



Community Handbook

2020-2021

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General Contact Information

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Physical Address 9000 Georgian Drive, Austin, TX 78753
Admissions Inquiries breana@growingcuriosity.org

Official Website www.growingcuriosity.org

Administration and Staff

- Breana Sylvester, Director & Lead Guide breana@growingcuriosity.org
- Apple (Analiz) Gonzalez, Assistant Guide applegonzalez@growingcuriosity.org
- Erin Thompson, Online Education Lead erinthompson@growingcuriosity.org

Mission and Philosophy

Mission

Growing Curiosity's mission is to provide an affordable quality Montessori preschool program with a focus on physical and social development, anti-bias education, and an appreciation for nature.

Academic Information

School Hours

Full-time: Monday-Friday 8:30-3:00
Part-time: Monday – Friday 8:30-12:45

Communication

Open, honest, & direct

Growing Curiosity Community school hopes to foster open, honest, and direct communication and feedback, even when the communication is uncomfortable or difficult (see Communication Tips, *appendix a*).

Keeping the staff well informed

Please keep in mind that staff and parents must work as a team and that all members of the team must be kept well informed, especially when there are issues of concern.

Privacy

Please discuss sensitive issues/concerns (with other parents, staff, or administrators) privately—not in the classroom or on the playground. Speaking to staff in the office, when possible to discuss private/sensitive matters may put that person in an awkward position. Please email, or set up a conference.

Avoid conversations during or immediately before/after school

Staff are advised not to initiate or address in-depth questions or concerns during school hours or immediately before or after school. We ask that parents follow this guideline during these times, as we are very busy keeping students safe. For these longer conversations, staff and parents are encouraged to discuss the issue via email or set up a conference.

Directories

Growing Curiosity's parent and staff directories will be located in Transparent Classroom. You can log in to TC through the parent portal on our website.

Forms of communication

We use a variety of methods to communicate:

- **Group Emails:** School-wide emails used for requests, questions, announcements, and any mid-year policy changes.
- **Blog Updates:** An email with blog updates will be sent with information about upcoming activities and plans.
- **Transparent Classroom App:** If you have downloaded the parent app for transparent classroom, you will be able to receive photos and messages throughout the day, as appropriate. This app will be necessary for signing in your child each morning, so please make sure it's installed on your phone.

Communication feedback

Throughout the year, parents will be given feedback opportunities to give open and honest written feedback on a variety of areas. This feedback is used to help assess how things are so that we can best serve your family and our greater community.

Conferences

The scheduled conference periods are twice a year (see school calendar). Please mark your calendars for these preset dates. In addition, staff are accessible to parents and available for a conference anytime during the year by written request.

- Conferences MUST be held on or before the set date on the calendar.
- Conferences are 45-60 minutes. Please be on time, as we typically have several back to back.
- If you have an urgent situation and you have to cancel last minute, let us know ASAP via calling or messaging your child's teacher.
- Conferences are documented for archiving and note taking purposes.

Conduct

Our primary goal is to create a positive, supportive, safe culture. Young children are learning how to be in the world, and developing appropriate language and behavior. As such, we expect all children to occasionally exhibit undesirable behavior, such as hitting, pushing, yelling, or biting. If your child exhibits, or is hurt by, these behaviors we will communicate directly with all families involved, individually, and support the children in developing appropriate language and skills to prevent future incidents. In the rare case that our current staff are unable to provide appropriate support for your child's physical or behavioral needs, we will do our best to help you find appropriate resources and work with those resources in or outside of the classroom, if possible.

Dismissal

Our intent is to support students in working through issues whenever possible. However, there are times (i.e. when student safety/security is at risk) when we as a school do not have the appropriate resources to keep all children safe. In such cases, parents will be made aware of all concerns in a timely manner and will be a part of the conversation. We will do everything we can to help parents find the support their child needs prior to asking a child to leave the school. It is essential that suggestions for further support for the child be handled by the parents in a timely manner (e.g. pediatrician recommendations or OT evaluation, etc.).

Dress code

Students should dress in a comfortable manner that is appropriate to the activities for the day and appropriate to the weather. The children will go outdoors every day in all kinds of weather, except during thunderstorms and extreme heat.

Please send your child with at least two clean masks each day. Masks tend to get wet with talking, and children may desire to change masks mid-day. Masks are not required, but are heavily suggested. We

understand that some children are too young or are unable to tolerate a mask. In the case of the latter, please practice at home when possible.

