

Kids' Zone Learning Center Policy Handbook



Welcome! Kids' Zone looks forward to getting to know you and your child. We offer licensed childcare for children ranging in age from 6 weeks – 12 years. With many locations to serve you in the central Texas area.

Kids' Zone's philosophy is to provide a developmentally appropriate program for each child in our care. We pledge to help children achieve independence, self-discipline, social development, self-knowledge, enthusiasm for learning, wholesome attitudes, and intellectual growth.

Our goal is to provide a safe, loving, and Christian environment to prepare your child for the future. Our longtime teachers and staff are dedicated to helping each child discover their unique potential- academically, socially, and inter-personally.

Founder- Donna Brown

Owner- Whitney Brown

General Manager- Danielle Crais

Director- Jenna Laake

www.kidszonelearningcenter.org

Statement of Faith

We believe God's word is the absolute truth and He should be at the heart of all educational pursuits. We believe there is only one true God, embodied in the trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe Jesus died for our sins on the cross and all who believe in Him shall have eternal life.

Mission Statement

Kids' Zone Learning Center's mission is to prepare children for a lifetime of learning and leadership; following a quality Christian curriculum that fosters academic, social, emotional, and spiritual growth while instilling a respect for the core values of honesty, loyalty, perseverance, and compassion.

You are welcome to visit at any time to observe your child or participate in their activities and events. We will post updates and pictures of events on the Brightwheel app or our Facebook Page. If you wish to have your child omitted from our Facebook page, please inform the office in writing.

Please feel free to review and discuss any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of Kids' Zone with our Director.

You may review a copy of the Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers and our most recent Licensing inspection report. Our local Child Care Regulation Office is located in Georgetown. The telephone number is 512-864-2800 or you can visit them on the web at www.txchildcaresearch.org.

Protective and Regulatory Services hotline for child abuse is: 1-800-252-5400.

Hours of Operation

Kids' Zone is open January through December, Monday through Friday from 7:00 am. to 6:00 pm. For children picked up after 6:00 pm, a \$1.00 late fee will incur with each minute. If late pick-up is a regular occurrence, additional charges will be added.

The center observes the following holidays:

New Year's Day

President's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Thanksgiving Day

Friday after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

A recognized holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. A recognized holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

Enrollment

Kids' Zone accepts children between the ages of 6 weeks to 12 years. For enrollment, the following must be submitted prior to starting:

Completed admission form

Signed physician's statement

Current immunization records

Signed policy handbook acknowledgment

Registration fee (non-refundable)

Parents may email the staff at kidszonedt@yahoo.com or call 512-746-4144 to make any changes to their child's contact information or admission forms at any time.

Withdrawal

If a child must be withdrawn from Kids' Zone, a two-week written notice must be provided to the Director or Assistant Director. Families failing to provide sufficient notice of withdrawal will be charged tuition equivalent to two weeks from the date of notification/withdrawal.

If a child is repeatedly unable to adhere to Kids' Zone's policies, and all other options have been explored (written notification, verbal communication with parents, and probation period), the child will be removed from enrollment. Kids' Zone has the right to dismiss a child from enrollment at any time. Children may be dismissed from enrollment due to behavior, non-payment or any other reason Kids' Zone deems necessary. Caregivers and/or Directors have ongoing conversations with parents to express concerns and discuss strategies for addressing challenging behaviors. Conversations are framed around our program's objectives. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress.

Please understand if you choose to withdraw for an extended period of time with the intent to return, a spot is not guaranteed. It is recommended you speak with the director to place your child on the waitlist for their expected return date. The only guaranteed way to hold a spot is to pay full-time tuition during the summer.

Tuition Payments

Tuition is to be paid in advance according to weekly, semi-monthly or monthly billing cycles.

Payments, depending on the billing cycle, are due:

Weekly: by Tuesday of the current week

Semimonthly: 1st and 15th of the current billing month

Monthly: 1st day of the current billing month

Late fees will occur if your balance is not paid on time

Tuition will be charged even when a child is absent. No adjustments in tuition are made due to holidays, illness, absences, late arrival, or early dismissal.

Tuition should be submitted through the Brightwheel app or by check, cash, or money order to the Kids' Zone Administration staff. Teachers are not allowed to accept tuition payments. Please do not place tuition payments in your child's backpack or lunchboxes.

Balance reminders will be sent weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly through Brightwheel after late fees have been applied to any account with an outstanding balance. There will be a late payment fee of \$5 per day charged to your account for every day that tuition is considered late.

Childcare will be discontinued for all delinquent accounts unless special arrangements have been made in advance with the Kids' Zone Director. A delinquent account is any account that has accrued a balance equivalent to a half month of tuition or more than one week's tuition.

Please understand that a fall spot is not guaranteed if you choose to drop out for the summer. If a fall spot is needed, your child(ren) will be added to our waitlist. The only guaranteed way to hold a spot for the fall is to pay full-time tuition during the summer.

