

Parent Handbook



Good beginnings never end!



Dear Parents,

We are excited to have you as part of our family. At DKH Academy every child is important. Our program is academically rich and designed to promote your child's growth and development. Thank you for choosing DKH Academy for your child.

This handbook will help you understand our goals and policies. Our guidelines are all designed to make sure that each child receives the best education possible. Please look over the information given, so that you are familiar with our policies and procedures. When you choose a licensed preschool, you and your family join your child in new experiences and relationships. We all share a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the children we serve. The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is part of this partnership. DKH Academy is required to provide a copy of our operational policies. Please read through them and contact the director or assistant director, if you would like to review or discuss any of the policies. Parents will be notified in writing of any operational policy changes.

The following information is available to you from the office upon request:

- Texas Department of Family & Protective Services Minimum Standards
- Most recent Licensing Inspection Report
- Most recent health and safety inspection
- Most recent fire inspection
- Most recent gas inspection

Parents are welcome to visit DKH Academy during our hours of operation to observe your child, the center's operation and program activities. We ask that your presence not be disruptive to your child, other students, or staff. We strive for excellence at DKH Academy. Together we can make a positive impact on the lives of preschool children.

Sincerely,

Nancy Parra
Owner/Director

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About us

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Welcome to DKH Academy. We look forward to working with your family as we embark on a year of amazing growth, development and discovery for your child. Our doors are always open as we partner together to make each year a meaningful journey.

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Nancy Parra
Owner/Director



Becky Aleman
Assistant Director

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Hours of Operation

September – May: **Monday–Friday**
Office Hours: **8:00am–4:00pm**
Classroom Hours: **8:30am–3:15pm***
June – August: **as posted**

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*(*with extended day program enrollment)*

Any questions or concerns about the following policies and procedures, please contact the office.

Mission

*To foster a love of learning,
creativity, friendships and
imagination because we believe...*

Good Beginnings Never End!

Philosophy

At DKH Academy, we believe it is the responsibility of our teachers and staff to instill a love of learning and discovery of each child's developmental and natural abilities. DKH Academy utilizes degreed, nurturing, experienced and professional teachers in the guidance and education of young children. We encourage not only academics, but an overall balanced preschool experience which includes areas of cognition, language, social/emotional skills, initiative, creativity, and responsibility. Growth in all areas of development, as evidenced through formal/informal assessment, observation and family input will be experienced by every child. Families will feel nurtured and supported in their child's early developmental years. We know that positive early childhood experiences set a pattern for the way children will learn and live in the future.

Enrollment & Admissions

Enrollment is open to students between the ages of 18 months-6 years.

Priority Enrollment

(For currently enrolled families and alumni) Begins first school day in January for the following school year (Sep–May).

Open Enrollment

February 1 for following school year (Sep–May). Parents wishing to enroll their children at DKH Academy are encouraged to set up an appointment for a tour of our school between 9:30am–12:30pm.

Once enrolled, all registration forms and fees must be completed and paid in order to secure your child’s spot, and all required permission forms, medical forms and current immunization records MUST be submitted to our office PRIOR TO ATTENDING SCHOOL. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell and work numbers, and any individuals authorized to pick up a child. DKH Academy must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child(ren)’s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and DKH Academy’s rules and policies set forth in this Parent Handbook. Any questions or concerns can be referred to the DKH office. All policy changes will be communicated to parents immediately by an official letter from DKH Administration.

Tuition and Fees

First month’s tuition is due June 1st. This payment is non-refundable. All other (8) tuition payments will begin in September with last payment due April 1st. Tuition received after the 10th of the month will be considered late and a \$15.00 LATE FEE will be assessed to your account. Monthly statements are not issued. If you are unclear of your payment status, please check with the office. Any special payment arrangements must be approved through the office. Tuition and fee schedules are available in the office for your convenience. A monthly discount on tuition is offered for your second and third child (10%), excluding LEAP, Spanish Immersion and Ready Readers. Under no circumstances will tuition be prorated or reduced due to holiday, family vacation, absence due to illness, bad weather, pandemics, moving/transferring or dropping out.

Fee Summary

Fees	
Tuition	Payable first of the month
Late fee	\$15.00 (if tuition is paid after the 10th of the month)
Returned check fee	\$15.00
Late pick-up	\$ 1.00 /min past the 5 minute grace period

Payments can be made by check, payable to DKH Academy, or by ACH auto draft.