Each child needs at least one complete change of clothes because clothing may become dirty during activities and outdoor play. If your child is toilet learning, please make sure they have at least three changes of clothing at all times.

Each child should have a pair of boots and a raincoat when there is inclement weather. *GCCS has extras for families who forget theirs or need to borrow. Please let us know if you need a long-term borrow.

The extra clothes will be kept in the child's box in the classroom during the week, if clothes are soiled they will come home and should be replaced with clean clothes. Due to COVID, we will be washing nap mats, work mats, and blankets at the school at least weekly, and storing in the child's box during the week.

Shoes and clothing should be simple enough that the child can put them on and remove them with minimal help (e.g. velcro shoes, elastic waistbands, no belts or overalls).

Clothing and shoes must allow the child a full range of motion and be appropriate for walking, active play, yoga, and upside-down play.

Each item should be labeled to avoid confusion and loss.

Winter days require hats, mittens, warm shoes or boots, long pants, coats. Because weather can fluctuate during the day, dress your child in layers that can be added or removed as the temperature changes.

Summer days require shorts, short sleeved/breathable shirts and a hat. Sunscreen and bug spray will be applied morning and afternoon. We will apply Sawyer Brand Picaridin bug spray or alternatively Cutter Lemon Eucalytus (deet free). For sunscreen we use either Badger, Alba, or ThinkSport mineral broad spectrum sunscreen, or you may bring a labeled bottle for your child.

Please do not dress your child in clothing with violent images or explicit content.

Outdoor play

The children play outdoors every day, weather permitting (in the absence of thunder and lightning). Children are expected to have appropriate clothing for the corresponding weather. Under normal conditions all children are expected to go outside. We do not have enough staff for children to remain inside during playground time. Please keep your child home if they are not well enough to play outside on any given day. Our outdoor times are typically 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, with afternoon outside time once the weather isn't dangerously hot.

Recess – Playground rules

1. Take care of your body's needs.
2. Respect others' bodies and space.

3. Care for the environment and materials.

Here at Growing Curiosity, we strive to help children develop into competent adults. Experiential learning is key to that development. For this reason, we value and support risk-taking behavior both emotionally and physically. On the playground, this means that a teacher's responsibility is to supervise and engage children in supportive conversation about the risks being taken and how children can stay safe. Examples of risk-taking behavior include supervised play tumbling, jumping off stumps or tires (2 ft max), and wrestling. Punching and kicking is prohibited.

The possible consequences of these risks and the learning gained from the success or failure of risk-taking will be discussed before outside time, situationally and as reflections. This means that receiving the occasional accident/incident report is a sign of your child's progress and growth toward competence and confidence. These incident reports are designed to keep the parents in conversation with their child's teacher, their child and administration about risk-taking behavior and the rewards to be gained from engaging in risk-taking behavior.

Play policy

In our community, children are encouraged to use their imaginations and participate in developmentally appropriate role-play to experience and express feelings. Coupled with this play, children will use props (such as buckets, sticks, pots and pans) with the expressed consent of all parties involved. All children have the right to opt out of the play, and will be supported in their communication needs.

Below are some articles with information on the benefits of allowing children to direct their play and take risks, including play-fighting and wrestling:

<http://dianeelevin.com/wp/wp-content/articles/warandsuperhero.pdf>

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/talkingwithkids/news/>

Policies and Procedures

Absences, arrival, and dismissal

Absence

Please notify your child's teacher if your child will be absent. We need to know if illness is the cause of the absence, and particularly if you suspect COVID symptoms. To do this, please use the transparent classroom app and leave a note, or message the teacher directly, or alternatively call the school.

Arrival

Children MAY NOT be left in a room unattended. The child must be signed in at the entrance to the playground and greeted by a teacher. Before leaving campus, the child must be signed in through Transparent Classroom and the parent must record the child's morning temperature and answer the health screening questions.

Drop-off: Children should be dropped off between 8:30 and 9 am unless other arrangements have been discussed with the school.

Students who arrive after 9 AM are considered late. While we understand that unavoidable circumstances sometimes arise, late arrivals are a disruption and we ask that every effort is made to arrive on-time. Teachers will communicate directly with parents when late drop-off becomes an issue.

In cases where a child will be absent or will arrive after 9 am, parents are asked to notify us as soon as possible. If parents know ahead, they are asked to email the teachers with as much advance notice as possible.

