergency Procedures

In the event of a serious injury, sudden illness, or medical emergency requiring immediate medical attention, Semillas Preschool will follow the procedures below.

○ Immediate Response

- The teacher/caregiver closest to the child will assess the situation and remain with the child. Appropriate first aid or CPR will be initiated, according to the teacher/caregiver's training.



- Disposable, gloves will be used when handling blood, vomit, or other bodily fluids that may contain blood. Gloves will be discarded immediately after use, and hands will be washed after gloves are removed.

- **Emergency Medical Services and Director Notification**

When two teachers are available:

- One teacher will remain with the child and provide appropriate first aid or CPR
- The second teacher will call 911 when the child's condition requires immediate medical attention or hospitalization.
- After calling 911, the second teacher/caregiver will notify the Director through the school radio.
- The second teacher will maintain supervision of the remaining children and move them away from the emergency area
- The teacher calling 911 will provide the school's name and location, the child's age, the nature of the emergency, the child's condition, and any other information requested by the dispatcher.
- Staff will follow all instructions provided by the 911 dispatcher.

If only one teacher/caregiver is immediately available:

- The teacher/caregiver will activate 911 while remaining with the child and providing first aid or CPR
- The phone will be placed on speaker so the teacher can follow the 911 dispatcher's instructions while continuing to provide care and supervision.
- The Director will be notified through the school radio after calling 911

- **Director and Office Response**

- Coordinate the emergency response with the teacher and Emergency Medical Services.
- Ensure additional staff support is provided.
- Ensure that supervision, safety, and required child-to-caregiver ratios are maintained throughout the school.
- Coordinate communication, emergency transportation, and follow-up.

The assigned Office staff will:

- Othe child's enrollment and emergency information.
- Make the child's relevant emergency and medical information available to Emergency Medical Services
- Assist the Director with communication with the child's parent or guardian.
- Have the applicable Incident/Illness Report documentation available for completion following the emergency.



Other available office personnel will provide support as needed and help ensure that classrooms remain appropriately supervised and required ratios are maintained while the Director and assigned Office staff coordinate the emergency.

- **Child's Emergency Medical Information and Individual Action Plan**

The child's emergency information, emergency medical authorization, emergency contacts, physician or health-care professional information, allergy information, applicable medical or allergy action plans, and other relevant information on file will be made available to Emergency Medical Services

- **Parent or Guardian Notification**

After the child's immediate safety has been addressed and Emergency Medical Services have been contacted, the parent or guardian will be notified.

The parent or guardian will be informed of:

- The nature of the emergency.
- The child's condition
- Any first aid, CPR, or emergency medication provided.
- Whether 911 was contacted.
- Whether emergency transportation is required.
- The hospital or emergency medical facility to which the child is being transported

If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, Semillas Preschool will contact the emergency contacts listed in the child's enrollment record.

Reasonable attempts to reach the parent or guardian will continue throughout the emergency.

- **Child's Physician or Health-Care Professional**

When the child's injury or illness requires immediate treatment by a health-care professional or hospitalization, Semillas Preschool will contact the physician or other health-care professional identified in the child's record.

- **Emergency Transportation**

If emergency transportation is required, Emergency Medical Services will transport the child to an appropriate emergency medical facility.

The Director will accompany the child whenever possible and remain with the child until the parent or guardian arrives.

If the Director is unavailable or must remain at Semillas Preschool to ensure the safety, supervision, required ratios, and proper operation of the center, a designated office staff member will accompany the child.

The child's emergency information will accompany the child



○ **Supervision of Remaining Children**

When two teachers are assigned to the classroom:

- The teacher providing first aid or CPR will remain with the injured or ill child.
- The second teacher will maintain supervision of the remaining children while activating 911 and notifying the Director.
- The remaining children will be moved away from the emergency area when necessary to maintain their safety and allow emergency care to be provided.

Additional staff will be assigned as necessary by the Director or person in charge to maintain required ratios, supervision, and the safe operation of the school.

○ **Incident/Illness Documentation**

The report will accurately document the circumstances of the incident or illness and the actions taken, including, as applicable:

- The circumstances surrounding the injury, illness, or medical emergency.
- Observations regarding the child's condition.
- First aid or CPR provided.
- Any emergency medication administered.
- The time 911 was contacted.
- The time the Director was notified.
- Parent or guardian notification.
- Emergency transportation and medical treatment, when applicable.
- Any other relevant actions taken in response to the emergency.

After the caregiver completes the report, the Director, or the person in charge will review, sign, and date the completed report.

A copy of the required Incident/Illness Report will be provided to the parent or guardian.

The parent or guardian will sign the report acknowledging that the report was reviewed or that a copy was received within 48 hours of the incident.

The completed Incident/Illness Report will be maintained with the child's record

○ **Notification to Texas Child Care Regulation**

Semillas will notify Texas Child Care Regulation no later than two days after:

- An injury to a child in care that requires medical treatment by a health-care professional or hospitalization.
- An illness that requires hospitalization of a child in care.
- Any other reportable non-routine situation associated with the emergency that placed or may have placed a child at risk for injury or harm.

○ **Follow-Up**



Following the emergency, the Director will review the circumstances of the incident and determine whether additional follow-up is necessary, including:

- Additional communication with the family.
- Staff review or training.
- Corrective or preventive action.
- Environmental or procedural modifications.
- Review or update of the child's medical, allergy, or emergency action plan, when applicable.

7.9 Smoking and Tobacco Prohibition

Semillas Preschool is a smoke-free environment.

- Smoking, vaping, or tobacco use is prohibited:
 - Inside the building
 - On school grounds
 - In the parking lot

This policy applies to all staff, parents, and visitors.

7.10 Hearing & Vision Screening

In accordance with Texas law:

- Children who are 4 years old by September 1 must have a hearing and vision screening on file
- Documentation must be submitted no later than December 1
- Records must be maintained in the child's file

SECTION 8: MEDICATION PROCEDURES

8.1 Authorization for Medication Forms

A completed and signed Authorization for Dispensing Medication form is required for all medications.

- Forms must be signed and dated by the parent or guardian.
- An authorization form is required for prescription and non-prescription medications.
- A doctor's signed and dated doctor's prescription is required
- A signed authorization form is also required for sunscreen, diaper cream, lotions, and insect repellent.



8.2 Medication Delivery and Intake Procedures

All medications are delivered only to the front desk.

- Medications are not accepted through backpacks, lunch boxes, or direct delivery to the classroom.
- Front office staff receives all medications, with the authorization form that is required.
- Medications must arrive in their original container.
- Prescription medications arrive with the pharmacy label.
- Over-the-counter medications arrive in the manufacturer's original packaging.
- Front office staff verifies that the medication is properly labeled and checks the expiration date.
- Each medication needs to be labeled with the child's full name and the date the medication is received at the school
- Prescription medication with the doctors office letter head must include:
 - o Child's full name.
 - o Physician's name, signature
 - o Dosage instructions.
- Non-prescription medication must be labeled with:
 - o Child's full name.
 - o Date received.
- A doctor's note with the doctors office letter head and correct dose, signed and dated will be required. This ensures the correct dosage. If the doctor does not provide it, then the child should be receiving the medication.

8.3 Storage & Labeling

- Medications are kept in a locked cabinet and out of children's reach.
- Medications are in the original container.
- Expiration dates are checked monthly.
- Medications in classrooms, such as sunscreen and diaper cream, are stored in locked cabinets of each classroom
- All medications are returned home at the end of the school year.

8.4 Administration of Medication

- Medication is administered only by designated and authorized staff
- Before administering each dose, the designated staff member will verify:



- The child's identity.
 - The completed and signed Medication Authorization Form.
 - The name of the medication.
 - The child's name on the medication container.
 - The correct dosage.
 - The correct time and method of administration.
 - The written physician instructions.
 - The medication's expiration date.
- Medication will be given only to the child whose name appears on the original container and Medication Authorization Form. Medication will be administered according to the child's physician's written directions.
 - Each dose will be documented immediately in the Medication Administration Log, including:
 - The child's name.
 - The medication name.
 - The date and time administered.
 - The dosage administered.
 - The full name and signature of the staff member who administered the medication.
 - If the child refuses the medication, vomits after receiving it, experiences an unusual reaction, or if a medication error occurs, the parent or guardian will be contacted immediately by telephone. Staff will follow the child's medical action plan and emergency procedures, including calling 911 when necessary.
 - Medication is typically administered between 11:30 AM and 3:30 PM.

8.5 First Dose Restriction

- Semillas does not administer the first dose of any medication.
- The first dose must be given at home by the parent or guardian.
- An exception may occur for emergency medications, such as an EpiPen, when immediate administration is required for the child's safety.

