



PARENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

1115 South Boulder Tulsa,
Oklahoma 74119
918-556-8840
earlylearningacademy@tulsafmc.org

Samantha Grant – *Preschool Director*
samanthagrant@tulsafmc.org

Christa Henson – *Assistant Director of
Preschool Programming*
christahenson@tulsafmc.org

Updated February 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who We Are

- Mission
- Overall Goal

Health Policies

- Emergencies
- Medications
- Illnesses That Require Your Child to Stay Home
- Contagious Illness Notification Policy
- Common Illnesses

Financial Guidelines

- Payment Options
- Financial Policies
- Tuition Rates

Other Policies and Procedures

- Biting Policies
- Potty Training Policy
- Car Line Procedures
- Inclement Weather Policy

WHO WE ARE

A weekday preschool where faith and fun begin early!

Our Mission

The purpose of the Early Learning Academy is to provide a child-centered Christian preschool environment that nurtures the spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, and social needs of each child. Our goal is to guide children toward wholeness as desired by our Lord Jesus Christ.

With this purpose in mind, the following objectives will help us fulfill our mission:

- **Biblical Curriculum** – We implement a curriculum grounded in the Word of God. Engaging units of study and creative activities are paired with biblical lessons and scriptural principles, helping children understand how God’s truth connects to their everyday learning.
- **Individualized Learning & Developmental Support** – Each child enters school with different experiences, abilities, and strengths. Our teachers work to meet children where they are by setting measurable objectives for academic readiness while supporting developmental milestones such as fine and gross motor skills, visual-perceptual growth, and auditory discrimination.
- **Social and Emotional Growth** – We place a strong emphasis on helping children understand and manage their feelings, show respect for others, and build positive relationships. Teachers apply biblical truths as they guide children to be kind, forgiving, and compassionate—reflecting Christ’s love in their interactions.

Throughout our program, we implement these principles through the following activities:

- Arts and Crafts
- Chapel
- Music & Movement Class
- Themed Curriculum Units

Overall Goal

The staff and teachers at the ELA are committed to helping each child:

- Develop fine and gross motor skills within their developmental stage.
- Grow intellectually through hands-on exploration and discovery in a loving, supportive environment.
- Flourish spiritually by relating to others in a setting where God’s love and scriptural principles are evident in daily life.

HEALTH POLICIES

Preschool can be a prime environment for the spread of germs and illness. Because of this, we are committed to maintaining practices that help prevent the spread of infection among our children. While we work hard to keep our classrooms clean and sanitary, the first step in infection prevention is keeping contagious children at home.

Below are a few important guidelines to help you determine when your child should remain at home.

Emergencies

If your child becomes ill or an emergency arises during preschool hours, we will contact you using the phone numbers provided on your registration forms.

Medications

The director may administer medication during school hours if written authorization has been provided by a parent or guardian.

Please follow these steps when bringing medication:

- **Bring the medication in its original container**, whether prescription or over-the-counter. This ensures the director knows exactly what is being administered. If the container is not prescription-labeled, **clearly label it with your child's name**.
- **Contact the preschool office**, give the medication directly to the director, and complete and sign an authorization form that includes dosage and timing.
- **Do not** leave medication in your child's lunchbox, backpack, or diaper bag. Always hand it directly to the director.

Illnesses That Require Your Child to Stay Home

To help prevent the spread of illness, please keep your child home if they have any of the following symptoms:

Fever: A temperature over 100°F. Your child must be fever-free (99°F or below) without medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Vomiting and/or Diarrhea: These symptoms are often caused by contagious viruses or bacteria. Your child may return once vomiting has stopped and stools have been normal for at least 24 hours. If your child vomits or has two loose stools while at school, you will be contacted to pick them up.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): A contagious bacterial infection affecting one or both eyes, characterized by redness and pus-like discharge. Your child may return after 24 hours of prescribed antibiotic eye drops or ointment and once the discharge has stopped.

Consider keeping your child home if they display one or more of the following:

- **Listlessness** – Unusual quietness, low energy, lack of appetite, or inability to participate in activities.
- **Earache and/or Ear Drainage** – Especially if yellow or green drainage is present; please consult your child's doctor.
- **Runny Nose and/or Cough** – If nasal discharge is thick and yellow/green, it may be contagious. Clear drainage is typically allergy-related, but a doctor's note confirming allergies is required for our files.
- **Allergy-Related Symptoms** – If your child has chronic rashes, cough, runny nose, or loose stools related to allergies, please provide documentation from a doctor verifying the condition is not contagious.
- **Sore Throat and Swollen Neck Glands** – A child diagnosed with strep throat may return after 24 hours of antibiotics and once fever-free.