Parents must sign their children in and out of the classroom when dropping off and picking up.

Parents must pick children up by 3:00 PM for full-time and 1:00 pm for part-time, and must sign their child out using the Transparent Classroom App before leaving campus.

Dismissal

Your child should be picked up between 3:00pm and 3:15 pm (no later) for full-time and by 1:00 for part-time students. Late pick-ups will be charge a fee of \$30/hr after 3:15 pm (charged by the hour). ***Additionally, it is required by the state of Texas that we call 311 and report children left on campus after closing if we have not been able to contact a parent or caregiver to pick up. Please be aware that we may not have children on campus without a parent outside of our operating hours.***

If you intend to pick up your child before 3pm, please call your child's teacher to let us know or leave a written note. Children are sleeping before 3pm, and we will do our best to meet you on the playground.

Release of the child

All students are to remain under the supervision of their teacher(s) until they are released to the appropriate adult. If the adult picking up is not recognized, staff will verify the Emergency Info/Student Pick-Up form and/or get verbal approval from parent before releasing the child. A child will be dismissed only to a parent or person designated by the parent. The parent(s) must designate on the child release form everyone authorized to pick the child up from school. We prefer to be notified in writing if anyone other than the parent(s) or a previously authorized person is to pick up the child. Or the Parent may call to authorize a last-minute arrangement for pickup of a child. The parent will be asked to verify their identity. When the person authorized to pick up the child arrives, he or she must display picture identification, preferably on their driver's license.

If an unauthorized person comes to pick up the child, the school will not release the child without calling the parent(s) and receiving permission.

We may legally prevent the child from being picked up by a parent or a person designated by the parent if we suspect that person is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. We are allowed by Texas state licensing Minimum Standards to request the assistance of the local police. We will call the police for assistance if we believe the child is in danger.

Under the laws of the state of Texas both parents may have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent, who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list, must file an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document the center may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.

Personal Relationships

GCCS believes that every individual may choose who to date, therefore we do not limit employee or employee/parent relationships. However, GCCS expects all employees and parents to maintain a professional atmosphere while on campus, and ensure adequate separation of professional and private activities.

Babysitting

Employees are left to their personal discretion as to accepting babysitting positions with families enrolled in GCCS, however GCCS is not responsible for the conduct of said employee while rendering babysitting services to GCCS (or other) families outside of childcare center hours.

Birthdays

Children's birthdays will be celebrated at school during our morning outdoor Circle Time, Montessori classrooms often have a Sun celebration, enacting each of your child's trips around the sun. Parents will need to be seated away from the group and masked for these celebrations. We also won't be able to have sweet treats for birthdays this year. **Non-parents will be welcome to join via zoom, but will not be allowed in person.**

Re-Enrollment

Registration forms for the following school year are due by March 31.

Final projections for the following school year (staffing) are made in May whenever possible. Please note that these projections are subject to change.

Food policies/Nutrition guidelines

Please send your child with a re-fillable water bottle for outside time and a lunch box with two snacks and a lunch included. Caffeine, soda, chocolate, and candy (including chocolate unless otherwise approved) are prohibited. We encourage low-sugar, high protein meals. We cannot refrigerate or reheat food so plan accordingly. Lunches will be kept inside until needed, but if you have ice packs to include, these tend to keep lunches fresher on hot days.

Medical considerations

Administration of medicine

We prefer that medication be administered at home. However, when necessary, it may be administered by a staff member. Medicines brought to school must be clearly labeled and turned in to the classroom teacher for safekeeping.

Medication (including non-prescription drugs) need to be in a labeled container. Prescription medication should be kept in its original and most recent container bearing the pharmacy label which shows prescription number, date filled, physician's name, directions for use and the child's name.

Special medical procedures will be administered to a child only upon receipt of a written, dated and signed request from a licensed physician and/or parent(s) of the child.

Medication forms giving permission and dosage instructions are available through Transparent Classroom. We will also have a stack available in the school office. We cannot administer any medication without WRITTEN permission to do so. If the child needs medication more than twice a day, the parent(s) must check with the director before bringing the child to school.

All medications need to be turned over to the teacher in the morning and will be placed on the medicine shelf in the cupboard or in the refrigerator. DO NOT leave any medications in the child's lunch box, backpack, or pockets!

No aspirin will be given to a child by any staff member.