8.6 Long-Term Medication Authorization

- Expires one year from the date signed.
- Must be renewed annually.



8.7 Sample Medication

- Sample medications or medications without proper labeling will not be administered at Semillas Preschool.
- If medication is provided by a physician as a sample, it must include:
 - The child's full name clearly labeled on the medication.
 - The name of the medication.
 - Written dosage and administration instructions from the physician signed and dated
 - The medication's expiration date.

8.8 Emergency Medication

Epinephrine Auto-Injectors and Inhalers

- Emergency medications, such as epinephrine auto-injectors and inhalers, are maintained to ensure an immediate response in the event of a medical emergency.

The following procedures are implemented:

- Emergency medications must be accompanied by a current physician's prescription and written parent authorization before being stored or administered at the school. The physician's documentation must include the child's full name, medication name, dosage instructions, administration procedures, the date and the physician's signature.
- Emergency medications will be labeled with the child's full name and stored in the emergency locked cabinet that remains readily accessible to staff in case of an emergency.
- Each child requiring an EpiPen or other emergency medication must provide medication prescribed specifically for each child. Medications are not shared between children.
- The child's individual medical action plan and administration instructions will be maintained with the medication for immediate reference.
- Emergency medications are administered by designated trained staff members.
- In the event of a life-threatening emergency, if the designated staff member is not immediately available, another trained staff member will administer the medication to protect the child's health and safety.
- Staff members involved in emergency response receive annual training on recognizing allergic reactions and the proper administration of epinephrine auto-injectors.
- Emergency medications are checked monthly to ensure they are not expired.
- Any administration of emergency medication is documented immediately in the medication log, the parent or guardian will be notified by telephone as soon as



possible after the medication is administered. Staff will call 911 when required by the child's medical action plan or the nature of the emergency.

Semillas Preschool does not maintain or administer unassigned epinephrine auto-injectors. Emergency epinephrine maintained by the school is prescribed and labeled specifically for the individual child for whom it is intended.

8.9 Diaper Cream, Sunscreen, and Insect Repellent

Sunscreen & Insect Repellent Policy

- Parents are required to apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent at home before arrival.
- Parents who wish for staff to reapply sunscreen or insect repellent during the day must provide the product
- A completed Sunscreen/Insect Repellent Authorization Form must be signed at the front desk prior to any application.
- Authorization is required for both parent-provided and school-approved products.

All products must be:

- Labeled with the child's full name.
- Delivered directly to the front desk.
- Not placed in the child's backpack.

Types of Products Used

Semillas Preschool will only apply commercially manufactured, parent-provided sunscreen and insect repellent that is appropriate for the child's age and is used according to the manufacturer's directions.

Semillas Preschool does not maintain or apply a shared supply of sunscreen or insect repellent between children.

Products will not be used when the manufacturer's label indicates that the product is inappropriate for the child's age

At the time of delivery, parents must:

- Complete and sign the authorization form.
- Provide any relevant instructions or allergy information.

The front desk will:

- Review the product label.
- Confirm the child's name and classroom.
- Record the date received.
- Label the product with classroom identification.
- Deliver the product to the assigned classroom.



Application at School

Staff will only apply sunscreen or insect repellent when:

- A signed authorization form is on file.
- Products are applied according to manufacturer instructions.
- Application is supervised at all times.
- Semillas Preschool does not apply shared sunscreen or insect repellent.
- Products that are not properly labeled or do not have the required authorization will not be used.

SECTION 9: NUTRITION & FOOD SAFETY

9.1 Meal and Snack Provision

Semillas Preschool provides the following to children aged 18 months and older:

- A healthy morning snack.
- A healthy afternoon snack.

Snacks are selected to meet basic nutritional standards, support balanced nutrition and healthy eating habits, and be appropriate for the age and developmental level of the children.

The AM and PM snack menu will provide variety throughout the week. The current snack menu will be available to families on the Semillas Preschool website at semillaspreschool.com and is posted in all information boards of the school.

Lunch:

Lunch is provided by the parent or guardian. Semillas does not prepare or provide lunch.

To support working families, Semillas Preschool partners with Simply Fresh, an independent third-party vendor that provides optional lunch services for students. This service is contracted directly between the parent or guardian and Simply Fresh.

Parents or guardians who choose to participate are responsible for:

- Contacting and registering directly with Simply Fresh.
- Selecting and ordering meals.
- Providing the vendor with applicable allergy or dietary information.
- Making payments directly to Simply Fresh.

Simply Fresh manages all lunch orders and payments directly with families. Semillas Preschool does not prepare, sell, select, or charge families for lunches ordered through Simply Fresh. Additional information and access to the Simply Fresh registration process are available on the Semillas website: semillaspreschool.com.



Families may access this information by selecting: Parents tab and then go to Snacks tab. Meals ordered through Simply Fresh will be identified for the individual child. Staff will verify the child's name before providing the meal and will follow all allergy and dietary information maintained by the school.

9.2 Food from Home

All food provided from home is required to comply with the following requirements:

- Food must be fully prepared and ready to eat.
- The school does not heat, cook, or modify food brought from home under any circumstances.

Food must be packed in:

- Sealed, leak-proof containers.

Food that must remain cold must be sent in an insulated lunch container with an appropriate ice pack

Food intended to remain warm must be sent in an appropriate insulated container.

The following are prohibited:

- Glass containers.
- Food requiring refrigeration beyond normal classroom or school storage capabilities unless properly handled and stored.

Parents and guardians are responsible for providing food that is appropriate for their child's age, developmental level, dietary needs, and ability to eat safely.

9.3 Food Safety and Consumption

- Children will consume only food provided by the parent or guardian, snacks provided by Semillas Preschool, or a lunch ordered for the child through Simply Fresh.
- Food sharing between children is strictly prohibited.

Staff will ensure:

- Each child receives and eats only their designated food.
- The child's identity is verified before food is distributed.
- Food is handled in a hygienic manner.
- Allergy and dietary information is reviewed and followed.
- Children are actively supervised during all meals and snacks.



9.4 Infant Feeding Requirements

For infants and children younger than 18 months, A completed Infant Feeding Information Form will be obtained for each infant.

The form will include the infant's current feeding schedule, type and amount of breast milk or formula, feeding instructions, introduction of solid foods, allergies or dietary restrictions, and any other relevant feeding information provided by the parent or health-care professional.

The Infant Feeding Information Form will be reviewed with the parent and updated at least every 30 days while the infant is not yet ready for table food.

Parents must notify of any change in the infant's feeding schedule, formula, breast milk, food introduction, allergies, dietary restrictions, or other feeding instructions.

Any necessary changes will be documented as soon as they occur and will not be delayed until the next 30-day review.

Parents or guardians provide:

- Infant Feeding Information Form
- Bottles (No glass bottles)
- Breast milk or formula.
- Baby food.
- Meals and snacks as needed.

All items are to be:

- Clearly labeled with the child's full name.
- Dated when required.
- Prepared according to the child's daily feeding needs.

Infants are fed:

- According to written parent instructions.
- On an individualized schedule appropriate to the infant's needs.

Staff will document infant feedings according to school procedures and communicate the feeding information to the parent or guardian daily through the school platform.

9.5 Allergy Management and Dietary Restrictions

- Each classroom will maintain an updated allergy list.
- Staff will be informed of all allergies and dietary restrictions.
- Allergy information will be maintained in the child's records and made available to staff responsible for the child
- Food will be checked before it is provided to a child with a known allergy or dietary restriction.

Parents or guardians are required to provide:



- Written notification of allergies and dietary restrictions.
- A completed Allergy Action Plan.
- A physician's signature on the Allergy Action Plan.
- Required emergency medication and written administration instructions.
- Updated information whenever the child's allergy, dietary restriction, or medical needs change.

Staff will:

- Follow all allergy precautions.
- Prevent exposure to restricted foods.
- Follow the child's Allergy Action Plan.
- Recognize and respond to symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Administer prescribed emergency medication according to the child's medical plan.
- Call 911 when directed by the child's Allergy Action Plan or required by the child's condition.
- Notify the parent or guardian immediately when an allergic reaction or suspected exposure occurs.

Parents who order lunch through Simply Fresh are responsible for providing allergy and dietary information directly to Simply Fresh and to Semillas Preschool.

9.6 Food for Special Events

Food brought for sharing during birthdays, celebrations, or special classroom events is required to:

- Be store-bought.
- Be in the original packaging.
- Include a visible ingredient list.

Homemade food for sharing is not permitted.

Families must notify the classroom teacher or school administration in advance before bringing food for a celebration.