DKH Academy is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC administers the largest and most widely recognized accreditation system for all types of early childhood programs. NAEYC accreditation assures high quality programs which provide a safe and nurturing environment while promoting developmentally appropriate practices for young children. In order to maintain accreditation, DKH Academy undergoes regular and rigorous reporting and assessments to uphold NAEYC program standards. DKH Academy is the only preschool in the local area to have received this prestigious accreditation. DFPS minimum standards can be accessed on line. www.dfps.state.tx.us

Play-based Program

- Encourage self-help skills
- Enrich language development
- Delight and engage children in academic learning
- Encourage independence
- Develop curiosity
- Enhance thinking and problem-solving skills
- Promote self-esteem
- Promote self-control
- Embrace diversity & respect family cultures
- Foster connections with the community

Non-discrimination

DKH Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administrative policies and procedures.



Extended Day Options

Enroll your child in one of our extended day programs to add rich learning opportunities and extra time to play and socialize until 3:15pm.

Age requirements and availability will vary by program.

Extended Day Options

LEAP (Learning, Enrichment, & Play)

An extended day program is offered for your convenience and as an enrichment to your child's day, Monday through Friday, immediately following all morning classes. Enrichment includes gross motor, music, art, science and cooking. The pick-up time is 3:15 p.m. LEAP fees must be paid monthly to hold your child's regular spot. Drop-in spots are available.

Spanish Immersion (by enrollment only)

Children who learn to speak a second language experience greater academic success, self confidence and cultural sensitivity throughout their lives. The program will be enhanced through the support of the Sonrisas Spanish curriculum in which the lessons are standards-based and sequential. Through the use of animated and dramatic gestures, the language comes alive to help the children understand what is being communicated. Through music, games, stories, art and drama, the learning becomes meaningful and fun.

Ready Readers Academy (by enrollment only)

This reading program is engaging and fun; utilizing multisensory teaching strategies for language-based learning. It incorporates all components of an effective reading program; including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency and comprehension strategies.

Additional fees apply, see registration form for details.



Enhanced Curriculum

With our emphasis on wonder and play, driven by best practices and developmentally appropriate learning opportunities, your tuition includes many rich and authentic curriculum programs that provide academic challenges and support throughout the school year.

Enhanced Curriculum

Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom

Daily enrichment in our certified outdoor classroom is provided for every student. Weekly lessons are planned and facilitated by our staff.

Kid Fit

Every child receives a weekly motor skills class which emphasizes teamwork, coordination, balance, and overall health/fitness. This class is incorporated into the weekly schedule, lead by our KidFit teacher.

Performances

Approximately 3 times per year, a professional performance/presentation (storytellers, fire/police department, musicians, petting zoo, etc.) will come to DKH Academy as part of our curriculum.

Spanish

All Junior and Senior Kindergarten classes participate in a weekly Spanish lesson taught by our Spanish teacher. Spanish is taught as part of the curriculum by classroom teachers in all other classes.

Technology

Computers, SmartBoard, and iPads are available to all 4 year old and kindergarten classrooms. Only educational software is installed.

Field Trips

As part of our Kindergarten curriculum, students take various field trips throughout the school year.

Guided Reading

Junior and Senior Kindergarten students receive Guided Reading lessons taught by a reading specialist. The program incorporates the perfect blend of both phonics and whole language for greatest success.

**At times, our special activities will be held on the greenbelt adjacent to DKH Academy.*



Policies & Operations

To ensure an organized and safe school year, we ask parents to know and understand all of our policies and procedures.

Lunch Policy

At DKH Academy, lunch is an important and fun time offering social growth and independence. Each child must bring a nutritional lunch provided from home every school day. Parents are responsible for meeting the nutritional needs of their children, and we request that you communicate with your child's teacher about any allergies or limitations regarding your child's diet. The teachers will notify you if your child's classroom needs to be declared "nut free" in order to assure the safety of all students in that class. Most classes offer a nut free table for those with mild sensitivity. Please cut all foods considered to be a choking hazard into small bites, and send food that doesn't require heating.

