



## 2018-2019 Parent Handbook

*The child is endowed with unknown powers which can guide us to a radiant future. If what we really want is a new world, then education must take as its aim the development of these hidden possibilities.*

~Maria Montessori

**REVISED FEBRUARY 2018**

## **MISSION & PHILOSOPHY**

**The mission of One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment** is to assist parents in providing a holistic and meaningful education that cultivates the intellectual, social and emotional development of the child while also instilling a lifelong love of learning.

We believe that parents are the first teachers of their children and remain the most important adults in the life of the child. In communication and partnership with parents, we will encourage growth in all areas of the child's life. It is through this partnership that we believe children will thrive at home, at school and in society.

Each child at One Tree will be gently guided to discover his or her inner strength and courage, to develop a sense of compassion and be provided a socially and emotionally safe environment in which he or she will be truly connected to his/herself, to the environment and to others. We help children with this is by teaching grace and courtesy as well as by teaching conflict resolution utilizing the "Peace Rose." We also help children learn to speak up for themselves when needed both in the classroom with their teachers as well when needed with their friends in social situations.

We do expect a certain level of independence on the part of the child in order for the child to be able to thrive in our environment. Independence is a key component in our (and Montessori's) philosophy. One way in which One Tree will be encouraging this independence is through emphasizing a respect for oneself and for the environment by encouraging children to make choices as to what they work on and by helping children to learn to manage their time in order to be able to get work done that is needed for their learning. We are more than happy to help parents learn how to instill this sense of independence in their child at home and at school.

Our multi-age classes allow for older children to serve as mentors to younger children. We believe that this helps to foster the development of critical thinking, problem solving and leadership skills as well as encourages respect for different levels and stages of learning. The multi-age environment also helps children to develop a strong sense of community by providing an opportunity to teach and to learn from each other.

## **ONE TREE'S COMMUNITY**

### **One Tree's Teachers will:**

- Create a peaceful, stimulating environment where children can learn.
- Facilitate the child's social and emotional development.
- Convey friendliness, caring and respect to children and parents.
- Guide each child through an individualized learning plan.
- Communicate with parents and support parents as needed for the homeschool portion.
- Be committed to learning and to professional growth in all areas of One Tree's mission.

### **What is expected of the children:**

- Know and follow the classroom rules and procedures.
- Be polite, considerate, mannerly, and courteous to peers and adults.
- Be a contributing, positive member of One Tree's community.

### **How parents can help:**

- Make mornings relaxed and unhurried.
- Have child **arrive on time** each day.
- Allow your child to *independently* get out of the car at drop-off.
- Pick up child on time at the end of the day.

- *Encourage independence* in your child through responsibilities at home each day (e.g., choosing own clothing, packing lunch and snack, etc.)
  - Communicate with teachers about family issues that may affect your child while at One Tree. This may include, but not be limited to: parents being away from home, a new person living in the home, an illness, a separation or divorce, hospitalization of a family member, accident or death in the family, moving, death of a pet, significant home renovations, etc.
  - Communicate with teacher about how the homeschooling portion of the week is going.
  - Read the forms that are sent home as well as all of the emails that are sent.
  - Attend scheduled parent/teacher conferences.
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## **ONE TREE'S CLASSROOMS**

One Tree's classroom is prepared in such a way that the children will be able to work freely and independently after the teacher gives formal lessons. The teacher's role is one of the observer and guide as the children progress at their own pace. The environment is prepared to guide the learner toward a progression of skills. The carefully prepared environment includes specially made materials for specified development skill progression. Each area of the classroom indirectly trains them for proficiency in the main areas of traditional studies, through real life, hands-on experience.

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## **FIRST WEEK OF THE PROGRAM**

The first week of the program consists of 2 ½ days to help acclimate the child to the environment. We will be working on classroom rules and procedures and getting to know each other.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

We are thankful that parents who enroll their children in One Tree's programs are committed and engaged with their child's education. We ask that each parent contribute a minimum of 10 hours over the course of the school year. However, we always welcome and can use help beyond the minimum 10 hours. Areas such as reading support, care of the building and outdoor environment, cleaning, substituting when a teacher is out, etc. are examples of ways in which you can help out.

We also have a PTO that meets one time a month to plan various activities (such as fundraisers, school events, school beautification days, etc.)