Allergies (Red Flag List)

Parents should inform the school of children's allergies when children are enrolled (this information is requested in the enrollment paperwork). The school maintains lists of medical allergies and food preferences for the children. These lists are posted in the classrooms. Make sure to notify us of changes. If your child has severe food allergies please work with your physician to develop an allergy treatment plan and submit it to the school.

Emergency Medical Policy

Assess the situation and strive to keep the child calm.

If it is a true emergency, call 911 or request that an administrator take the child immediately to the hospital.

If the emergency is less severe, administer first aid on site.

When appropriate, call the child's parent as soon as possible.

Follow any procedures outlined in the child's Emergency Contact form (if applicable).

Complete an accident report if injury is serious in nature.

Illness

Please see the "Table of Medical Conditions and Policies" (in appendix)

The parent(s) or other person authorized by the parent(s) shall be notified immediately in case of an illness when a child has an illness requiring exclusion as listed below.

The following criteria are based on TXDFPS standards for daycare centers. An ill child shall not be admitted or will be sent home if one or more of the following exists:

1. the illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities; or
2. the illness results in a greater care need than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;

or the child has one of the following conditions:

1. An oral temperature of 100.2 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness, until medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the facility's activities.
2. Symptoms and signs of a possible severe illness (such as lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs) until medical evaluation indicate that the child can be included in the facility's activities;
3. Uncontrolled diarrhea; more than 1 incident;
4. A vomiting illness (two or more episodes in 24 hours) until medical personnel determines the illness is non-communicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
5. Mouth sores with drooling until medical personnel determine that the condition is noninfectious;
6. A rash with fever or behavior changes, until medical personnel determine that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease;
7. Purulent conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated, or until eye no longer has discharge or is noticeably swollen and irritated;
8. Scabies, head lice, or other infestations, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated. *In the case of lice the child must also be totally nit-free;*
9. Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
10. Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever;
11. Chicken pox, until 6 days after onset of rash or until all sores have dried and are crusted.
12. COVID-19, until at least 14 days after all symptoms have subsided, but no sooner than 14 days after onset of symptoms. If a family member tests positive, the child may return 14 days after the parent stops showing symptoms. Growing Curiosity is required to get further guidance on all positive cases in the community, so this guideline is subject to change based on that guidance.

By helping us observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and the others in the school.

Immunizations

State law requires that all staff and children attending daycare be fully vaccinated. The state of Texas has a parental discretion exemption option, however as a school we require children be fully immunized. Our policy requires all employees and enrolled students have on file a current immunization schedule or a doctor-signed medical exemption.

This document will be requested each year upon re-employment/re-enrollment and kept in student and employment files.

Growing Curiosity Community School is responsible for the development and implementation of a vaccine-preventable disease policy for our campus that includes all areas of the minimum standards.

As of June 2014, minimum standards (746.3611) require schools to specify vaccines that employees must have based on our evaluation of risk.

Due to the age range of our students, the duration of our school day and year, and the primary responsibilities of our staff including direct contact with young children, food, bedding and toiletries, the following vaccines are required to address the potential risk:

- Hepatitis A and B combination (HEPA, HEPB)
- Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)
- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertusis (Whooping Cough) (DTaP)

Vision and Hearing Screenings

Vision and hearing screenings are required for four and five-year-olds and are conducted by your child's pediatrician. Please have the office send us the screening results. Contact us if you are unable to get this screening with your child's pediatrician or family doctor.

Parents must inform the school if the child has a communicable disease. Status and treatment of the disease will be determined by the communicable disease chart, as published by the Texas Department of Health. If a major outbreak of a communicable disease occurs, notices will be posted or sent home.

All staff members are certified in first aid and CPR. If a child is involved in an accident at school, first aid will be administered by a staff member. If medical assistance is needed in the event of serious injury or illness, parent(s) will be called and/or the child will be taken to the family doctor or hospital for treatment.

Any change of address and/or phone number must be reported to the school in writing immediately so that we can always contact parents.

Personal property

Bedding for Naps

A supervised rest / nap period is provided each day for every preschool child. A rest mat is provided for each child. Due to COVID, the school will wash the mats at least weekly, more regularly if soiled. Mats will be kept in the children's individual bins. If you wish your child to have a blanket nap, please bring items that can be washed along with the nap mats and kept at the school. Blankets should stay in nap roll except at nap time.