Lunch Box Burnout (LBBO)

Each month, students have the opportunity to participate in LBBO where they will receive a special hot lunch provided by the DKH PTO. You may choose the number of times each month and can indicate your preferences when you register online. **Your child must be enrolled to participate, and if you choose not to participate please be sure to send a lunch as usual. Prices determined each semester.**

Arrival & Dismissal Times

Arrival Times

8:25 am Jr. Kinder

8:40 am Sr. Kinder, M-F & MWF 4's

8:50 am Toddlers, 2's & 3's

(Early drop-off is by arrangement only and is an additional fee)

Dismissal Times

12:30 pm Toddlers

12:40 pm M-F & MWF 4's

12:55 pm 2's, 3's and Jr. Kinder

3:15 pm Sr. Kinder, LEAP, Spanish & Ready Readers

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

The circular drive is provided to facilitate a smooth arrival and dismissal procedure for all families arriving in vehicles. For student arrival, please pull up to the front of the preschool building. A DKH Academy staff member will be there to greet your child. All arrivals and dismissals will take place at the preschool building regardless of your child's classroom location. **Please DO NOT get out of your car in the drop off/pickup lane. Please DO NOT park on Briarhill Blvd.** Remember to always be respectful of our neighbors and do not block driveways/mailboxes or damage yards. You may drop off your child no more than 5 minutes before your child's class start time unless other arrangements have been made through the office. **At the end of class, PLEASE pick up your child on time. Cell phone usage is prohibited during arrival and dismissal times.**

For dismissal time each child will be given a small laminated card for their backpack with their assigned dismissal identification number. The parents are given a matching ID card which must be clearly visible to the dismissal teachers. Please remain in your car and a staff member will walk your child to your car. In this way, the children can be picked up quickly and with the least amount of confusion.

If you do not have your ID card, or the staff at DKH Academy does not recognize the vehicle or person picking up your child, you will be asked to pull forward in the car line while administrators await verbal verification from the parent or guardian. You will be asked to show a picture ID. Any person authorized to pick up should be listed on your child's emergency card.

During inclement weather please take extra precautions, as it becomes even more important to follow safety rules. If windy, rainy, cold, etc., this is particularly true.



FUN FACT

This is the original DKH Academy when it opened it's doors in 1979.

It was located in Old Town

Lewisville until it was moved to

Highland Shores in 1986.

Look how we've grown!

Discipline and Guidance

Once the function of the behavior has been assessed, discipline will be consistent, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control, involving families and professionals when warranted to develop an individualized plan.

All children are expected to follow the three basic rules:

- A child will respect self.
- A child will respect others.
- A child will respect school property.

DKH Academy uses positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction by the following methods:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements;
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. The aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules.

Giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior.

In rare instances a child may face expulsion if negative behaviors cannot be improved by written, communicated, and implemented strategies/efforts coordinated between home and school.

Toilet Training

All students 3 years and older should be able to lower underwear and get seated when using the toilet. **Each child should be taught proper wiping procedures by parents.** Students should be able to communicate their toileting needs. We recognize that we are working with young children and an occasional toilet accident is normal, therefore, we ask that you keep an extra set of seasonally appropriate clothes in their backpack.



Illness or Accident

General school policy is that children who have a **fever (100° or above), diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours of class time MAY NOT attend school** due to the highly contagious nature of these symptoms. Children with other contagious illnesses or who are **too ill/uncomfortable to participate in indoor and/or outdoor activities should also be kept at home**. Please be considerate of the other DKH families and staff members in order to keep illness at a minimum.

Communicable diseases that exclude a child from care are defined by the Texas Department of Health (TDH) in 25 TAC §97.7 (relating to Diseases Requiring Exclusion from Child Care Facilities and Schools). You can access this information from the Texas Department of Health or Licensing staff.

Each family must have an emergency card on file with current names, telephone numbers (home, work, cell) and driver's license number of individuals with permission to attend to your child when parents cannot be reached.

COVID-19 Illness Policies and Protocols

For COVID related illness, we will continue to follow guidelines set forth by CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics. See Addendum provided at orientation.

If positivity rates and transmission risk in our school and/or community becomes substantial, DKH Academy may implement multiple strategies for the prevention of infectious disease as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Children and staff may choose to wear face coverings for personal safety.

Health checks are conducted daily upon arrival to identify potential concerns about a child's health, such as signs or symptoms of illness or injury.

