

**Red Apple School
Parent Handbook
2021/2022**

***All items relating to the COVID Pandemic are italicized and in red ink.
Please read and sign the COVID Pandemic addendum.***

Red Apple School strives to provide a caring and loving atmosphere where children have time to experiment, explore and discover God's world. We offer a developmental Christ-centered program using an integrated curriculum. Each child is seen as a unique and special child of God, with potential for growth and development in all areas.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

Red Apple School does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

Required Policies

Red Apple School is licensed and regulated by the Department of Texas Health and Human Services. The following policies are required by Child Care Licensing per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501.

1. HOURS OF OPERATION

The Red Apple School building is open Monday through Friday, August through May, per the Red Apple School calendar. Red Apple extended hours occur from **7:00 a.m. to 8:55 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.** Your child **MUST** be enrolled in the extended day program to be in attendance during the extended hours. The Red Apple School day hours are from 8:55 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Please refer to the calendar for all holidays.

2. DROP OFF AND RELEASE OF CHILDREN PROCEDURES

Per Texas state laws, parents have a right to access their child at any time. However, we strongly encourage parents to drop off their children by 8:55 a.m. each day so that the child can take part in our full educational program. In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Children will not be released to a minor. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment form and in Brightwheel to pick up, and the authorized adult must bring a picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

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Students who come to school between 8:55 and 2:30 will be dropped off and picked up each day at their designated door. **A staff member will screen your child's temperature before they may come into the building.** Children MUST be accompanied by an adult who waits while the child is screened. Students will be accompanied to their classrooms by a Red Apple staff member.

Students who are dropped off and picked up during Extended Day hours will be accompanied to the classroom by the adult who is dropping them off or picking them up. All families coming during Extended Day hours will enter through the main Red Apple entrance. Parents who have students who are in the Extended Day Program will be given a code to use on the keypad outside the main entrance door to enter the building. The Extended Day access code will only work from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and from 3:00 to 5:30.

ALL PARENTS MUST SIGN THEIR CHILDREN IN THROUGH THE BRIGHTWHEEL APP AND ANSWER THE SCREENING QUESTIONS BEFORE SIGNING THEIR CHILD IN FOR THE DAY. Families will be given a business card with the QR code to sign their child in and out and the QR code will also be posted outside the building and the classrooms.

In the event of rain, students will be dropped off in their classrooms by parents and picked up from their classrooms by parents. We will send a Brightwheel notification for Rainy Day Pickup.

Students must remain with parents after the student is signed out for the day. **Please do not leave your child unattended before or after school.**

3. ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY

Please see attached COVID policies. **Children who are ill should not attend school.** Red Apple School observes the standards set by the Department of Texas Health and Human Services for ill children. The most common standards for exclusion are:

1. Illness that prevents the child from participating in childcare activities, **including outdoor play.**
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.
3. **A temperature of 100 or higher.**
4. **Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrollable diarrhea, 2 or more vomiting episodes in 24-hours.**
5. **A dry cough.**
6. **Loss of taste or smell.**
7. **Chest pain.**

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If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child apart from the other children with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices.

Parents need to pick up children within 30 minutes of notification. In the event of *severe* illness or injury, Red Apple School may call for an ambulance at the parent's expense.

If a child is sent home sick from our program, we ask that they please not return until the child is symptom free for 48-hours, *and if applicable will require a negative COVID test.*

4. MEDICATION

Please inform your physician that your child is in a full-day or part-day preschool/kindergarten program and that you prefer to give medications at home, morning and evening. Knowing this, many doctors will order longer acting medications. Limiting medications dispensed away from home prevents medication errors.

If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- **Prescription medication will be accepted only if it is in the original container, has the child's name on the container and the correct dosage of medication to be administered is given and hasn't reached its expiration date.**
- Nonprescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturer's recommendation on the label. Medication must be in the original container and accompanied with a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.
- Before any prescription or nonprescription medication can be administered, we must have permission in writing by the child's parent or guardian. Please fill out the medication forms. Please bring a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy
- Insect repellent and sunscreen must be applied before a student comes to school, or we must have a signed medical authorization to administer the sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Medication needs to go home after the last date that the medication is administered.