Restrictions

- Toys, games, and electronics must be left at home, unless pre-approved by teachers.

- If your child would like to bring an item to show, please contact the teacher to set up an appropriate date.
- Any items from home used to physically harm someone or any items from home that become a distraction during instruction time will be taken away and returned to parents, but will not be allowed in the school going forward.

Lost and Found

The lost-and-found will be a digital affair this year, with pictures taken of items sent for parents to claim. Items will then go home at the end of the day.

Restroom

Students may visit the restrooms individually as necessary, and will be given frequent opportunities to come in to the restroom from outdoors. *Children MAY NOT come in diapers.* We are not licensed for diapering, children who are toilet learning must come in underwear with at least three changes of clothing.

School Cancellation

Growing Curiosity will follow AISD closures in cases of inclement weather. AISD closings are always broadcast on TV and radio news. This, along with an email will be sent to all school families.

If Growing Curiosity must close on a day when AISD is not experiencing closures, parents will be notified via email or phone. Check the official AISD twitter account here: <https://twitter.com/AustinISD>

Emergency Evacuation

In the case of an emergency that requires us to vacate the school, the staff will take the children to the adjacent lot of 9000 Georgian Drive on the South side of the property

Emergency contact phone number for Head of School is 903.819.1986. Please use Transparent Classroom or email for all non-emergency communications.

Volunteering

Normally parents are always welcome on our campus to participate (with a Criminal History Background Check on file), and teachers are expected to make them feel welcome, useful and involved during their visits. Due to COVID, we are unable to have non-employee adults inside the building. See *appendix c* for prospective volunteer jobs. Families are strongly encouraged to take part in community events in Georgian Acres, such as *It's Your Park Day*, or local creek cleanup efforts.

Legal postings

Child Abuse

We report all suspected child abuse to the child abuse hotline, as required by law.

Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline

For reporting abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities. 1-800-252-5400 or <https://www.txabusehotline.org>

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

Local Licensing Office (512-369-7013)

1340 Airport Commerce Dr. Suite 525; Austin, TX 78741

Department mail code 0214

Growing Curiosity teachers and staff receive annual training regarding detecting child abuse and neglect, prevention techniques as well as strategies for reporting abuse/neglect. The office staff is a resource for getting information and assistance for parents or children who are victims of abuse or neglect.

Complaints

The school is always interested in feedback from the parents, positive and negative. Parent information is essential to the continued growth of the school. Complaints should be brought to the attention of the director. Complaints should be in writing. The best interest of the child is always in the forefront of our program.

Discrimination

Growing Curiosity Community School does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national or ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, veteran status, or disability in its admissions, operations and employment practices. We reserve the option of determining that the facility cannot reasonably be modified to accommodate certain needs.

Gun & Gang-free Zones

Any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty under Texas law.

Firearms and other Weapons

Law enforcement officials who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty may have firearms or ammunition on the premises of the child-care center. For all other persons, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of the child-care center.

Review of minimum standards & licensing inspection report

Parents have the right to review a copy of the state minimum standards for day care centers as well as Growing Curiosity Community School's most recent Licensing inspection report at any time. This resource is found in the school office in the TXDFPS binder upon request. You can find the minimum standards online at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

You may request to review our most recent licensing paperwork at any time, licensing papers are posted on our bulletin board by the front entrance. Also on this board are phone numbers for contacting the local Licensing office, the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline. The Texas DHPS website is available at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/protective-services-providers/child-care-licensing>

Parents and Guardians may visit the child-care center at any time during your hours of operation to observe their child, the child-care center's program activities, the building, the premises, and the equipment without having to secure prior approval. During COVID this must be done from outside the building (playground or through windows).

Discipline

Growing Curiosity Community School does not believe in punishment, but rather supervision, modeling, and guidance when children are struggling. GCCS fully follows the State of Texas Minimum Standards:

Discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child;
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding;
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control;
4. A positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, including the following:
 - a. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - b. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - c. Redirecting behavior using positive statements;
 - d. 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 goal is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules.
 - Giving children understandable guidelines and re-directing their behavior helps them to develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior.

What types of discipline and guidance or punishment are prohibited?

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
2. Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
5. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child; High (7) Subjecting a child to harsh,

abusive, or profane language;

7. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet;
8. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age, including requiring a child to remain in a restrictive device.

