Family Handbook



The Learning Center

at Nichols Hills United Methodist Church
1212 Bedford Drive • Nichols Hills • 73116
405.842.5325

ccottle@nicholshillsumc.org

Our mission is ***to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world***.



WELCOME

We welcome you to The Learning Center (TLC) at Nichols Hills United Methodist Church (NHUMC) and to the partnership to be shared during these early developmental years.

The need for quality care is growing and we are here to meet this need by providing the best care to the children and families of this community,

This handbook was designed to explain our program and policies. We hope that you will read it carefully and keep it for future reference.

We strongly encourage your participation, cooperation, comments, and support.

GENERAL INFORMATION

TLC is located at 1212 Bedford Drive. The main phone number is 405-842-5325. The director's email is ccottle@nicholshillsumc.org. Please feel free to contact us at any time and we will promptly reply.

TLC is open from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 1:59 p.m. on Fridays, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have three sessions: fall, spring, and summer. We re-enroll for each session, paying an enrollment fee of $100 per child per session. Children eight weeks up to five years of age are accepted. During the summer we will accept school-age children, ages five to eight with priority given to siblings currently enrolled.

There are six classrooms to separate children according to age and developmental needs. There are two playgrounds as well as an indoor area during inclement weather in our Fellowship Hall. During the Summer, we will have an additional classroom for ages Kindergarten through Second.

TLC will be closed the following days: Presidents Day, Martin Luther King Day, Spring Break Week, Good Friday, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Fall Break, the week of Thanksgiving, and for Winter Break which includes Christmas Day through New Year's Day. If one of the holidays falls on Saturday, TLC will be closed on Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on Monday. There are

no adjustments in tuition for holiday closings or breaks. There will be breaks in between each session. Those breaks will be posted at least 30 days prior.

TLC is operated under the Department of Human Services/Child Care Licensing regulations, City-County Health Department, as well as the Nichols Hills Fire Department. We maintain a Compliance File at the front desk for your review.

PROGRAM

MISSION STATEMENT

The Learning Center at Nichols Hills United Methodist Church is a non-profit program that seeks to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing and responsive environment where children are supported in their development and respected as individuals with unique personalities, abilities, temperaments, learning styles and talents.

The Nichols Hills United Methodist Church mission is ***to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world***.

PHILOSOPHY

A caring and nurturing environment will be provided with a developmentally age-appropriate program to set forth the foundation for learning experiences. Such experiences will be centered on a weekly theme. Classroom environments will be set up with interest centers, such as blocks, dramatic play, art, science, math, manipulatives and reading.

Each child is unique and has different needs and interests. Care will be given for each child to learn at his or her own pace and developmental level.

Parent participation is very important, and parents are welcome in the center at any time. We maintain an open-door policy.

GOALS

The goal of the staff is to provide an atmosphere which will promote growth in many different areas. Staff will work with parents to set realistic expectations for their child and explore ways to enhance the center's overall environment. Children will be given an opportunity to be independent, feel secure with adults, interact with peers and learn self-help skills.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND FEE POLICY



ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Priority placement is made for children who have siblings currently enrolled in TLC, TLC staff, and NHUMC members. Children from the community at-large are accepted for enrollment based on available space.

After taking a scheduled tour of the facility and confirmation of space availability, an enrollment fee must be paid. (See "Tuition Rates") Children must be enrolled a minimum of two days. This is best practice for the emotional development of the child.

The following documents are required before a child attends TLC: completed enrollment form, child information sheet, current immunization record and any legal documents (divorce, custody, etc.). A Compliance File Notification form is to be signed upon orientation to TLC. Enrollment fees are due each spring, summer and fall sessions. (See "Tuition Rates")

WITHDRAWAL/EXPULSION POLICY

When leaving TLC, a two-week notice must be given to the director. If proper notice is not given, any unused tuition will be forfeited for the month attended. The Center has the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for any reason, including, but not limited to:

- Non-payment or excessive late payment of fees and tuition
- Failure to follow the rules or guidelines outlined in the family handbook
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by the parent or child
- Inability of staff to meet the parent or child's physical or emotional needs.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is due the first working day of each month. Tuition and fees are enclosed in the enrollment packet. Payments are considered late if not paid by the close of business on the fifth day of each month. A late fee will be assessed at that time. (See "Tuition Rates")

RETURNED CHECKS

A $25 fee will be charged for all returned checks. If you have two returned items in a year, you will be required to make all future payments with money order, cashier's check or credit/debit cards (which carries a 3% fee.)