Staff is required to:

- Review the ingredient label.
- Check classroom allergy and dietary information.
- Verify compliance before allowing the food to be distributed.
- Prevent food from being provided to a child when ingredients cannot be verified or when the food conflicts with the child's allergy or dietary information.



9.7 Food Handling Procedures

Staff are required to:

- Wash their hands before and after handling or serving food.
- Use gloves when directly handling ready-to-eat food.
- Discard gloves after a single use.
- Change gloves between tasks and whenever gloves become contaminated.
- Food preparation and service surfaces are cleaned and sanitized before and after use.
- Utensils are cleaned between uses.
- Cross-contamination is avoided.
- Food is protected from contamination during storage and service.
- Staff must remove gloves and wash their hands before moving from diapering or toileting duties to food handling.

9.8 Storage of Food

- Perishable items are refrigerated.
- Dry food is stored in clean, dry conditions.
- Food is stored in sealed or covered containers.
- Food is stored separately from cleaning products, chemicals, medications, and other hazardous materials.
- Food brought for an individual child is labeled or maintained with the child's identifying information.

Refrigeration requirements:

- Refrigerators maintain temperatures at or below 41°F.
- Refrigerator temperatures are monitored daily.
- Breast milk, formula, and other perishable food are stored according to applicable safety guidelines.

9.9 Breastfeeding Accommodations

Semillas Preschool supports breastfeeding families and recognizes a parent's right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while the child is in care.

A safe and comfortable breastfeeding space with an adult-sized seat will be available within the center or classroom for a parent who wishes to breastfeed their child.

Parents may breastfeed their child at the school during hours of operation in accordance with applicable access and safety procedures.

Breast milk will be stored and handled according to applicable health and safety requirements.



Breast milk must be:

- Properly labeled with the child's full name.
- Dated as required.
- Stored and handled according to applicable safety procedures.

Breast milk will only be provided to the child whose name appears on the container.

9.10 Water and Beverages

- Children have access to safe drinking water throughout the day.
- Water will be offered during meals, snacks, outdoor play, physical activity, and whenever requested by a child.
- Parents are required to provide a labeled spill-proof water bottle for their child each day.
- Staff will monitor children and encourage regular hydration.
- Sweetened beverages are discouraged.

If juice is provided by a parent or guardian:

- It should be 100% fruit juice.
- It should be limited to no more than four ounces per day.

Beverages will not be shared between children.

9.11 Choking Hazard Prevention

Foods that may present a choking risk must be appropriately cut or modified before being provided to a child.

Foods requiring appropriate cutting:

- Whole grapes.
- Cherry tomatoes.
- Hot dogs.
- Cheese cubes.
- Large pieces of raw vegetables.
- Large pieces of meat or other firm foods.

The following high-risk choking foods are not permitted:

- Nuts and seeds.
- Popcorn.
- Hard candy.
- Chewing gum.
- Marshmallows.
- Large amounts or spoonfuls of peanut butter.

Children must remain seated while eating and may not walk, run, play, or lie down with food in their mouths.



Staff will actively supervise children during meals and snacks and remain close enough to respond immediately if needed.

Staff are responsible for:

- Actively supervising children during all meals and snacks.
- Remaining close enough to respond immediately.
- Ensuring safe eating practices.
- Monitoring children for choking, allergic reactions, or other signs of distress.
- Following emergency first aid and CPR procedures when necessary.

9.12 Sanitation and Kitchen Compliance

- The kitchen is inspected annually by Harris County Environmental Health Services.
- All required sanitation procedures are followed.
- Food preparation and food-service areas are maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Waste is disposed of promptly and appropriately.
- Trash containers used in food areas are covered when required and emptied regularly.

Staff will ensure:

- Clean and sanitary food preparation in service areas.
- Proper cleaning and sanitation of surfaces and utensils.
- Proper waste disposal.
- Appropriate food storage temperatures.
- Compliance with applicable health and safety standards.

SECTION 10: HYGIENE PROCEDURES

10.0 Diapering Supplies

Parents are responsible for providing:

- Diapers
- Wipes

Clearly labeled with the child's full name

Staff will ensure that supplies are:

- Used only for the assigned child
- Stored in a sanitary manner

10.1 Diaper Changing Procedures

Semillas Preschool staff are trained to follow Texas Minimum Standards



Prepare the diaper-changing area and gather all necessary supplies before placing the child on the changing table.

- All diaper-changing supplies must remain out of children's reach.
- Caregivers must put on disposable gloves before beginning the diaper change. A clean, disposable liner may be placed on the diaper-changing surface when used.
- Place the child on the designated diaper-changing surface. When the changing surface is above floor level, the caregiver must maintain the required safety precautions at all times by using the safety mechanism, keeping a hand on the child.
- Promptly change any wet or soiled diaper or clothing.
- Use the disposable diaper provided for the individual child. Semillas Preschool does not use or change cloth diapers. If a child arrives wearing a cloth diaper, staff will replace it with a disposable diaper and notify the Director or designated supervisor.
- Thoroughly clean the child using individual disposable wipes or towels. Disposable wipes and towels must be discarded immediately after use.
- Ensure that the child's diaper area is dry before placing a clean diaper on the child.
- Diaper creams, ointments, powders, or lotions only be applied in accordance with Semillas Preschool's authorization policy. Each product must be labeled with the individual child's name and date, and kept out of children's reach.
- Place a clean diaper on the child and return the child to a safe, supervised area.
- Dispose of the soiled diaper in the covered diaper container. Soiled clothing must be placed in a sealed plastic bag and sent home with the child.
- **Remove and discard disposable gloves after each diaper change.**
- **Wash the child's hands after each diaper change in accordance with the child's age and applicable handwashing procedures.**
- **Wash the caregiver's hands with soap and running water after each diaper change, including when disposable gloves were worn.**
- **Sanitize the diaper-changing surface after each use. If a disposable liner is used, it must be discarded between each child's diaper change and the changing surface must be maintained in accordance with required sanitation procedures.**

10.2 Restroom Supervision and Toileting Procedures

Children will be actively supervised at all times while using the restroom to ensure their safety, privacy, hygiene, and well-being.

- Staff will supervise children when using the restroom and provide guidance on proper hygiene practices, including how to wipe correctly and wash hands thoroughly.



- Teachers will verbally guide and instruct children on how to clean themselves in order to support the development of independence and healthy hygiene habits.
- For younger children, or children who have not yet developed the ability to clean themselves independently, staff may assist with cleaning as needed to ensure the child's comfort, hygiene, and well-being.
- All assistance will be provided in a respectful manner that protects the child's dignity while maintaining appropriate supervision and safety procedures.
- For safety and accountability, restroom doors will remain open at all times when a child is being assisted.
- A staff member may accompany a child into the restroom when assistance is required; however, the restroom door should never be closed while a staff member is inside with a child.
- These practices help ensure that children's hygiene needs are met while maintaining a safe, transparent, and appropriately supervised environment.

10.3 Parent Communication Regarding Toileting

Any significant toileting concerns, accidents, injuries, unusual symptoms, or health-related concerns observed during restroom use will be communicated to parents through Brightwheel, telephone communication, and/or written documentation as appropriate.

Families will be informed of any changes to restroom procedures or toileting expectations through the communication methods outlined in Section 1.8 School Communication.

10.4 Potty Training Requirements

- Children in the 3-year-old and 4-year-old classrooms are required to be fully potty trained

Children who are not potty trained may not transition to these classrooms.

10.5 Handwashing and Hygiene

Children will wash their hands:

- Before eating.
- Before participating in water-table play.
- After using the toilet or having a diaper changed.
- After outdoor activities.
- After playing in sand.
- After feeding or touching animals.



- Any other time a caregiver has reason to believe the child has come into contact with a substance that may be harmful.

Handwashing:

- Last at least 20 seconds
- Use soap and running water

Children 18 months of age and older will wash their hands with soap and running water.

For infants who are not yet able to reach the faucet, staff will clean the infant's hands using an individual cloth or disposable towel with soap, followed by a separate cloth or disposable towel with clear water to rinse and dry. Once an infant is able to reach the faucet, soap and running water will be used.

Employees will wash their hands:

- Before eating or handling food or medication.
- Before feeding a child.
- After arriving at the child-care center.
- After diapering a child.
- After assisting a child with toileting.
- After personal toileting.
- After handling or cleaning bodily fluids, including wiping noses, mouths, or bottoms or tending to sores.
- After handling or feeding animals.
- After outdoor activities.
- After handling raw food products.
- After eating, drinking, or smoking.
- After using cleaners or toxic chemicals.
- After removing gloves.