Classroom observations are open and encouraged by One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment. We are more than happy to schedule an observation 4-6 weeks after the start of the program to ensure that the children are well-adjusted to the rhythm of the day. By this time, children will have made the classroom their own and will not be as distracted by observers. Additionally, please feel free to check in on your child, but please be aware that we would like to have minimal classroom interruptions and we will ask that you observe quietly while you visit.

## **MEDIA**

Television and movies are not a part of One Tree's curriculum. We want to discourage parents from allowing children to watch shows, including and *especially cartoons and video games, with violence*. Children tend to act out what they have seen on television and as part of our overall philosophy we believe in maintaining a peaceful environment. In addition, studies have shown that watching television can decrease a child's attention span, something we will be working on every day to increase.

If you do allow your child to watch TV at home, please be aware of the amount of media time allowed. We recommend *no more* than 30 minutes daily. We also recommend limiting media exposure from Monday through Thursday evening so that the events viewed in the media are not acted out at school.

We have a playground and classroom policy of not discussing movies, TV or video games while at school. Our goal is to encourage students to be creative in their play by not relying on what information they have seen on a screen.

Finally, we believe in protecting childhood by protecting children from adult information. What this means is that we do not discuss adult topics (e.g., Las Vegas shooting) with children. If and when an event occurs that is televised/broadcasted through the media, our philosophy is to not share with children the events as to not create a sense of fear in them. We encourage parents to take this same approach. However, we respect families that choose to share these events with children, but we do ask that if you choose to share that you ask your child to not discuss the topic at school. If a child does approach a staff member asking about an event, we will simply state that “we are safe here at school” and “that is a topic for your parents to discuss with you.”

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## **DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM GUIDANCE**

One of our goals is to help children to develop and maintain self-control. Acceptable behavior is encouraged through positive reinforcement. We offer a firm and caring discipline policy consisting primarily of redirection, natural consequences and “time apart”. Consequences are consistent with the age of the child and the action. Attention spans and skills of children are considered so that behavior expectations are developmentally appropriate. To better understand from where our discipline policy philosophy comes from, a good resource is Jane Nelson’s *Positive Discipline* book.

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that may arise, this handbook empowers the staff to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the policies of the program, even though not specified. Injustice to the other children or other circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from One Tree’s program. If a child does practice an injustice or purposeful harm towards another student, we will call the parents and ask that the child be picked up immediately.

When a child’s repetitive and disruptive or harmful behavior cannot be resolved by using preventative techniques, logical or natural consequences or conflict resolution, he/she will be asked to leave the activity. The child will never be humiliated, isolated, or made to feel badly about him/herself. We will also never use corporal punishment.

When a child’s behavior does not change after these conscientious efforts, the family will be asked to remove the child from the program. In cases of student removal from the program, we will not be able to issue refunds.

If we see a pattern of behavior for which these techniques do not seem to be working, we will work with the parents to try and resolve the issue by developing a plan of consistent expectations for the classroom and home.

If after a reasonable period of time, the disruptive or harmful behavior continues, One Tree has the authority to call the parents and ask the child to be picked up immediately.

Privacy protects all parties from the disclosure of information regarding a student to anyone other than his/her parent or legal guardian and One Tree’s staff. Reports are not shared with those who are not in a position of authority.

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## **COMMUNICATING WITH ONE TREE STAFF**

If you need to communicate with a teacher or an assistant, please write a note, leave a voicemail or send an email and we will schedule a time to meet with you. However, you choose to contact us, we will respond in a timely manner.

During arrival and dismissal, we will be focused on the children and we will likely not be able to converse with parents at this time.

If you need to talk with us during the day, please leave a voicemail message. We will check our messages frequently. If there is an emergency, please continue to call to ensure that we pick up the phone.

We also ask that you **limit text messages** for: arriving late to pick up or drop-off, your child being absent or for an emergency situation. Anything outside of immediate needs (e.g., arrival and pick up) we ask that you utilize email or voicemail. Please also **do not send text messages outside of regular school days and hours** (e.g., not at night or on a Saturday) to be respectful of staff's time off. Please feel free, however, to email anytime. Email messages will be responded to in a timely manner.