Parents will be notified in writing of any injury or accident that occurs during school hours.

Medical Emergencies

If a child becomes ill while at DKH Academy, the parent will be contacted to pick up their child. In case of critical illness or injury, emergency medical services will be contacted, parent notified, CPR/first aid administered, if needed, and the child's physician identified on the emergency card will be contacted.

Dispensing Medicine

Parents must sign an authorization form and include times for DKH Academy staff to administer each medicine according to label directions. The medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name, dosage, expiration date and signed by a physician. DKH Academy staff will apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent, and diaper cream, provided it is sent from home.

Immunizations

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), children require frequent boosters and immunizations during early childhood. Each child enrolled at DKH Academy must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health. This current copy of completed immunizations must be on file in the office by the date of admission.

Exemptions for immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of Health rules in 25 TAC §97.62. You can find out more information relating to immunization requirements by visiting the Texas Department of Health at www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize.

Fundraisers

For the 2021-22 school year, DKH Academy will work alongside the DKH PTO to provide fun, family oriented fundraisers and activities including:

- DKH PTO Silent Auction/Carnival
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Spirit Wear
- Spring Fundraiser TBA
- LBBO (Lunch Box Burn Out)
- Pajammin' Night

Your participation in these fundraisers is always optional but greatly appreciated as they help to purchase new materials, offer staff training, and other ways which will enrich our curriculum.

Vaccine Policy

Employees of DKH Academy are not required to receive certain immunizations such as an annual flu shot or COVID-19 vaccination. DKH will promptly exclude any underimmunized child if a vaccine preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

Vision, Hearing & Speech

The Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act (Texas Health and Safety Code) requires a screening for possible vision and hearing problems for all enrolled students who are four years of age by September 1. Screening must be done prior to completion of the first semester.

The Highland Village Lion's Club, in cooperation with DKH Academy staff, conducts hearing and vision screenings in October. With parent permission, vision screenings will be given to ALL children and hearing screenings will be given to children 4 years (by Sept 1st). Results will be sent to the parents shortly thereafter.



Parties

Each class will have three parties per school year and will vary from classroom to classroom. Teachers will have parent volunteer sign-up sheets during orientation night held at the beginning of the school year. Each party will have 3-4 parents who will organize and plan the party. Parents should share plans with the teacher. No younger siblings please. Babies in infant seats are welcome.

In addition to the three parties, each class will perform one program (during school hours) sometime during the school year. This will be the teacher's choice (Thanksgiving, Winter Holidays, Spring, Mother's Day, etc.) and will vary from classroom to classroom.

Snacks

We encourage good manners during this social time of the school day. Snack requirements will be left to the discretion of each classroom teacher. Your child's teacher will discuss the snack protocol during parent orientation.

Field Trips

Field trips enhance our Kindergarten curriculum by offering real-world experiences that extend classroom learning. Each child must have a permission form on file before he/she can participate in outside school activities. Parents are asked to help with transportation and chaperoning at this special time. DKH Academy will invite guest speakers to our school for "in house" field trips (fireman, policeman, dentist, artist, etc.) for all our children to enjoy.

Show & Share Time

This is an excellent time for language expression experiences, and provides an opportunity for children to get to know more about each other. Each teacher handles this special time uniquely. Pay attention to each student's monthly calendar for special sharing item.

Breastfeeding Provision

DKH Academy will provide comfortable provisions with an adult sized seat for any mom wishing to breastfeed her child, as it is your right.

Animals

Parents will be notified in writing if animals are to be present at DKH Academy. All safety precautions as specified by NAEYC will be followed. Parents may decide whether to prohibit or allow their child to have contact with the animals.



Inclement Weather / Closings

Watch Channel 5 for school closings due to inclement weather. DKH Academy follows LISD. If they are closed...DKH Academy is closed. Also, no matter what LISD decides, we reserve the right to cancel classes if we feel the safety of our students may be threatened by hazardous road conditions. If LISD cancels classes for reasons other than weather (pandemic, gas leak, water line break, etc.) the director of DKH Academy will assess the situation and its effect on the safety and health of our students and families. The decision to cancel classes is never taken lightly. Tuition reimbursements or credits will not be given for any cancelled classes. Makeup days, as determined by LISD, will be added to the DKH Academy calendar if they fall between Labor Day and Memorial Day.