Proper handwashing procedures will be taught, modeled, supervised, and reinforced with children as developmentally appropriate

10.6 Sanitation of Equipment and Surfaces

- Toilets, sinks, and toileting areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and will be cleaned whenever soiled. Potty chairs, if used, will be sanitized after each child's use
- Toys and equipment that have been placed in a child's mouth or contaminated by body secretions or excrement will be removed from use and sanitized before being used by another child.
- Cloth toys, will be machine washed weekly and whenever contaminated.



- Linens will be machine washed weekly, whenever soiled, and before being used by another child.
- Sleeping equipment will be sanitized whenever soiled, before being used by a different child. Daily for infants and weekly for 18 months and older.
- Tables and surfaces used for meals or snacks will be cleaned and sanitized before food is served and after each use
- Chair trays will be sanitized before and after each use
- Toys or equipment contaminated will be removed from use and sanitized before being used by another child.
- Water play tables and toys used in water tables will be emptied and sanitized daily. Children and caregivers will wash their hands before participating in water-table activities.
- Sand tables and sandboxes will be covered daily, Children and caregivers will wash their hands before.
- Food-service equipment, dishes, and utensils will be sanitized after each use. Reusable bibs, napkins, and tablecloths will be washed after each use, and disposable single-use items will be discarded after use.
- Floors, walls, ceilings, classroom furnishings, and equipment will be maintained clean and in good repair.
- Garbage and waste will be kept inaccessible to children and disposed two times during the day or as needed to prevent offensive odors, insects, rodents, and other pests.

Cleaning and Sanitation Products

Be clearly labeled.

Be kept inaccessible to children at all times.

Be stored separately from food, medications, and children's personal items.

Be used only on surfaces and for purposes permitted by the product manufacturer.

Be prepared and used according to the manufacturer's instructions, including required dilution, application method, contact time, ventilation, rinsing

Be stored and disposed of according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Products used for sanitizing will be appropriate for the intended surface and will meet applicable EPA requirements.



10.7 Pacifier Hygiene Procedures

- Each pacifier is
 - Labeled with the child's full name
 - Stored individually
 - In a labeled container
 - In a designated area within the classroom cabinet

If a pacifier becomes soiled:

- It must be washed with soap and water
- Disinfected with the
- Allowed to dry before reuse

Pacifiers:

- Are not shared under any circumstances
- Are maintained clean and in good condition

SECTION 11: REST & SLEEP PROCEDURES

11.1 General Rest Requirements.

- All children will have rest time/ nap time
- Children are not required to sleep but should remain:
 - Quiet
 - In their designated rest space

Staff will maintain a calm and structured environment during rest periods.

11.2 Supervision During Rest Time

Children remain under sight and sound supervision at all times during rest periods.

Staff:

- Remains present in the classroom
- Is positioned to observe all children
- Maintains required teacher-child ratios

Attendance is verified:

- Before rest time
- After rest time

11.3 Infant Sleep Requirements (Safe Sleep)

Semillas Preschool follows Texas Minimum Standards and applicable safe sleep practices for infants.



- Infants will always be placed in a face-up sleeping position in their own individually assigned crib.
- A different sleeping position will only be used when Semillas Preschool has a completed Infant Sleep Exception Form that includes a signed statement from the infant's health-care professional stating that the alternative sleeping position is medically necessary.
- An infant who is developmentally able to roll independently from back to stomach and from stomach to back may assume a preferred sleeping position after the infant has initially been placed face-up for sleep.
- Infants will sleep on a firm, flat crib mattress with a tightly fitted sheet.
- Only one infant will be placed in each crib.
- Cribs will remain free of blankets, pillows, stuffed toys, bumper pads, sleep positioners, loose bedding, and other soft or loose objects.
- Sleep positioners are not permitted.
- Infants will not be swaddled for sleep or rest at Semillas Preschool.
- Pacifiers may be used as long as they are not attached to the infant, the infant's clothing, a cord, a stuffed animal, or another object.
- If a pacifier falls out while an infant is sleeping, it will not be reinserted unless the infant is awake.
- Nothing will be permitted to cover an infant's face or head while sleeping.
- Infants will be actively observed while sleeping.
- If an infant falls asleep in a car seat, swing, bouncer, or other restrictive device, the infant will be moved to the infant's crib as soon as possible.
- Awake infants will receive supervised tummy time several times throughout the day.

11.4 Infant Crib Requirements

Each infant will have an individually assigned crib.

Cribs will:

- Be labeled with the child's name.
- Include the child's photograph and date of birth according to Semillas Preschool procedures.
- Contain only a tightly fitted crib sheet while the infant is sleeping.
- Be maintained in a safe, clean, and sanitary condition.
- Meet applicable crib safety requirements.

11.5 Rest Equipment Children 12 Months and Older

Children 12 months of age and older will rest on individually assigned and labeled cots.

- Each cot will be assigned to one child.



- Cots will be arranged to allow caregivers to move between them and maintain active supervision.
- Cots will be arranged head-to-toe to help reduce the spread of illness.
- Rest equipment will be cleaned and sanitized daily.
- Bedding will be washed weekly, whenever soiled, and before being used by another child.
- Children's faces and heads will remain uncovered during rest.
- Classroom lighting may be dimmed to promote rest but will never be completely dark.
- Staff will maintain continuous sight-and-sound supervision throughout the rest period.

11.6 Nap Materials

Parents are responsible for providing:

- A blanket specified by Semillas Preschool for children 12 months of age and older.

Optional:

- One small, age-appropriate comfort item approved by Semillas Preschool.

All nap and comfort items needs to:

- Be clearly labeled with the child's full name.
- Be used only by the assigned child.
- Be stored separately to prevent cross-contamination.

Parent-provided bedding will be sent home according to the school's established washing schedule and whenever additional laundering is necessary.

SECTION 12: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & SAFETY PROCEDURES

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of severe or inclement weather conditions that may require a school closure, Semillas Preschool will follow the decisions made by the Houston Independent School District (HISD). If HISD announces a school closure due to weather conditions, Semillas Preschool will also be closed.

Families will be notified by email and school platform with any updates regarding school closures or delayed openings

12.1 Emergency Preparedness Plan

Semillas Preschool maintains a written Emergency Preparedness Plan in accordance with Texas Child Care Regulation requirements.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan addresses, as applicable:

- Emergency evacuation.
- Emergency relocation.



- Sheltering and severe weather.
- Lockdown for a volatile or endangering person.
- Fire emergencies.
- Gas leaks and hazardous conditions.
- Power outages.
- Medical emergencies.
- Emergency communication.
- Reunification and release of children.
- Continuation of care and supervision during an emergency.

Emergency preparedness drills will be conducted as follows:

- Fire drills will be practiced every month. Children must be able to safely evacuate the building within three minutes.
- Severe-weather sheltering drills will be practiced at least four times during each calendar year.
- Lockdown drills for a volatile or endangering person on the premises or in the area will be practiced at least four times during each calendar year.

All required drills will be documented according to Texas Child Care Regulation requirements and Semillas Preschool emergency preparedness procedures.

12.2 Fire Emergency, Evacuation, Relocation, and Reunification Procedures

Fire drills are conducted monthly at varied times.

In the event of a fire, smoke, the first responsibility of all staff is to immediately evacuate

Evacuation Procedures

Teachers will follow the primary evacuation route posted in each classroom. If the primary route is blocked or unsafe, staff will immediately use the designated secondary evacuation route.

The Lead Teacher will lead the group and take the classroom's Emergency Bag, Emergency Binder, clipboard and personal phone when immediately accessible

The Assistant Teacher will check the classroom, attached restroom, and all other classroom areas; confirm that no child has been left behind; and remain at the back of the evacuation group.

A name-to-face count will be completed:

- Before leaving the classroom
- Upon reaching the designated reunion point
- Before and after relocating or moving the group to another area
- Upon returning to the classroom.



Every child must be visually identified and accounted for during each name-to-face count. Staff will keep children together, prevent children from running, and maintain continuous supervision throughout the emergency. All children must be safely evacuated from the building within three minutes.

Infant Evacuation Procedures

Infants will be evacuated using the classroom's assigned evacuation cribs. No more than four infants may be transported in each evacuation crib.

For an infant classroom with up to eight infants, the Lead Teacher will push the first evacuation crib, and the Assistant Teacher will push the second evacuation crib.

For an infant classroom with nine infants and three assigned staff members, The lead teacher and assistant teacher will push an evacuation crib containing no more than four infants, and the third Assistant Teacher will safely carry the ninth infant using the baby carrier.

Infants will be accounted for as they are placed in an evacuation crib, immediately before leaving the classroom, upon arrival at the designated safe area, and each time the group is moved.