LATE PICK UP OF CHILDREN

An overtime fee will be assessed when children are left at TLC past closing time (2:30 p.m., 1:59 p.m. or 4 p.m.) The late fee will be charged for each child that is picked up late. After 3 p.m. or 4:30 p.m., the fees will double. Payment will be due at time of pick up and paid at the front desk. If payment is not received at that time, the child will not be allowed to attend until payment is made. (See “Tuition Rates”)

ABSENCES

There are no reduced rates for children who are ill or absent. If a child has an extended illness, two weeks or more, contact the Director to discuss possible financial arrangements. Children absent for two weeks without prior notice will be dropped from TLC enrollment.

RECEIPTS

Receipts will be printed upon request from parents. Parents may request end of the year statements for tax purposes at any time.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES/RELEASE

ARRIVAL

Parents must accompany children to specific doors and make sure that the teacher acknowledges that the child is present. Teachers sign children in and out daily. Children need to see their parent leave and say good-bye. Even when there are tears the child will adapt and trust that you will return. All children must be present by 9:15 a.m. each day. Failure to abide by the arrival time cutoff may result in termination of enrollment. If you are going to be tardy, please notify us. Any children who arrive after 10a.m. will not be able to attend school that day. Parents are asked to call TLC when their child will be absent.



DEPARTURE

Parents will retrieve their children at the same door that they were dropped off. There is a fifteen-minute window of time to pick up. We will charge late pick up fees starting at closing time. It is $1 a minute. The Nichols Hills Police Department will be called and Child Welfare notified if a parent is more than 30 minutes late picking up his/her child without communication to the program.

A child will be released only to persons identified on their enrollment form. Without proper identification and permission from parent, the child will not be released.

The staff in charge has the responsibility to see that children are safely supervised. If the person picking up a child comes in and appears to be under the influence, TLC staff reserves the right not to release the child. Someone else on the emergency pick up list will be notified. If this behavior is repeated, the child's enrollment will be terminated from TLC.

LEGAL CUSTODY/CONTACT INFORMATION

TLC cannot refuse to release a child to the child's parent or legal guardian who shares custody of the child unless a legal court document stating this is in our TLC files. It is strongly recommended that parents keep staff fully advised when experiencing custody issues. Legal documents will be kept confidential in the Director's Office.

Please contact TLC immediately of any changes in address or phone numbers. It is essential that current, up-to-date information is on file in case of an emergency. Child Welfare or local authorities will be contacted in the event a parent or guardian cannot be reached.

HEALTH

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunization records must be kept current. Exemptions are not accepted. If a shot cannot be administered due to illness, a doctor's note is required stating when it will be given. Failure to maintain current records will result in expulsion from TLC until immunizations are current or a doctor's note is provided with necessary information.

MEDICATION

TLC staff will administer medication provided by the parent/guardian only. Prescription meds must be in original container and clearly labeled with child's name. TLC staff will not administer another person's (including sibling) prescribed medicine. Siblings cannot share medication.

Medication will not be given if a medication form is not filled out by parent or if medicine is expired. A doctor's prescription must indicate accurate dosage for the child and for how long to administer the medication. Medications must be taken home daily.

TOO SICK TO GO TO SCHOOL

In order for a child to attend TLC, he or she must be well enough to participate in all activities. Children not able to play outdoors are not well enough to be at school.

Parents must notify TLC if the child has been exposed to or develops a contagious disease or illness. Following an absence for a contagious disease, a physician's written statement may be required for re-admittance to TLC. Notice will be provided to families regarding any diagnosis with respect to privacy issues.

Children displaying any of the following symptoms must remain out of the center for 24 hours free of symptoms and without fever reducing medicine.