DKH Academy PTO

This is OUR school; parents, children and staff. At DKH Academy you should always feel welcome. Volunteers are always appreciated. In an effort to bring our DKH families together, we have formed a DKH PTO. We encourage you all to join. Membership dues are only \$15 per family. See our DKH PTO page on Facebook for more information.

Special Reminders

- Please remember to mark your child's name on his/her belongings (lunchbox, coats, folders, blanket, backpack, etc.) DKH Academy is not responsible for lost items. There is a Lost and Found located in each building.
- Children should not bring gum, candy, mints, or cough drops to school.
- Toys should not be brought from home, unless it is show and share day
- Your child should wear closed-toed shoes to school. They will play on the playground daily and participate in Kid Fit weekly.
- Please make sure your designated pick-up list is current at all times.
- Notify your child's teacher or the office of any changes in emergency, work or cell numbers.
- Call the school office, if you will be late or your pick-up plans have changed. If needed, we will bring your child to the phone so you may tell them yourself. This little effort is very reassuring to them.
- Keep in mind, if you are going to send party invitations to the classroom, please include all students.

Building Access

Security is an ongoing priority at DKH Academy, thus no visitor or staff member can enter without proper clearance. All doors will remain locked throughout the school day (exception will be made at front office door during arrivals and dismissals). ALL visitors can only gain access at the office in the main building by ringing the doorbell and being allowed in by a staff member. If visiting for a period of time or access is needed to the other building, visitors will need to sign in and will be assigned a numbered visitor badge to be worn and clearly visible while at DKH. All visitors will need to check out at the office and return badge before leaving. Exceptions may be made for class parties.

Conferences

Communication between parents and faculty is an important part of your child's life at school. We encourage you to schedule a conference with your child's teacher anytime you have concerns or just want to "touch base". Formal conferences are held once a year in January for preschool, pre-kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten. Senior Kindergarten will have fall and spring formal conferences.

Confidentiality

All assessment results and student files are kept confidential and only available to parents, administration and staff directly involved with the students and regulatory authorities.

Emergency Drills

DKH Academy prepares for emergencies by posting escape routes in every classroom. Also posted, and available for parent review, are disaster plans which include lock down procedures, tornado, civil disturbance, hazardous material spill, bomb threat, and fallen aircraft. We have partnered with McAuliffe Elementary as a "safe place" (2300 Briarhill Blvd., Highland Village, phone number: 469-713-5959) in case of emergency. In accordance with licensing standards, fire drills are performed monthly and tornado and lock down drills are performed quarterly. Community helpers such as the Highland Village Fire Department and Police Department present safety programs to our students annually.

Assessment Plan/Schedule

At DKH Academy we use a variety of on-going assessment tools.

- Observation
- Work Samples/Portfolio
- Parent Information
- Ages & Stages Questionnaire
- Developmental Checklists
- Formal Assessment (ABC Inventory) in January
- DRA for Guided Reading students

On-going assessment is necessary for:

- Identifying children's interests and needs.
- Describing the developmental progress and learning.
- Planning program improvement and communicating with families.
- Improving curriculum and adapting teaching practices and the environment.

The current school year assessment timeline will be issued to families at the beginning of the school year.

Records

Copies of school records will be released with the permission of parents. With a transfer, records will be faxed to the requesting school.

Gang Free Zone

DKH Academy is designated as a gang-free zone. Certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of DKH Academy is a violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalty.

Child Abuse Prevention

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

State law requires that every employee of a licensed daycare or preschool facility, who in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or denial of critical care, shall immediately notify the Department of Child Services.

Our policy concerning this contains the following: A staff member shall report the suspected or alleged child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or to a local law enforcement agency and to DFPS as prescribed by the state law.

Oral and written reports shall contain the following information:

- The name and address of the child, phone number, date & year.
- The child's explanation as to what happened.
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, what the marks look like and color of bruises.
- The date CPS was called, name of reporter and case worker.
- Any other information or comments in which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury.
- If the police were called.

Failure to report is against the law. Any mandatory reporter who in good faith makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of a child abuse has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal.

To report child abuse anytime, day or night, call: 1-800-252-5400

Good Beginnings Never End!