Before leaving, the assigned Assistant Teacher will check the classroom, sleep area, diapering area, and all other classroom areas to confirm that no infant has been left behind.

Reunion and Relocation

After reaching the designated outdoor reunion point, children will remain with their assigned teachers and under continuous supervision. Staff will wait for instructions from the Director.

The Director will determine whether the children and staff may safely return to the building or must relocate to the designated alternate shelter.

Designated Relocation Point:

Hank's Gym
5320 Elm St.
Houston, TX 77081

When relocation is required, a name-to-face count will be completed before leaving the reunion point, immediately upon arriving at the relocation point, and each time the group is moved.

Staff will continue to provide appropriate care and continuous supervision using the available emergency supplies, records, and equipment until every child has been safely released or the emergency has concluded.



Emergency Communication and Parent Notification

The Director or designated administrator will communicate with the fire department, police, emergency responders, and other appropriate authorities.

Will provide responding authorities with the school's name and address, information regarding the emergency, the number of children and staff involved, and the location of the designated reunion or relocation point.

Parents will be notified through the school communication platform and by email.

Additional updates will be provided when children and staff have safely reached the designated reunion point or relocation point and when they have safely returned to their classrooms, when applicable.

The designated relocation point is identified in the Operational Policies, Parent Handbook, classroom Emergency Plans, and applicable emergency information.

Reunification and Release of Children

Children will remain with their assigned teachers and under continuous supervision until released to an authorized adult.

A child may be released only to:

- The child's parent or legal guardian;
- A designated emergency contact; or
- Another individual authorized and identified in the child's enrollment records.

Staff must verify the identity and authorization of the person receiving the child before releasing the child. Each release must be documented according to Semillas established sign-out and dismissal procedures.

12.3 Fire Safety Equipment

Fire extinguishers are:

- Accessible
- Inspected monthly
- Professionally serviced annually

Extinguishers are located: two in each hallway and one in the kitchen.

Instructions on how to use them are posted next to each fire extinguisher.

Recall PASS:

1. Pull the pin
2. Aim at the base of the flame
3. Squeeze the handle
4. Sweep back and forth

The fire extinguisher and carbon monoxide are checked monthly.



Carbon monoxide monitors are located at each classroom, in administrative areas, Gym, Library.

The panic buttons are checked monthly.

Smoke detectors are:

- Maintained according to manufacturer and regulatory standards

Sprinkler systems are:

- Maintained and inspected in accordance with fire safety requirements

Documentation of inspections and maintenance are kept on the Inspection binder at the office and available for review.

12.4 Severe Weather/ Sheltering Procedures

Severe weather sheltering drills will be conducted at least four times during each calendar year to ensure that staff and children are familiar with emergency procedures.

School administration will closely monitor weather alerts and local emergency notifications.

- If a severe weather or tornado WATCH is issued for the area, outdoor activities such as recess will be suspended, and staff will be notified to prepare for the possibility of moving children to the designated safe areas.
- If a tornado WARNING is issued or a tornado is sighted in the area, a warning signal will be announced, and all children and staff will immediately move to the designated safe areas. Children will sit in the protective position as instructed by staff.
- All students and staff will remain in the designated shelter areas until the warning has been lifted and it is safe to return to normal activities.

Communication with Families

If a severe weather or tornado warning occurs close to dismissal time, and if time and connectivity allow, the school will notify families by the school platform and text message that children have been moved to the designated safe areas.

Children will not be dismissed during an active severe weather or tornado warning. Dismissal will resume once the warning has been lifted and conditions are safe.

Severe Weather Drill Procedures

When a severe weather sheltering drill is announced:

- Staff will gather all children and conduct a name-to-face count.
- The Lead Teacher will take the classroom emergency materials and communication devices and lead the children to the classroom's designated shelter area.



- The Assistant Teacher will check the classroom, restroom, and other classroom areas; confirm that no child has been left behind; assist children; and accompany the group to the shelter area.
- Classrooms with an assigned interior bathroom will move into that bathroom. Classrooms without an interior bathroom will move to their assigned interior shelter area or safe corner, away from windows
- A name-to-face count will be conducted before moving to the shelter area, upon arrival, and each time the group is moved.
- Children will be placed in a low, protected position and instructed to cover their heads and necks with their hands and arms
- Staff will maintain continuous supervision, keep children calm, and provide reassurance throughout the drill.
- Children and staff will remain in the designated shelter area until the official “All Clear” has been announced by the Director

Infant Classroom Procedures

Infants will be placed in the classroom’s assigned evacuation cribs and moved to the designated interior shelter area.

Each evacuation crib may hold a maximum of four infants. An infant who cannot be placed in an evacuation crib will be held securely by the assigned office staff

Infants will be positioned far away from windows. Staff will protect the infants’ heads and necks as much as possible and maintain continuous sight-and-sound supervision.

A name-to-face count will be completed before moving, immediately upon arrival at the shelter area, and every time the group is moved.

Children in Common Areas or on the Playground

Children who are in a common area will be guided to the nearest designated interior shelter area, away from windows

When children are on the playground, staff will stop all activities, gather the children, conduct a name-to-face count, and bring them inside through the nearest safe entrance. Then children will be moved directly to their classroom’s designated bathroom or interior shelter area.

Another name-to-face count will be completed immediately upon reaching the designated shelter area.

Administrative Responsibilities



The Director will monitor official weather alerts and emergency communications and provide instructions to staff through the intercom.

Administrative staff will bring the necessary emergency contact information and administrative emergency materials and will maintain communication with emergency authorities when necessary.

Detailed classroom assignments, staff positioning, emergency materials, and designated shelter locations are described in the Severe Weather Procedures Drill

12.5 Lockdown Procedures

Lockdown drills will be conducted at least four times during each calendar year to ensure that children and staff are familiar with the school's emergency procedures.

A lockdown may be initiated when an endangering person or another immediate threat is present inside the school, on school property, or in the surrounding area. When a lockdown is announced, all staff must immediately follow the established classroom or common-area lockdown procedures.

Classroom Lockdown Procedure

When a lockdown is announced:

- Staff will gather all children and move them to the classroom's designated secure area.
- Classrooms with an assigned interior bathroom will move the children into that bathroom.
- Classrooms without an interior bathroom will move children to the designated secure area.
- The Lead Teacher will take the Emergency Bag, Emergency Binder, tablet, radio, clipboard
- The Lead Teacher will gather the children and lead them to the designated secure area.
- The Assistant Teacher will lock the classroom door, close curtains, turn off the lights, check the classroom and restroom, and confirm that no child has been left behind.
- The Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher will conduct a name-to-face count upon entering the designated secure area. Every child must be visually identified and accounted for.
- All radios, tablets, phones, and other electronic devices will be silenced.
- Staff will maintain continuous sight-and-sound supervision and keep children calm, quiet, low, and out of sight.
- Staff will provide developmentally appropriate reassurance and support while maintaining silence and security.



- Children and staff will remain in the secured area until the Director or designated administrator announces the official “All Clear”

Children Outside Their Assigned Classroom

If children and teachers are outside their assigned classroom when a lockdown is announced, they must not cross the building to return to their classroom.

Staff will move the children to the nearest designated secure room or lockdown area. Once inside, staff will:

- Secure and lock the door
- Turn off the light
- Silence all electronic devices
- Conduct a name-to-face count;
- Keep children calm, quiet, low, and out of sight
- Remain secured until the official “All Clear”

Children located in the gym, library, or another common area will follow the specific secure-location procedures established in the Lockdown Drill Procedures

Administrative Responsibilities

During an actual lockdown, the Director or designated administrator will:

- Contact 911
- Announce the lockdown;
- Monitor official information and directions from emergency authorities;
- Announce the official “All Clear”
- Coordinate communication with families and any necessary reunification procedures.

Communication with Families

During an actual lockdown, the Director or designated administrator will communicate with families when it is safe to do so and when such communication will not interfere with instructions from law enforcement or compromise the safety of children and staff.

Families will receive information through the school communication platform, and email. Information shared during the emergency may be limited to protect the children, staff, and emergency response.

Families must not come to the school during an active lockdown unless instructed to do so by school administration or emergency authorities.



12.6 Relocation point:

Hank's Gym
5320 Elm St.
Houston, TX 77081

- The Director or designated administrator will determine when relocation is necessary and will provide instructions to staff.
- Children will remain with their assigned teachers at the relocation point until they may safely return to the school or are released to an authorized adult according to Semillas Preschool's emergency reunification procedures.
- Families will be notified of the relocation location and reunification instructions when it is safe and appropriate to communicate.

Evacuation, relocation, emergency communication, continued care, and family reunification procedures are incorporated into each applicable emergency procedure within this section.