- Child development research supports that physical punishment such as pinching, shaking, or hitting children teaches them that hitting or hurting others is an acceptable way to control unwanted behavior or get what they want.
- Children will also mimic adults who demonstrate loud or violent behavior.
- Rapping, thumping, popping, yanking, and flicking a child are all examples of corporal punishment.

Instead of punishment, GCCS employees proactively recognize pro-social behaviors, helping children realize when they are behaving in appropriate ways. When children struggle, employees may help a child or children to calm themselves through practicing breathing exercises or using sensory equipment, and then ask them to show the appropriate behavior or check on a friend. Practicing proactive solutions such as making reparations and self-calming techniques give the child more options for the next time they encounter a difficulty. Over time, children learn to manage their emotions through modeling and practice.

Staff Qualifications

The staff has either formal education, or training and experience in the early childhood field. The staff also attends conferences and workshops throughout the year in the early childhood field.

Tuition payment policy

Tuition is collected through QuickBooks payments, or you may also pay by monthly money transfer, or mail checks or money order to:

Growing Curiosity

9000 Georgian Drive

Austin, TX 78753

appendix a - communication tips

Open, Honest, and Direct: As mentioned in the Communication section, Growing Curiosity encourages open, honest, and direct communication and feedback.

Talk directly to all staff members most involved: When you have a question or concern, we request that you first talk directly with all employees most involved with the area of your concern (except in a case in which this would not be appropriate).

Sounding board: With tricky or emotional situations, it is often helpful to talk through your concerns before bringing them to another party. However, in order to avoid what may be thought of as gossip, it is important that the following policies be followed:

- Your “sounding board” should be a single trusted friend/spouse versus a group of people.
- The intent of the conversation should be to:
 - Get objective feedback on the situation.
 - Help brainstorm potential solutions.
 - Help brainstorm ways in which you can approach the staff member with whom you have a concern.

Timing: If you need to discuss an important conflict/concern, be sure to schedule an appropriate time to talk, instead of catching the individual before/after school, etc.

State the facts: When you are ready to bring your concern to the person most directly involved, be as objective as possible. It can be helpful to use “I Statements” when appropriate & to state the facts.

Listen open-mindedly: Listen objectively as the person with whom you have a concern responds.

Identify needs and brainstorm solutions: Together, you and all employees with whom you have a concern are expected to identify needs, brainstorm solutions, and decide upon an action plan. As mentioned earlier, sometimes a person needs time and/or space before he/she is able to work productively towards a solution.

Plan B: If you feel that your concern has not been adequately addressed/resolved or if your concern involves school-wide policies, procedures, or requests, please speak with the administration. They will work with you and/or the person with whom you have a concern to brainstorm a solution and put a plan of action into place.

appendix b - lice policy and procedures

Head Lice

Whenever a child has lice, treatment of choice must begin and he/she will need to be “nit-picked” DAILY at home for the next week. ALL lice/nits need to be removed before coming to school.

Please contact your child’s teacher each morning for a week to let the teacher know that the child has been checked that morning.

Growing Curiosity requires that all parents check their child’s hair for the 10 days after a case of lice has been discovered at school.

The best way to get rid of lice is to go through every strand of hair daily and remove nits manually. About 15 minutes per infected person in the household, daily. The sooner detection occurs, the easier it is to manage.

Whether the choice of treatment is over the counter (Nix) or alternative, parents must return to the office to check in, before their child returns to class, during the treatment cycle (7-10 days).

Recommendations

Keep a “Robi Comb” (www.lice-guard.com/robicomb, can be found at Walgreens) and/or a Nit-Free Terminator Comb (www.nit-free-comb.com) on-hand. If a student in your child’s class has lice, you can use one/both of these combs for the next couple of weeks just to make sure that your child is lice-free (without hours of “combing” with a traditional lice comb).