Contagious Illness Notification Policy

If your child is exposed to a contagious illness at school, we will notify the class so that you can monitor your child for symptoms. Below are examples of illnesses we report and the guidelines for returning to school:

Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease: A common, highly contagious virus that causes mouth sores and a rash on the hands, feet, and sometimes the diaper area. Other symptoms may include fever, sore throat, irritability, and decreased appetite. HFMD spreads easily through direct contact with saliva or mucus.

Return Policy: A child may return once all blisters have dried and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours.

Head Lice (Pediculosis): If lice are found, the child will be sent home. All children in the class will be checked that same day and again in 1–2 weeks.

Return Policy: After a complete treatment and removal of lice, the child may return after 24 hours and must be free of all live lice and nits.

Other Common Illnesses

Children may occasionally be exposed to viruses such as the flu or RSV during school. The director will use discretion in notifying families if multiple cases of the same illness occur in a class.

Return Policy: If your child is diagnosed with the flu or RSV, a doctor's note is required before they may return to school.

These health policies are in place to protect the safety and well-being of all children and staff. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the director.

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

Tuition is calculated based on the number of days a child is scheduled to attend during the nine-month school year and is divided into equal monthly installments. Tuition remains the same each month regardless of days missed due to illness, holidays, vacations, or inclement weather.

Payment Options

Tuition may be paid in one of the following ways:

- **Cash/Check** – payable to “FMC” and include your child’s name in the memo line
- **ProCare** – bank draft, credit card, or debit card. If payment is sent directly from your bank, please ensure the check notes that it is for ELA tuition and includes your child’s name to ensure proper credit. Families will receive a monthly invoice through ProCare.

Financial Policies

Due Dates & Late Fees: Tuition is due by the 10th of each month. Payments received after this date are subject to a late fee of \$5 per day.

Refunds & Absences: Once tuition is paid, no refunds will be issued. Tuition must still be paid during vacations or extended absences in order to hold your child’s classroom spot. There will be no tuition adjustments for inclement weather closures.

Returned Checks: In the event of a returned check, payment must be made in cash along with a \$30 returned check fee.

Withdrawal Enrollment: If you need to withdraw your child from the program, we request a 30-day notice. Please note that any tuition already paid is non-refundable.

Delayed Start Fee: If you would like your child to start after the beginning of the school year (in early September), please note there may be a fee to hold your child’s spot. This fee will be based on the expected start date which may be no later than the beginning of January. The fee will range from \$75-\$150.

Financial Concerns: If your family experiences an unusual or emergency financial situation that impacts tuition payment, please contact the director immediately so that a solution may be worked out.

TUITION RATES FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR (SEPTEMBER-MAY)

2 days per week – \$275/month
3 days per week – \$375/month

Multi-Child Discount: Families enrolling more than one child will receive a 10% discount off their total monthly tuition.

OTHER POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Biting Policy

Biting is a common and natural developmental phase for many children. At the Early Learning Academy, our staff responds promptly and appropriately to all biting incidents to maintain a safe and nurturing environment for every child.

Immediate Response to Biting

- The child who bit will be calmly removed from the situation.
- Teachers will clearly and calmly reinforce that biting is not acceptable.
- The child will be redirected to another activity.
- Teachers will comfort and care for the child who was bitten.
- Once all children are calm, staff will notify the parents of both the child who was bitten and the child who bit. (Children's identities will not be disclosed.)
- Teachers will also closely observe any child prone to biting in order to identify possible triggers and to help the child respond to those triggers in more positive ways.

Persistent or Serious Biting

While staff work diligently to minimize biting, additional action may be necessary:

- If a child bites three times in one day without breaking the skin, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day.
- If a bite breaks the skin, the child who bit will be sent home immediately, even if it is the first incident of the day.
- The teacher(s) and the Preschool Director will schedule a meeting with the parents of any child sent home for biting to discuss strategies for addressing the behavior.

If biting continues despite these interventions, and the behavior causes significant disruption or stress to the class, the child's enrollment may be temporarily suspended until improvement is observed. This is not to punish the child but to protect the other children in the classroom.

Purpose of Policy

The goal of this policy is to help children understand the seriousness of biting, not to shame the child or parent. Our aim is to resolve the issue in a way that ensures the well-being of all children and fosters a safe, supportive classroom environment.