Health forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment showing any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history. These must be updated and kept current.

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5. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING EMERGENCIES

In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day. The information will also be notated in Brightwheel.

In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), the staff will call 911, giving location and nature of emergency. As appropriate, the staff will administer CPR or first aid measures. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified. **All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency.**

If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance the staff will contact the Poison Control Center 1.800.222.1222.

6. PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Open Communication with parents is very important to children's success. Red Apple School has multiple ways of communicating with parents. Listed below are ways that Red Apple School may communicate with parents:

Brightwheel Notifications
Email notifications

Written memos placed in your child's folders
Social media sites such as Facebook
Verbal communication with the child's teachers and Director

7. DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY

Red Apple School staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Just a few examples used in this situation are: 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 and redirecting behaviors. Red Apple School staff will never use Corporal Punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

If a Red Apple student begins to display behavior that is dangerous to himself/herself or other students in the classroom, a parent and teacher conference will be scheduled and led by the Director. A behavior plan will be developed at the meeting that will be put into action immediately.

8.SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

If a student continues to struggle with behavior that is unsafe to themselves or others in the classroom after a behavioral plan has been put into place and implemented, Red Apple School has the right to suspend or expel the student for their safety, as well as the safety of other students in the classroom. The suspension and expulsion decision are at the discretion of the Director and the Board of Directors.

9. LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Parents are responsible for sending a lunch and snack with their child each day. **Due to the fact that parents are responsible for bringing their child's meals, Red Apple cannot be responsible for the nutritional value of the meal, or for meeting the student's daily food needs.** Please send a SMALL snack with your child. The snack should fit in a snack size zip lock bag, or small container. You may also send a fruit or a vegetable. Snacks may **not** have high sugar content,

such as candy or cookies. Red Apple will provide **AFTER** school snacks to the students in the Extended Day Program. ***Please do not send food that needs to be refrigerated or heated.***

Prohibited food items:

Gogurts – squeezable yogurts

Pizza Lunchables

Red juice

NO LUNCHES MAY BE DELIVERED THROUGH A DELIVERY SERVICE SUCH AS UBER, DOOR DASH, ECT.

10. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization records must be current for all children enrolled in Red Apple School. A copy must be in the child's file. If immunizations are given throughout the school year, an updated copy must be furnished to the school.

From time to time Red Apple School may have children enrolled that have not received immunizations due to personal belief. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children.

11. HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Hearing and Vision Screening for possible vision and hearing problems is required by the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 36, for children who are 4-years old. Parents bring in screening proof from their local pediatrician.

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12. ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Upon selecting Red Apple School to meet your child's educational needs, **all enrollment paperwork is required before the child can start our program.** Paperwork required for enrollment includes:

- Enrollment Form
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- Physician's Statement
- Current Immunizations or Affidavit to Waive Immunizations
- Allergy Form with Plan of Action, if necessary
- Hearing & Vision Screening for all 4 year old students
- Signed Handbook Acknowledgement
- Signed Tuition Contract
- *COVID Acknowledgement Form*

Parents will be notified within 30 days of any policy change in writing. Signatures from parents may be required.

13. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If parents have questions or concerns about our program, we encourage you to have open communication with your child's teacher and the Director. Our door is always open to hear any questions or concerns.

14. PARENT INVOLVMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Each classroom will have visitor and involvement opportunities based on the needs of the classroom. As a parent, or guardian, you are welcome to come into the Red Apple School building to see and have access of your child at any time.

15. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Red Apple School is licensed and regulated by The Department of Texas Health and Human Services and we follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review a copy of these standards in our front office or view the 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>

16. COMPLIANCE HISTORY

Red Apple School encourages parents to view our compliance history with Child Care Licensing. Our most recent inspection is posted on our parent communication board or you may view this at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/default.asp. Parents may also contact our local childcare licensing office at (817) 321-8604.

17. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Red Apple School has an Emergency Preparedness Plan that is designed to ensure the safety of our students during an emergency by addressing staff responsibility and facility readiness with respect to emergency evacuation and relocation. The emergency preparedness plan is part of the Red Apple Staff training and is located in the Red Apple Office and is available to view at any time.