- Unable to or too tired to participate in ALL activities
- Temperature 100 degrees or more
- Irritability
- Excessive Runny Nose (Clear, Yellow, or Green)
- Persistent Crying
- Vomiting
- Strep Throat
- Mouth Sores
- Pink Eye
- Scabies
- Tuberculosis
- Rubella
- Hepatitis
- Croop
- Diarrhea (two loose stools in 3 hours)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Shingles
- Chicken Pox
- Ring Worm



- Impetigo
- Rash (unknown/oozing)
- Head Lice
- Uncontrolled Coughing/Whooping Cough
- Hand Foot Mouth Disease

The director reserves the right to refuse admittance into TLC due to unknown illness even with a doctor's note. Teachers monitor each child's health upon arrival and throughout the day. Records are maintained regarding children whose families are contacted to pick up due to illness.

INJURIES

Accident reports will be given to parents when a child receives an injury while at TLC. If, in the opinion of TLC staff on duty, the injury warrants emergency treatment an ambulance will be called, and the child will be taken to the nearest medical facility. The parent will be notified immediately. Photos of any incidents will be sent to families. Parents are responsible for any costs incurred for medical treatment.

CLOTHING

Each child will need to bring or keep an extra set of clothes at TLC. Clothes should be seasonal. NO FLIP FLOPS, CROCS, or SANDALS of any type. They slide off which cause many accidents. Sneakers or rubber sole enclosed shoes and socks MUST be worn to prevent injuries. Children in the infant room, who are beginning to walk, need socks with grippers. Once your child leaves the infant room, they MUST wear sneakers or rubber sole shoes.

NUTRITION

It is the parent's responsibility to bring lunch for the day. Food should be placed in a lunch sack that will keep a food temperature for at least two hours. Food must be ready to eat. Staff will not warm or prepare meals but will assist children with their food items.

TLC will offer an afternoon snack. Fruit, crackers and water are available daily. A monthly snack menu will be provided, but the center reserves the right to adjust menu as needed. A morning snack (provided by families) may be given. Please note classroom board for more information.

MISCELLANEOUS

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline is to encourage children to control and be responsible for their own behavior. When a child displays behavior such as abusing materials, bringing harm to others or themselves, biting, disrupting activities, etc., the staff will use a method of positive discipline or redirection. We do not use corporal punishment or criticism. Actions taken if a child has disciplinary problems:

- Verbal communication with parents
- Written notification to parents
- Call to parents to pick child up
- Suspension from the program (number of days set by Director)
- Dismissal from TLC

FIELD TRIPS/ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Field trips are no longer offered. Special activities such as petting zoo, gymnastics, music, etc. will be brought into the center throughout the year. The date, time, location and any costs will be communicated to parents at least one week prior to event. Families who do not want their child to participate will still have childcare provided when possible. Accommodations will be made at the discretion of the director.

SUPPLIES

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide wipes, diapers, and formula. Additional supplies may be requested with prior notice given. Failure to supply such items in a timely manner will result in termination of enrollment.

BIRTHDAYS

If planning a birthday party at TLC, please plan in advance with the child's teacher. If bringing goodies, all items must be store bought and unopened. If having a party outside of TLC and you would like to send invitations (but not inviting the whole class), please leave them at the Front Desk. Please refrain from sending any balloons to school.

TOYS FROM HOME

Children are welcome to bring a small soft toy for nap time use only. TLC may have special show and tell days when children may bring other toys. TLC is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is planned daily as long as weather permits. All children will go outside, so please dress them accordingly. Remember, if a child is healthy enough to be at TLC, they are healthy enough to go outside. Children will go outside when temperature is between 32 and 100 degrees. Consideration will be given to the heat index or wind chill and we may adjust the length of time outdoors. Fresh air is always needed. Sunscreen will be applied before outdoor play. Families are asked to bring children with sunscreen applied in the morning. Children who have any sensitivities to sunscreen will need to provide their own supply. Hats and/or caps are recommended for comfortable play. Insect repellant must be provided with signed medication permission form supplied.

CHILD ABUSE

TLC staff is required by law to report evidence or suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Child Welfare will be notified of any such concerns.

BAD WEATHER/CENTER CLOSINGS



Should bad weather force a late opening, early closure, or all day closure for TLC then information will be announced on one of the major news stations: KFOR (4), KWTV (9), KOCO (5), and KOKH (25). It will be listed as Nichols Hills United Methodist Church. Families will be contacted also by either group me, email or phone calls from classroom teachers or the director.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

POWER OUTAGE

DHS requires TLC to close in the event of a power outage. Parents will be required to pick up his/her child within 30 minutes of notification of closure.