According to research, the best way to get rid of lice/nits is manual removal and all the procedures such as daily sheet-washing, vacuuming, car seats, booster seats, etc. Please be thorough in your treatment when lice are found at your home. Natural products that have been highly recommended are Licex (www.licex.vigorgen.biz), Lice MD (www.licemd.com), Robicomb, Lice Ice and the Nit-Free Terminator.

comprehensive sites about treatments

<http://www.cdc.gov/lice/head/treatment.html>

http://www.cdc.gov/lice/head/faqs_treat.html

appendix c- Prospective Volunteer Jobs

- 1) Assist teachers with unit theme, materials, and activities
- 2) Go through lost and found and remove dirty or moldy items
- 3) Help keep school library organized

- 4) Assist with school IT needs
- 5) Sign up for meal trains and diaper drives when families are in need
- 6) Collecting get-well-soon drawings, signed cards, flowers when someone is sick, in the hospital, or a family experiences a significant loss
- 7) Reach out to new families and setting up playdates
- 8) Organize childcare for a family in crisis

Staff Appreciation Coordinator

- 1) Organize staff appreciation activities and events
- 2) Collect money from parents for gift cards and appreciation gifts
- 3) Have the staff fill out a Staff Appreciation Survey at the beginning of the year

Visitor Appreciation

- 1) Write thank you notes for campus visitors, parent and community volunteers.

Prospective Parent Outreach Coordinator

- 1) Help grow the school and bring in new families
- 2) Be a reference for prospective parents by answering questions, giving a current parent's perspective on what our school is really like
- 3) Post positive reviews of Growing Curiosity on Yelp, Google, Facebook, greatschools.com, etc.
- 4) Chat with prospective parents at campus events promotional events like It's My Park Day, Education Fairs, etc.
- 5) Share your ideas for outreach/better marketing

Photographer

- 1) Attend and photograph important classroom events, school-wide events, transitional ceremonies, promotional events, opening/closing circle, outdoor excursions, etc.

Gardening

- 1) Plan, organize, and carry out at least one individual garden project (additional shade sails, installing a rainwater tank, school murals, etc.)
- 2) Help plan, organize, and get materials for garden work days

appendix d - table of medical conditions

Temperature of 100 degrees or above	Child must be picked up immediately. Child may return after 24 hours of normal temperature without medication. (i.e. Children’s Tylenol, etc.)
Untreated eye infection (pink eye)	Child may return the next day with medicine.
Rashes	Unidentified rashes need a doctor’s written confirmation that it is not contagious. If treatment is needed, child may return after 12 hours.
Scabies/Lice (See appendix f for details)	Child may return after treatment and when they are free from all lice and nits (lice), or with doctor’s confirmation that the condition is no longer contagious.
Pinworms	Child may return to school after taking the first dose of medicine, bathing, and trimming and scrubbing nails.
Diarrhea	Child may return after 24 hour without incident, or with doctor’s confirmation that the condition is not contagious.
Vomiting	Child may return after 24 hours without incident.
Chicken pox, measles, mumps, roseola, etc.)	Child may return after sores have scabbed over, or with doctor’s confirmation that the condition is no longer contagious.
Strep throat/Tonsillitis	Child may return after 24 hours of treatment with medication.
Sick child without distinct symptoms	Parent will be notified and possibly asked to pick child up.
COVID-19	COVID-19, until at least 14 days after all symptoms have subsided, but no sooner than 14 days after onset of symptoms. If a family member tests positive, the child may return 14 days after the parent stops showing symptoms. Growing Curiosity is required to get further guidance on all positive cases in the community, so this guideline is subject to change based on that guidance.

*NOTE: If your child has a highly contagious condition (such as lice, a stomach bug, the flu, etc.), please notify the office so that appropriate steps may be taken.

appendix e - Parent Commitments

Growing Curiosity Community School requires parents and staff to support their child's education by agreeing to commit and adhere to the following.

My family (or a family representative) agrees to:

- class-specific commitments:
 - drop off and pick up my child on time
 - keep updated on class-specific information by regularly checking Transparent Classroom, and the blog (will be emailed).
 - maintain regular contact with my child's teachers and attend all scheduled parent conferences
 - Attend community nights and parent information nights regularly
 - reinforce with my child the importance of kindness toward others and care for the learning environment
 - replace or pay for damage to facilities caused by my child any lost or damaged books or materials assigned or loaned to my child and for any intentional
 - take any grievances directly to the person with whom I have an issue.
 -  Like our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/growingcurious/>
 - fulfill my financial responsibility to Growing Curiosity Community School;
 - fill out and return feedback forms in order to help Growing Curiosity continue to improve and grow.



I have read the Growing Curiosity Community Handbook 2020-2021 and will adhere to, and support my child in adhering to, the requirements and responsibilities of the handbook.

Student Name

Parent/Legal Guardian (1) Name

Parent/Legal Guardian (1) Signature

Date

Parent/Legal Guardian (2) Name

Parent/Legal Guardian (2) Signature

Date