12.7 Power Outage

In the event of a power outage, the Director will assess whether the school can continue to operate safely.

Communication

During a power outage:

- Office staff will use cell phones, and school platform to receive and communicate emergency instructions.
- Emergency contact information for children and staff will be maintained in printed form and kept readily accessible.
- Portable battery backup is available for essential communication devices.

The administration will provide families with available information regarding:

- The status of school operations;
- Any anticipated delay or interruption;
- Early dismissal or child pick-up instructions;
- Evacuation or relocation, when necessary; and
- The resumption of normal operations.

Continued Operation, Dismissal, or Relocation

A brief power outage will not automatically require evacuation, relocation, or dismissal if the school can continue to provide safe care and supervision.

If the outage compromises the safe operation of the school, the Director may:

- Suspend or modify school activities;



- Initiate early dismissal and contact families for child pick-up;
- Evacuate children and staff to the designated outdoor reunion point; or
- Relocate children and staff to the designated emergency relocation point.

If relocation is necessary, children and staff will relocate to:

Hank's Gym

5320 Elm Street

Houston, TX 77081

Staff will maintain continuous supervision and conduct a name-to-face count before leaving the school, immediately upon arrival at the relocation point, and each time the group is moved.

Children will remain with their assigned teachers until they safely return to the school or are released to an authorized adult according to Semillas Preschool's emergency reunification and sign-out procedures.

Restoration of Operations

Once power has been restored, the Director will determine whether the building and its essential systems are safe for continued occupancy.

Families and staff will be notified through Brightwheel, and email if:

- Normal operations may resume;
- The school will remain closed or dismiss early;
- Children and staff have safely relocated; or
- Children may be picked up from the school or designated relocation point.

SECTION 13: FACILITY, SAFETY, & ENVIRONMENT

13.1 Building Safety

- All entrances to the building remain locked
- Access is controlled through a secured entry system (code access)
- Entry codes are changed periodically or as needed for safety
- Primary and secondary exits must remain clear and unobstructed at all times
- Staff wear identification (name tags) at all times while on duty
- The facility is monitored to ensure compliance with safety standards

13.2 Playground Safety

- A designated staff member conducts a daily playground inspection
- A Playground Equipment Checklist is completed and reviewed monthly
- All playgrounds are fenced and supervised at all times
- Teacher-child ratios are maintained at all times
- Children are always within sight and sound of staff



Playground Safety Rules:

- Children must use equipment safely and appropriately
- Children must go down slides feet first and facing forward
- Unsafe behaviors such as climbing improperly, jumping from equipment, or rough play are not permitted
- Staff actively engage with children and monitor play at all times

13.3 Classroom Safety

- Electrical outlets are covered when not in use
- All cords are secured and out of children's reach
- Classrooms are cleaned and sanitized daily, including high-touch surfaces
- Personal belongings (such as purses) are stored in locked cabinets
- All items (cots, mats, cribs, bedding) are labeled with the child's name
- Bedding is washed at least weekly or as needed
- Food will only be present in classrooms during scheduled meals, snacks, feeding routines, or approved supervised activities and will be handled and stored according to Semillas Preschool food-safety procedures.
- Toys will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Toys or equipment that have been placed in a child's mouth or contaminated by bodily secretions or excrement will be removed from use and sanitized before being used by another child.
- Trash is removed regularly, especially after diapering and food service
- Classrooms are inspected daily for safety hazards and choking risks
- All cleaning products and hazardous materials are stored in locked cabinets

13.4 Storage Rules

- All hazardous materials (cleaners, disinfectants, chemicals) are stored in locked cabinets
- Items are labeled clearly and kept out of children's reach
- Storage will maintain all required clearance from ceilings, sprinkler heads, fire-safety equipment, electrical panels, and exits in accordance with fire-code
- Emergency supplies are stored in designated, accessible locations
- No unsafe items are accessible to children

13.5 First Aid Kits

- Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit stored in a designated locked cabinet
- First aid kits are checked monthly and replenished



- Each classroom has a flashlight that is checked monthly
- Emergency bags are available in each classroom and used during drills and outdoor activities
- Office staff monitor and restock supplies monthly.

13.6 Fire & Carbon Monoxide Devices

- Fire extinguishers are located throughout the facility, two in each hallway, one in the kitchen
- Instructions for use (PASS method: Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep) are posted near each extinguisher
- Fire extinguishers are inspected monthly
- Carbon monoxide detectors are installed throughout the building and checked monthly
- Panic buttons and safety systems are tested regularly
- Staff are trained on the proper use of fire safety equipment annually

13.7 Building Access and Security

Access to the facility is controlled to ensure the safety of all children.

- All individuals entering the building are required to follow check-in procedures
- Unauthorized individuals are not permitted access

Staff ensure:

- Doors remain secure
- Children are not able to exit the building unsupervised

13.8 Visitor Procedures

All visitors are required to comply with safety procedures.

- Visitors will:
 - Check in at the front office
 - Sign in
 - Receive and wear a visitor badge
- Identification is required

Visitors are required to:

- Remain under staff supervision
- Will not be left alone with children
- Follow all school policies



13.9 Video Surveillance

Semillas Preschool utilizes video surveillance systems to support safety and security.

- Cameras are installed in:
 - Classrooms
 - Hallways
 - Common areas

Cameras are not installed in:

- Bathrooms
- Diapering areas
- Private spaces

Use of Recordings

- Video recordings are maintained for internal safety, security, and incident-review purposes.
- Access to recordings is limited to authorized administrative personnel.
- Video recordings will not be copied, distributed, or released to parents or third parties except when required or authorized by applicable law

Nothing in this policy limits a parent's right under Texas Minimum Standards to view an available video recording of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's child. Any such viewing will be handled in accordance with applicable Texas Child Care Regulation requirements, including requirements protecting the privacy of other children appearing in the recording.

13.10 Hazard Prevention

Staff ensure:

- Walkways and exits are clear and unobstructed
- No tripping hazards are present
- Electrical panels remain accessible
- Hazardous materials are inaccessible to children

Regular safety checks are conducted.

13.11 Maintenance of Equipment

All equipment is required to be:

- Safe and in good condition
- Appropriate for the age group

Damaged or unsafe equipment will be:



- Removed immediately from use
- Reported for repair or replacement

13.12 Safety Inspections and Walkthroughs

Semillas Preschool conducts routine safety inspections.

- Monthly safety walkthroughs are completed
- Inspections include:
 - Exits and pathways
 - Fire safety equipment
 - Environmental hazards
 - General facility condition

Documentation of inspections are:

- Completed
- Maintained on file
- Available for review

13.13 Storage of Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials is:

- Stored in locked and in designated areas
- Clearly labeled
- Inaccessible to children

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are:

- Maintained on safety binder
- Available for staff reference in the cabinet or storage

13.14 Waste Disposal

General Waste

- All garbage and waste will be kept inaccessible to children at all times.
- Trash containers will be lined and maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Containers are covered to prevent access by children, odors, insects, rodents, or other pests.
- Waste will be removed from classrooms and child-care areas daily and more frequently whenever necessary to maintain sanitary conditions.
- Garbage will not be allowed to accumulate inside or outside the building.



Diaper Waste

- Containers used for soiled disposable diapers have a cover
- Soiled diapers will be disposed of in an individually sealed bag and in the designated diaper disposal container
- Diaper waste will always remain inaccessible to children.

Soiled Clothing

- Clothing contaminated with urine, feces, vomit, blood, or other bodily fluids will be placed directly into a sealed plastic bag and sent home with the child.
- Soiled clothing will not be rinsed in classroom, restroom, or handwashing sinks
- When appropriate, solid fecal matter may be carefully disposed of into the toilet before the clothing is placed in the sealed bag.

Blood and Bodily Fluids

When handling blood, vomit, or other bodily fluids that may contain blood:

- Staff will use disposable gloves.
- Gloves contaminated with blood will be placed in a tied, sealed, closed plastic bag and discarded immediately.
- Staff will wash their hands with soap and running water after removing and disposing of gloves.
- Materials or surfaces contaminated with blood or bodily fluids will be cleaned and sanitized

Contaminated and Hazardous Materials

- Contaminated disposable materials will be contained and discarded out of the contact with children
- Potentially hazardous products and materials will be used, stored, and disposed of according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Any sharp medical item, if used, will not be placed in regular classroom trash and will be disposed of in an appropriate puncture-resistant sharps container, labeled and following the disposal instructions and the local requirements

13.15 Outdoor Environment and Playground Safety

Outdoor areas are maintained to ensure safety.