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## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

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### **TBD FOR 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR**

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#### **LUNCH & SNACKS**

At One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment, we believe in educating the whole child, which includes the idea of teaching healthy eating habits. Children are to bring packed lunches, a snack and a water bottle for use throughout the day. Please be sure that the lunches are balanced, nutritious and that they represent the 5 food groups as best as possible. Items that are discouraged include Lunchables, squeeze tube yogurt, juice boxes, chocolate or vanilla beverages, candy, chewing gum, sugary sweets or sodas, etc. **we ask that all lunch and snack items contain 10g or less of sugar. We will politely ask your child to put any item we do not allow back in their lunchbox and let them know that they can enjoy that item afterschool.**

The one exception is in celebration of a birthday when treats for the whole class may be brought by a child's parent. In these cases, please no icing or artificial ingredients. We also ask that you make an effort to bring a child-sized treat (such as mini-cupcakes, two-bite brownies, etc.). Please also notify the teacher ahead of time so that she can prepare for the celebration.

Because One Tree wants to encourage children to be as independent as they are developmentally able, **please send their food in containers that are manageable for them.** As a community, we are also trying to become more and more "green," so please send reusable containers versus plastic bags or other packaging that cannot be recycled.

**Please do not send anything that requires refrigeration or warming.** We will not be able to keep children's lunch or snack items in a refrigerator. Ice packs may be used in lunches to keep items cool. We will provide utensils and napkins for the children.

#### **ALLERGIES AND DIETARY RESTRICTIONS**

If your child has any allergies or aversions to certain foods, please let us know in writing on your Emergency Care form.

We will accommodate any allergy your child has. If it is very serious, we will make sure all families are aware of this allergy when packing lunches and/or providing a snack. Also, in severe cases, we will post notices in the classroom. If your child requires medication (e.g., Epi-pen) in case of an emergency, we ask that you provide one that can be left at school throughout the school year. We will train our staff accordingly

For dietary restrictions and preferences that are not allergy producing, please give us a complete written description of your requests. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet all of these preferences when providing any food, but we will be sure and inform you if and when this may be the case.

**THIS SCHOOL YEAR WE ARE A NUT-FREE FACILITY! PLEASE DO NOT PACK ANY ITEM THAT CONTAINS ANY TYPE OF NUT (PEANOT, ALMOND, PECAN, CASHEW, ETC.)**

## **WE HAVE A CHILD WITH A SEVERE NUT ALLERGY AND WE WANT TO KEEP THIS CHILD SAFE!**

### **PERSONAL ITEMS FROM HOME**

On occasion children will have the opportunity to share something they have brought from home. These days will be designated and we will ask that children bring relevant items that are related to the discussion we will be having that day. We very much value educational items that are interesting and that contribute to the subject at hand.

**Please do not allow your child to bring toys to play with or to show friends at school. If a toy or game is brought, it will be put in a safe place until the end of the day when the child may take it home. If a child brings a “ball” or other “outdoor” play items, your child will need to be okay with every child having the opportunity to use it.**

### **BIRTHDAYS**

#### **Non-School Party Invitations**

Parties outside of school are a great way for One Tree families to meet and to celebrate with classmates and other parents. Please talk to your child about limiting their birthday conversations to home and not at school. WE also ask parents to mail or email invitations rather handing them out at school, especially if not all the students in the class will be invited to the event.

### **CLOTHING**

Please have your child come dressed in comfortable clothes appropriate for the weather. We will have outdoor time if it is 32 degrees or above (and quite often below 32 degrees if it doesn't feel too cold), so please dress your child accordingly (including dressing them in a coat, hat and gloves). If it is raining, please provide rain gear. You may also want to bring a pair of rain boots to leave at the school for rainy and muddy days.

**LABEL** all clothing that you send to One Tree. If it is not labeled, we cannot guarantee that it will be returned to the appropriate child.

Please help develop your child's independence by allowing him or her to choose clothes that are easy to manage without the help of an adult. We believe that children take great pride in dressing themselves. Please also make sure the clothing is okay to get messy with glue, paint, markers and outdoor play. Please do not allow them to wear anything that would upset you if it got ruined.

When dressing for school, we request that children not wear “character” clothing (Spiderman, Dora, etc.) as much as possible. We do not allow shirts/clothing with sarcastic humor on them (e.g., “I'm with stupid,” etc.).

Skirts with shorts built in are preferred for comfortable outdoor play and exploration. Bloomers may be substituted. Dresses/skirts without either are not allowed. For older children, please also be aware of the length of the shorts and skirts. Please also make sure a child's shirt does not go below the line of the shorts/skirt to avoid the appearance of not wearing shorts/skirts. Pants and shorts are always welcome.