Potty Training Policy & Guidelines

Potty training is an exciting milestone for both children and parents. At the Early Learning Academy, we are committed to supporting your family in reaching this goal. We understand that the process can sometimes be challenging, and every child develops at their own pace. For this reason, we encourage families not to push children before they are ready, as this can sometimes do more harm than good. The most common window of readiness is between the ages of 2.5 to 3.5.

Our Approach

Potty training works best when families and teachers partner together. Open communication about your child's readiness and progress is key to success. At school, the group environment presents unique challenges—such as distractions, busy activity levels, and the fear of “missing out”—that may delay a child's readiness compared to home. Teachers will encourage children and look for signs that they need to use the potty; however, in a busy classroom setting, it is not always possible to anticipate every need.

Signs of Readiness

Children may be ready to begin potty training at preschool when they show several of the following signs:

- Interest in the toilet.
- Awareness of being wet or soiled.
- Ability to stay dry for longer periods of time.
- Ability to undress and pull pants up or down independently.
- Desire for independence.
- Use of consistent words or gestures to communicate bathroom needs.
- Willingness to try wiping themselves.

If your child is showing these same signs at home, it may be the right time to begin potty training together.

What We Can and Cannot Do

At the Early Learning Academy, we are committed to supporting families as children work toward potty independence. To ensure success, safety, and consistency, the following guidelines apply:

- **Age to Begin** – Potty training at preschool generally begins no earlier than age 2. Please note that not every child is ready at this age.
- **Communication** – Children must be able to verbalize when they need to go.
- **Willingness** – Children must show a willingness to sit on the preschool potty and demonstrate an understanding of its function.

- **Underwear Policy** – For sanitary reasons, children may not train in regular underwear until they are consistently dry at school. Training pants or pull-ups must be used during the learning process, as underwear cannot contain accidents and may spread germs. Once children can go home in the same dry pull-up/training pants they arrived in, they may begin wearing underwear.
- **Pull-Ups Requirement** – If pull-ups are used, they must be the type with Velcro sides for easier changes.
- **Accidents** – If a child comes to school in underwear and has accidents, staff reserve the right to place the child back in a pull-up for the remainder of the day.
- **Clothing** – Children should wear clothing that makes bathroom use easier. Avoid overalls, onesies, tights, belts, dresses/skirts (which may fall into the toilet), or tight-fitting jeans. Elastic-waist pants or shorts are strongly recommended.
- **Supplies** – Parents must provide extra pull-ups, pants/shorts, socks, and shoes. When your child is ready for underwear, please also send several clean pairs to keep at school.
- **Independence by Age 4** – By age 4, we encourage children to be able to clean themselves after using the toilet. In the Red and Orange Team classrooms, fully potty-trained children will be coached in this skill if needed to build confidence.

Classroom Support

Each classroom with potty-trained and potty-training students follows a schedule of regular bathroom breaks, giving children frequent opportunities to use the potty. By maintaining consistent expectations at home and school, we can work together to help your child achieve potty independence.

Car Line Procedures

To ensure safety and efficiency during drop-off and pick-up, please follow these guidelines:

- **Check-In** – Drive by, display your car tag, and join the line.
- **Pull Forward** – Drive up to the first available cone.
- **Wait for Staff** – Remain in your car until a teacher approaches.
- **Assist Your Child** – Parents/guardians should help children in and out of their car seats.
- **Quick Buckle** – Buckle your child as quickly as possible. If you need extra time, please pull forward past the cones or use the parking lot to the left of the car line.

<p style="text-align: center;">Times: Drop-Off: 8:45–9:00 a.m. Pick-Up: 1:45–2:00 p.m.</p>

Late Policy:

After 2:05 p.m., a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged.

The first late pick-up will result in a friendly reminder. Any subsequent late arrivals will result in the fee being applied.

Inclement Weather Pick-Up/Drop-Off:

During severe weather, we will use the covered parking area.

Families will be notified through the Procure app at least 15 minutes before the scheduled drop-off or pick-up window. If no notification is sent, assume procedures will remain in the regular location.

Inclement Weather Policy

We follow TPS (local public schools) as a *guideline* when making weather-related closure decisions. **Final decisions are made by the Director and communicated by 6:00 a.m. on the day of the closure.**

- If you have not received communication by 6:00 a.m., you may assume the school will remain open.
- All weather-related updates will be shared through the Procure app.