TLC has electronically monitored fire alarm systems. Monthly fire drills and evacuation drills are performed and documented. Evacuation exit maps are posted inside

classrooms near entrance/exit doors. Feel free to check our fire drill record in our DHS Compliance File available at the front information area.

TORNADO DRILLS

Tornado drills are conducted monthly. The children are taken to the basement in the event of a tornado alert. Routine practice provides children confidence and lessens their anxiety in threatening weather. Our lower-level area has restrooms, a kitchen and activities for all ages. Emergency plans & guide are located in each classroom and on the Family Bulletin Board.

BOMB THREATS/SERIOUS INCIDENTS

Procedures are in place in the event of a bomb threat or intruder. See our Emergency Preparedness & Crisis Response Guide hanging in each classroom and on the Family Information Board. These procedures are reviewed upon hire and annually in staff meetings. Our south and west entrances are locked after 9:30 a.m. each day and unlocked fifteen minutes before pick-up times. Call boxes are available to provide entrance to TLC during our working hours. Families are always welcome to drop by at any time. However, there will be occasions when the doors are unlocked for funerals, special meetings, bible study groups, etc.

SEVERE WEATHER/DISASTER

The children will be directed to safe places throughout the building. This is one of the routines that we practice monthly. Complete disaster plans & guides are available in all classrooms and on the Family Information Board.

COMMUNICATION

Should you have a question or concern pertaining to your child please contact the teacher and directly communicate your needs. If this is unresolved, please speak with the director so that we may address any issue. It is our goal to preserve our partnership and work in the best interest of all the children. At times this is difficult, but when we all focus on the children's best interest, we can work things out. Our TLC Management Team will be available to support you in the best approach for further dialogue. The director will provide contact information for the TLC Management Team upon request.

FOCUSED PORTFOLIOS

Our staff uses a process of documentation called "Focused Portfolios" to record children's growth and development. Through photographs, anecdotes and children's work samples, teachers put together a visual account of each child's accomplishments.

This process recognizes and celebrates that all children develop at different rates and with various strengths. Collections are completed in fall and spring and are kept in a folder for the year, after which the portfolio becomes a keepsake for the child and family. This collection is a representation of your child as an individual with distinct interests, background, skills and desires. We will offer family conferences twice a year to share these special collections and to celebrate the accomplishments of your child.

Families are invited to participate in this portfolio collection process in whichever special way you choose. Here are some suggestions:

Þ Create a photo collage of your immediate or extended family
Þ Write about a special family event or trip and include a photo
Þ Share how your child's name was selected
Þ Describe a family hobby or typical weekend past time

Again, welcome to The Learning Center and your child's journey of life-long learning experiences. We are proud to have you here.



Tuition Schedule effective Jan 1st, 2027

Monthly Tuition

(Two day minimum, all ages)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
$175	$220	$175	$220	$160

Examples: Monday, Wednesday, Friday = $510
Tuesday, Thursday = $440
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday = $925
Any combination of days based on availability.

Other Fees:

- Application/Waitlist Fee $100- 1st child. $50 each additional child
- Enrollment Fee (per session) $125 - 1st child; $100 each additional child
- Drop-In Rate $45 per day Monday / Wednesday / Friday
  $55 per day Tuesday /Thursday (upon availability)
- Late Pick Up $10, than 1 per minute per child after the first 5 minutes
- Late Pay Fee $25
- Returned Check Fee $25

To make electronic payments follow these steps:

Go to Nichols Hills UMC Website – nicholshillsumc.org

1. Click “The Learning Center.”

2. Click “Payment.”

Establish a Profile. – This will allow you to make future payments without re-entering your information.

5. Enter Payment Amount and Child’s Name.

6. Enter Payment Method. NO FEE FOR CHECKING
7. There is a **3% processing fee** for *Debit or Credit Card payments.*
   For Debit or Credit Card payments, click “Help offset processing fee.” This is **not optional**.



The Learning Center Weekly Events
2023-2024

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
Lets Go Sports 9:30	Tippi Toes *10:00 Art 10:00 Children's Chapel 2:45 ***cost $45 monthly**	Children's Chapel 9:45 Music 10:00	Letz Go Sports 9:30 Children's Chapel 2:45	Letz Go Sports 9:30