We do ask that you keep at least one complete change of clothes in your child's bin just in case. Please label all of the items in case they get misplaced.

### **SHOES**

Your child will need a pair of indoor shoes (slip on type) to leave at One Tree. We request this to help keep the classroom clean and the children comfortable. **Only send your child in lace up shoes if they have learned to tie them.** Open-toe sandals, clogs, flip-flops are not allowed. Rain boots to be left at school are also requested.

## **MISC. OUTDOOR INFORMATION**

At times, mosquitos are biting in our play yard. Please apply bug spray before arriving to school. We also encourage you to send bug spray (with your child's name) with your child to school so that she/he can apply it him/herself.

We have also, at times, come across poison ivy in our play yard, especially in the "wooded" areas. While we do our best to mark it so that children know to stay away from it, we cannot guarantee that your child will not be exposed to it. If your child has an allergy to poison ivy, we encourage you to educate your child to recognize it as well as to ask your child to stay out of the areas that are more "wooded."

Finally, on sunny and warmer days, please apply sunscreen to your child before you arrive to school. We also encourage you to provide sunscreen for your child and teach him/her to reapply it on him/herself when needed at school.

## **ONE TREE'S CLOSINGS FOR WEATHER**

In the event of inclement weather, please check your email the morning of to make sure there has been no last minute changes. Emails regarding school closures for the day will be sent by 7:00 AM. **All communication regarding inclement weather and school closures will be communicated via email. Text messages received regarding school closures will not be responded to.** Every school year we allot 4 inclement weather days. If we have to close more than 4 days during the school year we will consider adding on days to the end of the year.

In the event that One Tree should be closed mid-day, all children will need to be picked up in a timely manner. If you cannot pick up your child, we can only release them to a person listed on their Emergency Information form. This is a strict policy for the safety of the children, so please consider it when you are filling out the Emergency Information form. Please advise your pick-up people that they will have to tell us a password in order for us to release your child to him/her.

## **ABSCENCES AND ILLNESSES:**

When your child will be absent from school, please call One Tree Tutorial at your earliest convenience to let us know. This will enable us to plan accordingly.

A child with a contagious illness may not be in attendance. If the illness begins at school, the parent will be notified and the child will need to be picked up in a timely manner by the parent or someone authorized on the Emergency Care Form.

Under the following conditions children may not be in attendance:

- A fever of 100 or greater. The child must be fever free without fever suppressants (such as Tylenol or Advil) for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Discharge from eyes. A child may return to school after an eye infection when they have been on medication and are fever free for 24 hours.
- When a child has diarrhea, he/she must have had a normal bowel movement or be diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If you child has a nasal drainage of any color other than clear, there is usually an infection. Please check with your pediatrician if it continues more than 3 days.
- Sore throat or persistent rattling cough.
- Vomiting, the night before or morning of attending school. A child may not return to school until 24 hours has passed since the last episode.
- Head lice (All eggs must be removed & treatment to kill live lice must be completed before returning to school.)
- Any type of contagious illness
- Any health condition that the teacher or school believes to be unhealthy for the child or other exposed children.

Again, please let us know as soon as possible if your child will be out. It is also helpful for us to know when your child has a contagious illness so that other parents can be advised of possible exposure and so that we can look for similar symptoms in other children.

If your child goes home one day with a fever/vomiting, etc., and he/she returns the next day we will ask you to take him/her home.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS**

### **Over-the counter medication:**

We cannot administer over the counter medication to a child.

### **Prescription medication:**

Prescription medication can be administered only when the following conditions are met:

1. The medicine is brought to One Tree in its original container.
2. A note from the prescribing doctor or a pharmacy printed information sheet that describes the dosage, time and a list of possible side effects.
3. Parents complete and sign a medication authorization form.
4. Parents initial the medication form each afternoon when picking up the child.

One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment reserves the right to refuse the responsibility of prescription administration for any reason. If this occurs, we will be happy to accommodate parent visits during the day for the purpose of medicine administration.

## **EMERGENCY CARE AUTHORIZATION FORMS**

It is required that we have a parent-signed form on file authorizing emergency medical care for your child. If your child should become seriously ill or injured, One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment will make every attempt to notify you. However, if the parents cannot be reached, this authorization gives us the permission to seek emergency medical treatment for your child.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT/PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION FORM**

For the safety of your child, a completed emergency contact/pick-up authorization form must be completed and signed before the beginning of the program's year. If there is a change in information during the school year, please request a new form to keep all information up-to-date. Please notify those on your form that he/she will be asked to tell us your "password."