- Play areas required to be:
 - Free of hazards
 - Properly enclosed
 - Supervised at all times

Equipment is required to be:

- Age-appropriate
- In safe condition

Emergency exit routes are required to remain:



- Clear
- Accessible

13.16 Water Activities

Semillas Preschool provides water activities during the summer months in a safe and supervised environment. These activities are designed for play and cooling purposes and do not involve the use of pools or standing bodies of water.

- Water activities include sprinkler play, water tables, and similar activities
- Semillas Preschool does not use or install pools or wading pools on site

Clothing & Preparation:

- Children must arrive with sunscreen already applied from home
- Children must wear water-appropriate shoes that secure at the heel
 - Crocs without back straps and flip-flops are not permitted
- Children must bring:
 - A change of clothes
 - A towel
 - Any additional items required by the classroom
- All items must be clearly labeled with the child's full name

Safety & Supervision:

- Staff maintain active supervision and required ratios at all times
- Children remain within sight and sound supervision
- Water is turned off immediately after each group completes its activity
- All toys and equipment are cleaned and sanitized after use

General Guidelines:

- Participation in water activities follows the school's health and safety policies
- Parents will be informed of scheduled water activity days

13.17 Animals and Pets

For the safety and health of all children:

- Pets are not permitted on school premises

13.18 Weapon and Violence-Free Environment

- The possession, use, or threat of any firearm or illegal weapon is strictly prohibited on school property, including parking areas and school-sponsored events
- This policy applies to all individuals, including those with concealed carry permits
- Any behavior that threatens the safety of children or staff is not permitted



13.19 Gang-Free Zone Notice

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone.

Criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity committed within a gang-free zone are subject to harsher penalties as provided by Texas law.

SECTION 14: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & COMPLIANCE

14.1 Compliance with Licensing Regulations

Semillas Preschool operates in accordance with applicable:

- Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) requirements.
- Texas Child Care Regulation (CCR) requirements.
- Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers, Chapter 746.
- Other applicable state and local health, safety, fire, and regulatory requirements.

Staff are responsible for understanding and following all policies and procedures applicable to their assigned responsibilities

14.2 New Employee Orientation and Required Training

Semillas Preschool will provide orientation and required training to all new employees upon hire and before they are assigned unsupervised responsibility with children.

The Director or designated administrative staff will review the following topics with each new employee:

- Overview of the Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers;
- Overview of Semillas Preschool's Operational Policies;
- Discipline and guidance practices;
- Procedures for the release of children;
- Prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including risk factors, warning signs, reporting procedures, and available community training resources;
- Emergency Preparedness Plan and procedures for emergencies, including fire, severe weather, lockdown, shelter-in-place, toxic fumes, volatile persons, explosion, and severe injury or illness of a child or adult;
- Location and use of fire extinguishers and first-aid equipment;
- Medication procedures, when applicable;
- Prevention and response to food-related emergencies and allergic reactions;
- Building and physical premises safety, including protection from electrical hazards, bodies of water, vehicular traffic, playground hazards, and other safety risks;



- Handling, storing, and disposing of hazardous materials.

As part of the orientation process, each new employee will receive a physical tour of the school. During this tour, the Director or designated staff member will show the employee the location of fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, emergency exits, evacuation routes, shelter areas, medication storage areas, allergy information, hazardous material storage areas, classrooms, playgrounds, and other important safety areas.

New employees will participate in orientation and training during their first week of employment. This may include review of written policies, in-person training, classroom observation, shadowing experienced staff, and direct guidance from the Director or administrative team. Completion of orientation will be documented, with the Orientation acknowledgement form, after completing the training, and will be saved in each staff personal file.

Semillas does not provide transportation for children. Employees are not permitted to transport children in personal or school vehicles as part of their employment responsibilities. Therefore, the transportation portion of the orientation requirement is not applicable to the operation.

14.3 Staff Training and Professional Requirements

Semillas Preschool will ensure that all caregivers complete their required training hours by maintaining a yearly training plan, a staff training checklist, and an individual training record for each employee.

Upon hire, each new caregiver will begin the required pre-service training through ProSolutions Training. The first 8 hours will be completed during the new employee orientation week, before the caregiver is assigned responsibility for a group of children or counted in ratio. Semillas will track each employee's pre-service progress through a training log kept in the employee's personnel file.

For annual training, Semillas Preschool will create an annual staff development calendar. This will include a yearly training week for staff, monthly curriculum meetings, and ongoing professional development throughout the school year. Some training will be provided directly by the Director, other training will be provided by approved specialized professionals.

Pediatric First Aid and CPR and any other required specialized training is required within the 90-day period. The Director or designated administrative staff will review training every



month and remind staff by email of any pending training hours that need to be completed. Staff will be required to submit certificates for all complete training courses, and copies will be saved in their personnel files.

14.4 Staff Identification Badges (Name Tags)

As a Semillas Preschool safety, security, and identification policy, all staff members are required to wear an official Semillas Preschool identification badge while on duty.

Staff identification badges include the following information:

- A recent photograph of the staff member
- The staff member's full name
- The staff member's assigned classroom or position
- The name of the school (Semillas Preschool)

All staff members are required to wear their identification badge at all times while working inside the school building or on school grounds.

Badges remain visible and may not be removed, altered, or covered during working hours.

If a badge is lost or damaged, the staff member is to notify the administration so that a replacement can be issued.

14.5 Additional Staff Requirements

In addition to wearing identification badges, all staff members are required to comply with the following requirements while working at the school:

- Maintain professional appearance and attire appropriate for working with young children.
- Follow all health, safety, and supervision policies established by the school and required by Texas Child Care Licensing.
- Maintain active supervision of children at all times (sight and sound supervision).
- Complete all required background checks and licensing clearances before working with children.
- Complete all required training hours and professional development as mandated by Texas Child Care Licensing.
- Maintain current certification in CPR and First Aid when required by licensing standards.
- Immediately report any safety concern, injury, illness, or incident to school administration

14.6 Reporting Requirements

Semillas Preschool complies with all reporting requirements established by licensing.



The following are to be reported as required:

- Serious incidents or injuries
- Abuse or neglect concerns

Reports are required to be:

- Completed accurately
- Submitted within required timelines
- Maintained on file

14.7 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Procedures for Parents to Contact Child Care Regulation (CCR), DFPS Child Abuse Hotline, and CCR Website

At Semillas Preschool, the safety and protection of every child in our care is our highest priority. In accordance with the Texas Health and Human Services Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers, all staff members participate in annual training focused on recognizing and preventing child abuse and neglect.

Our school is committed to ensuring that both staff and families are informed about:

- Indicators that may suggest a child could be experiencing abuse or neglect
- Preventive measures that help protect children
- Resources available for intervention and support

Parents and staff may access additional information regarding abuse and neglect through the following resources:

- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) – Reporting Abuse
- Texas Health and Human Services – Child Care Licensing Contact Page

Whenever appropriate, Semillas Preschool will work in collaboration with local community organizations, Child Care Regulation (CCR), and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to provide support for children and families when concerns arise.

If you believe a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect, please take action using one of the reporting options listed below.

Reporting Procedures for Parents and Staff

Contact information:

-  1-800-252-5400
-  www.txabusehotline.org

All reports are handled with strict confidentiality and in compliance with state regulations.

To Contact Child Care Regulation (CCR) Directly Office:



1330 East Forieth

Zip 77022

Phone 713 287 3238

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/child-care-regulation>

Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school administration regarding any concerns. However, families always retain the right to contact Child Care Regulation (CCR) or DFPS directly if they believe it is necessary.

14.8 Legal Reporting Requirements for Staff

Any Semillas Preschool employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected must make the required report directly to the appropriate reporting authority in accordance with Texas law.

Employees who meet the Texas definition of a professional reporter must make the report no later than the 24 hour after first suspecting that the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

The duty to report may not be delegated to or substituted by another person.

Reporting a concern internally to the Director, supervisor, administrator, or another Semillas Preschool employee does not replace the individual employee's legal duty to make the required report.

When the circumstances present an immediate or life-threatening danger, staff will contact 911 or the appropriate emergency authority in addition to completing any required abuse or neglect report.

Semillas Preschool will fully cooperate with any authorized investigation and will maintain confidentiality in accordance with applicable law.

14.9 Confidentiality of Records

- Child and family information will be:
 - Kept secure
 - Accessible only to authorized personnel

Information may only be disclosed:

- To the child's parent or legal guardian
- To licensing authorities
- When required by law

Staff is required to maintain confidentiality at all times.



14.10 Documentation and Record Keeping

Records are required to include:

- Attendance records
- Incident reports
- Medication logs
- Emergency documentation
- Inspection and safety records

All records are:

- Complete and accurate
- Maintained in an organized manner
- Available for inspection

14.11 Policy Changes

Semillas Preschool will review its Operational Policies periodically and update them as necessary to maintain regulatory compliance and appropriate school operations.