18. NURSING MOTHERS' ROOM

Red Apple School offers a private "family room" for nursing mothers to feed their children. The room is located in the two year old hallway. All parents have the right to provide breast milk or breastfeed while your child is the care of Red Apple School.

19. CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Red Apple School are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of Red Apple School are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Red Apple School take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, the staff of Red Apple School cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith." Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to: " Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body " Severe verbal reprimands " Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season " Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.) " Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol " Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child " Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time " Failure to attend to the special needs

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of a disabled child " Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside. " Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation. If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

20. HEALTH CHECKS

Red Apple School staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual, they are required to point this out to the parent at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects. A Red Apple staff member may complete a "Incident Report" to document these situations.

21. Staff Immunizations

Red Apple School does not require annual preventable shots and/or immunizations, but we highly recommend our employees to get vaccinated and immunized.

22. GANG-FREE ZONE

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Red Apple School is a GANG-FREE ZONE.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

23. TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is paid each month by the 10th of the month. Drafts or checks returned NSF will be charged \$25. A \$10 late fee will be added for all non-payments after the 10th of each month.

If you chose to pay your tuition using a credit or debit card **you will be charged a processing fee.** The amount of the fee will be dependent on the card used. You may pay with cash, check or set up your ACH account on Brightwheel to avoid a processing fee.

24. EXTRA FEES

Our program is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm. Red Apple School is only licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to care for children during these specified times. If you are late picking up your child, a **\$1 PER MINUTE** late penalty will be charged to your account. Children who are not enrolled in Extended Day, will not be taken to Extended Day if they are late being picked up, but will be in the school office and late penalties will be noted on the next month's statement.

25. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In order not to confuse school toys with a child's personal property, and in accordance with the attached COVID policy, we ask that children not bring playthings from home. Red Apple School cannot be responsible for lost or broken personal toys. Two exceptions to this are a stuffed animal for use during naptime by preschool children and for Show & Tell purposes. You will be notified by your child's teacher if, and when, the class will have Show & Tell.

26. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICIES

If inclement weather should occur, Red Apple School will send out a notification on Brightwheel to notify families of a closing, or late start, followed by an email and notification on social media.

In case of serious emergencies such as earthquakes, fire, storms, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified, if possible, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

27. OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine. Weather permitting, toddlers are required to have 60 minutes of outdoor time, and 4s, 5s and Kindergarten are required to have 90 minutes of outdoor play. These times are based on an 8 hour day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. **Appropriate footwear, preferably closed toe shoes, are to be worn to school to play on the playground. Teachers cannot change a child's shoes at school. Children may not wear flip flops due to the danger these shoes may cause on the playground. Please make sure privacy shorts are worn under dresses.**

Per the Department of Texas Health and Human Services, children too sick to go outside should not be at school.

28. BIRTHDAYS

Most children enjoy celebrating special events with their preschool friends (birthdays, new babies, and holidays). Parents may send a teacher approved treat to share with the class,

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however, **CUPCAKES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE SENT AS A BIRTHDAY SNACK.** Please make arrangements with the teacher several days in advance and be respectful of any allergies within the classroom. Red Apple will also recognize birthdays and half-birthdays during chapel.

Private, out of school, party invitations will only be passed out at school if all children in the class are invited. Teachers and administration are not allowed to give out another student's personal information.

29. SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES

Please do NOT ever allow your children to walk through our parking lot unattended for any reason.

Please do NOT under any circumstances leave a child in an unattended car in the Red Apple School parking lot.

Please do NOT park in the designated fire zones on the curb outside of the building. Parents may not park on the curb while waiting on a child, picking or dropping off a child.

You will be notified of any incidents other than minor scrapes or bumps with a phone call. We will also give you a written report at pick up time. First aid will be applied to minor incidents. In the event medical attention is required, we will notify you immediately.

Finally, we are so thankful that you have decided to send your child to Red Apple School for the foundational years. Please do not ever hesitate to reach out with any concerns or questions. Your family is a blessing to our school!