### **Accident Report:**

Any incident of physical injury to the child will be documented by attending staff. The details of how the injury occurred, first aid measures taken, and a signature of the attending staff member will be sent home with the parent that day, as well as a copy placed in the child's file. In the case of serious injury, the parent will be contacted immediately.

### **Faculty and Staff:**

Our faculty and staff have been chosen with care for their education, experience and love for children. We share a common vision for children's care and seek to provide a feeling of comfort and safety for the children through predictability and open communication with their home. All employees and working volunteers have had thorough background checks with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigations and up to date CPR and First Aid training for the assured safety of our students and the confidence of their parents.

## **ADMISSIONS**

No person shall, on the basis of race, national/ethnic origin, color, religious belief, sexual orientation, faith or creed be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any One

Tree Tutorial and Enrichment program.

Children at One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment must be registered as a homeschool/ non-traditional student to meet state attendance laws and in order to be able to attend One Tree's program. In grades K-8, homeschoolers have two options in order to be in compliance with the law:

1. Register with the local superintendent of public schools. You must register by August 1, maintain attendance records, and instruct 4 hours per day for 180 days. The teaching parent must have a high school diploma or G.E.D., and students must be tested when public school children are tested in grades 5, 7 and 9.
2. Register with a Church Related School that offers services to homeschoolers. You must meet the requirements of that particular school and have your child tested whenever they test their children.

Applications are accepted throughout the year, and we will enroll children based on the optimum age balance for our multi-age classroom, the earliest date of application and enrollment agreement received and by the philosophical fit between family and our program. We will also give priority to siblings of enrolled children.

There is a \$50 non-refundable application fee (a \$25 fee for second and subsequent children). Once a child has been accepted to One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment, parents must submit a non-refundable \$200 tuition deposit, which will be applied towards tuition. Additionally, a parent or guardian assuming the financial responsibility will sign and return an enrollment contract.

A check-list of forms needed for each student's file will be given to each family. Please see that One Tree receives all of the forms requested before the start of the first day.

**It is important to fully understand that One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment is not a licensed childcare facility, nor a school. One Tree will not be offering credits nor are we accredited by any agency. One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment is a tutoring program for children who are being homeschooled. We are committed to providing a quality tutoring program for children, but we will not be held responsible for children who do not pass any state required tests or who do not fulfill state required homeschool attendance laws.**

## **TUITION & FEES**

Tuition is based on a yearly sum. Tuition payment options are outlined in the enrollment contract.

Enrollment is for the **full academic year** and no portion of the tuition paid or outstanding will be refunded or canceled due to absence, subsequent pause in attendance, academic performance, accident, transfer, sickness, withdrawal or dismissal from school, unless by express written consent by the Director. The fact that One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment allows tuition and fees to be paid in two or more installments does not create a fractional contract or in any way relieve the parents of the responsibility for the entire tuition.

For more information on tuition and fees, including payment plans, please refer to the enrollment contract.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment recognizes the importance of protecting the rights and privacy of our children, families and staff. The practice of maintaining confidentiality of verbal information and written records is part of the ethical principle and professional behavior of our program. Student records may consist of, but are not limited to: attendance records, health and emergency information, assessments, developmental and academic progress reports, accident reports, parent authorizations for various activities, and correspondence documentation. Parents and guardians have the right to review these records directly related to their child during a scheduled appointment with a staff member present. Others who may review these records include One Tree's staff members and

accrediting agencies such as the Department of Education and the Department of Human Services.

**Parent Library:**

The staff of One Tree Tutorial has many books by and about Maria Montessori, Rudolf Steiner, as well as many other books on child development, parenting, education, etc. Please feel free to talk to us about your reading interest in this area and we may be able to both suggest and/or loan you appropriate books.

**Addenda to This Manual**

On occasion, an experience at One Tree may result in policy changes to this handbook. If our policies are adjusted, we will notify parents in writing of the new policy. In addition, if you ever have any questions or concerns about our policies or their implementation, or any aspect of your experience One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment, we ask that you address them promptly with us. Even concerns that may seem small can be addressed quickly and avoid any unnecessary stress for you and your child. We value your input and suggestions and are so happy that you and your child are part of One Tree Tutorial and Enrichment!