When an Operational Policy or applicable item in the child-care Enrollment Agreement is changed:

- Employees will be notified of the change.
- Parents and legal guardians will be notified of the change in writing.
- The Parent Handbook will be updated when necessary to remain consistent with the Operational Policies.
- Staff will receive training or instruction regarding revised procedures when applicable.
- At least one copy of the updated Operational Policies, applicable acknowledgment, or child-care Enrollment Agreement will be signed and dated for each family.
- The signed and dated updated information will be maintained in the child's record, or at least one copy for the family when permitted by Texas Minimum Standards.
- Current Operational Policies will remain available to families and staff as required.

Semillas Preschool reserves the right to update policies as necessary to maintain safe operations and compliance with applicable requirements.

14.12 Enforcement of Policies

Failure to comply with operational policies may result in:

- Corrective action
- Additional training
- Disciplinary action

Serious or repeated violations may result in:



- Termination of employment
- Reporting to appropriate authorities when required

14.13 Relationship to Parent Handbook

The Semillas Preschool Operational Policies serve as the governing policy and procedural document for the operation.

The Parent Handbook provides families with a parent-facing summary of applicable school policies and expectations and must remain consistent with the Operational Policies.

When the same policy or requirement is addressed in both documents, the Parent Handbook will communicate the same rule, requirement, expectation, or standard established in the Operational Policies, although the Parent Handbook may provide less operational detail.

In the event of an unintended discrepancy between the Operational Policies and the Parent Handbook, the Operational Policies will govern.

The Enrollment Agreement and Financial Agreement will govern financial obligations when specifically applicable

14.14 Final Statement of Compliance

Semillas Preschool is committed to maintaining a safe, compliant, and high-quality program.

All staff are responsible for:

- Upholding the standards outlined in this document
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all children
- Maintaining compliance with all applicable regulations

14.15 Parent Access to Child Care Regulation Information, Minimum Standards, and Compliance History

Parents and legal guardians may access information regarding Texas Child Care Regulation, the Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers, and Semillas Preschool's licensing and compliance history.

Texas Health and Human Services / Child Care Regulation

Parents may access the Texas Health and Human Services website and navigate to Child Care Regulation for information regarding licensed child-care operations, licensing requirements, regulations, and other Child Care Regulation resources.

Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers



Parents may access the current Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers online through the Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Regulation website by selecting Minimum Standards and Chapter 746, Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers.

A copy of the applicable Minimum Standards is also available for review through the Semillas Preschool office upon request.

Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline at:

1-800-252-5400

Online reporting information is also available through the Texas Abuse Hotline website.

In an emergency or life-threatening situation, 911 should be contacted immediately.

Child Care Regulation Contact Information

Parents may contact Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Regulation directly regarding questions, concerns, complaints, or licensing matters. Current Child Care Regulation contact information is available through the Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Regulation website and through the Semillas Preschool office.

Center Compliance History

Parents may review Semillas Preschool's licensing information, inspection results, and compliance history through the Search Texas Child Care online search tool by searching for the center by name or location.

Semillas Preschool will provide Child Care Regulation contact information and available inspection information to parents as required by Texas Minimum Standards.

14.16 Inclusive Services for Children with Special Care Needs

A child will not be denied participation solely because of a diagnosis, disability, developmental difference, or special care need. Each child's needs will be considered individually based on the information provided by the family and, when applicable, recommendations from qualified professionals.

Parents or legal guardians must inform Semillas Preschool of any medical, developmental, physical, behavioral, emotional, communication, or educational needs that may affect the child's care, safety, development, supervision, or participation in the program. Families must provide applicable medical information, professional recommendations, care plans, adaptive equipment instructions, or other documentation necessary for the school to appropriately support the child.

In accordance with Texas Minimum Standards, Semillas Preschool will:

- Provide accommodations recommended by a health-care professional or by a qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or Early Childhood Intervention program.



- Utilize, as recommended, adaptive equipment provided to the center for the child's use.
- At the parent's request and with parental approval, allow a child receiving early intervention or special education services to receive those services at Semillas Preschool from a qualified service provider.
- Plan activities that promote the inclusion and participation of children with and without special care needs.
- Adapt equipment, procedures, activities, communication methods, and teaching strategies as necessary to support the child in a natural environment.
- Collaborate with parents and, when authorized by the parent, qualified professionals regarding appropriate strategies and supports for the child.

Any outside professional providing services at Semillas Preschool must comply with applicable school requirements regarding access, identification, confidentiality, background checks, supervision, and safety.

Semillas Preschool will consider reasonable accommodations and modifications based on the individual needs of the child. A diagnosis alone will not be used as the basis for determining whether the program can serve a child.

If concerns arise regarding the school's ability to safely and appropriately meet a child's individual needs, the Director will review the circumstances with the family, consider relevant professional recommendations, and evaluate reasonable accommodations or modifications that may support the child's continued participation.

Any decision regarding continued enrollment will be based on an individualized assessment of the child's needs, the supports and reasonable modifications considered or implemented, the health and safety of the children and staff, and Semillas Preschool's ability to provide care in accordance with applicable law and Texas Minimum Standards.

14.17 Parent Rights

Semillas Preschool recognizes and protects the rights of parents and legal guardians in accordance with Texas Child Care Regulation Minimum Standards.

A parent or legal guardian of a child in care has the right to:

1. Enter and examine Semillas Preschool during its hours of operation without advance notice.
2. File a complaint regarding the center.
3. Review the center's publicly accessible records.
4. Review the center's written records concerning the parent's own child in accordance with applicable Texas Child Care Regulation requirements.



5. Receive available Texas Health and Human Services inspection reports for Semillas Preschool and information regarding how to access the center's compliance history online.
6. Have Semillas Preschool comply with a valid court order signed by a judge that restricts another parent or individual from visiting or removing the child from the center.
7. Receive contact information for Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Regulation, including the applicable department name, address, and telephone number.
8. View an available video recording of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's child in accordance with Texas Minimum Standards. When another child appears in the recording, Semillas Preschool will follow all applicable notification and privacy requirements. A parent may not retain any portion of a recording depicting a child who is not the parent's child.
9. Obtain a copy of Semillas Preschool's policies and procedures.
10. Review, upon request, applicable staff training records and any in-house training curriculum maintained by Semillas Preschool.
11. Exercise these rights without retaliation by Semillas Preschool.

Parents may contact the Director with questions regarding these rights or may contact Child Care Regulation directly.

14.18 Employee Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Policy

Semillas Preschool maintains this policy to protect children and employees from vaccine-preventable diseases in accordance with Texas Child Care Regulation Minimum Standards.

Vaccines Required by Semillas Preschool

At this time, Semillas Preschool has not designated any specific vaccine as a mandatory condition of employment. If Semillas determines that a specific employee vaccine is required under this policy, affected employees will be notified in writing of the vaccine requirement.

Compliance

If a vaccine is designated as required by Semillas Preschool, each affected employee must receive the required vaccine unless the employee qualifies for an exemption under this policy.

Exemptions

An employee may request an exemption from a vaccine required under this policy because of:



- A medical condition identified as a contraindication or precaution by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; or
- Reasons of conscience, including a religious belief.

An employee requesting an exemption must submit the applicable written request or supporting documentation required by Semillas Preschool and applicable law.

Protective Measures for Exempt Employees

When necessary based on the employee's level of risk and direct exposure to children, Semillas Preschool may require an exempt employee to follow reasonable protective measures to reduce the risk of exposing children to a vaccine-preventable disease.

Protective measures may include:

- Use of appropriate personal protective equipment, including gloves or masks when indicated.
- Follow infection-control precautions.
- Exclusion from the center or direct contact with children when required by applicable public-health guidance or law.

Protective measures will be based on the specific circumstances and level of risk.

Non-Retaliation

Semillas Preschool will not discriminate or retaliate against an employee because the employee has an approved medical or conscience-based exemption.

Requiring reasonable protective measures, including appropriate protective medical equipment, will not be considered retaliation when the measures are necessary to protect children from exposure to disease.

Documentation

Semillas Preschool will maintain a written or electronic record documenting each employee's compliance with, or exemption from, any vaccine requirement established under this policy.

Such records will be maintained confidentially in accordance with applicable personnel-record and privacy requirements.

Failure to Comply

An employee who is subject to a vaccine requirement under this policy and who fails to comply, does not qualify for an exemption, or fails to follow required protective measures will be subject to corrective action, or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, as appropriate and permitted by law.

14.19 Field Trips

Semillas Preschool does not conduct field trips away from the operation.