Tuition is non-refundable. We will hold a credit on your account for 90 days.

Other Fees

All fees listed are subject to change.

Returned check fee - \$15; after the second returned check, parents will be required to pay tuition with cash or money order.

School-Age all-day care - \$30/day if the child is present in addition to the weekly after-school tuition during JISD holidays.

Annual Registration Fee - \$125 per family is due the first of August every year.

Late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute for children picked up after 6:00 pm. If late pick-up is a regular occurrence, your child may be dismissed from the Kids' Zone program.

One week of vacation is allotted per family, per calendar year. You must notify the office in writing when you take your vacation week.

Brightwheel provides a tax statement of childcare tuition payments each year through the app. Statements may be printed, emailed, or faxed upon request of the parent/guardian. Tax statements will not be mailed.

Arrival and Departure

For your child's safety, it is imperative that you physically deliver them to their classroom and check them in with the teacher. Your child must be here by 10:30 am. If your child is not here by this time, they may not come to Kids' Zone for the day. When children come in after this time, it disrupts the other children from their daily schedule and routine.

If your child is going to be absent, please call Kids' Zone or send a message through the Brightwheel app to notify staff of your child's absence.

To ensure the safety of children and staff, the following procedures should be followed:

Parents need to walk their child(ren) in the building and deliver them to their classroom teacher every day. Parents are not permitted to allow their child to exit the car and enter the building on their own. Kids' Zone will not release any child without prior permission from the parent(s). All persons picking up a child must be listed on the child's enrollment form unless a parent or guardian has notified Kids' Zone Administration in advance. Some form of photo identification (Driver's License or state issued ID) must be provided to ensure each child is released only to those previously approved by the child's parent/guardian. Children will not be released to minors (under the age of 18 yrs). Children will not be released to any individual who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol (parent/guardian or otherwise.) Kids' Zone reserves the right to notify the proper authorities if necessary. Kids' Zone reserves the right to not release children and notify the authorities if the child is not properly secured in an appropriate child safety vehicle restraint in accordance with the Texas State Law. Do not leave unattended vehicles running. Remember never to leave a child unattended in a parked vehicle.

Notifications/ Parent information

Kids' Zone will provide a weekly newsletter for parents on the Brightwheel app. Pertinent information concerning your child and information about potential policy changes will be included. You will be notified in writing of any changes to our operational policies and enrollment agreement. You will receive the notice 30 days before the effective change. Policies are reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Information such as parent education courses, breastfeeding, and community resources are available in our Parent Resource center located outside the front office.

Parents will receive daily communication from their child's teacher in written form or via our Brightwheel app. You have the right to request a parent conference at any time.

You may update contact information for your child at any time by either 1. Emailing the change in information to us at kidszonedt@yahoo.com 2. Call the office at 512-746-4144 or let any of the office staff know of the updates.

Communication

Good communication is the key to a successful relationship between parent and teacher. You have the ability to communicate as needed with your child's teacher and center's administrative staff during business hours through the Brightwheel app. Kids' Zone staff will check the messages throughout the day and respond as needed. Communication on Brightwheel will not interfere with the supervision of the children. Staff will log activities and messages when additional coverage is available or when they are not actively supervising children.

Each classroom has an information board that contains the classroom's daily schedule, current activity plans, and other useful information. Each child also has a personal "cubbie" or hook. This is where your child's belongings and important may also be posted.

Your child's teacher will be glad to work with you to provide the best possible care and education for your child. Please understand, however, that your child's teacher must continue with the classroom activities and will not be able to have a lengthy discussion with you during drop-off or pick-up times. If necessary, a meeting can be scheduled for a more suitable time.

The Kids' Zone Director and Assistant Director are available to you. We encourage you to ask questions, make suggestions, or just come by for a chat. Any concerns that may arise concerning policies or procedures may be addressed through a phone call, conference, or e-mail at kidszone2006@yahoo.com. We encourage you to view Brightwheel, our website and/or our Facebook page for information on future activities, special events, and updates.

Discipline Policy

Kids' Zone practices assertive discipline. We encourage good behavior and give praise to each child. However, there are times when unacceptable behavior must be followed with a brief "time out." Continued behavior of that type will be brought to the parent's attention so both Kids' Zone and the parents can work together for the desired behavior and outcome of the situation. Discipline involves training and teaching.

Discipline must be:

Individual and consistent for each child;

Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and

Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which includes at least the following:

Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior;

Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; and

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.

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

Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;

Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;

Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;

Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;

Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;

Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;

Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods for the child's age.

Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;

Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and

If a child is repeatedly unable to adhere to Kids' Zone's set rules, and all other options have been explored, the child will be removed from enrollment. Kids' Zone has the right to dismiss a child from enrollment at any time.

Incident Report

While every effort is made to ensure children's safety, incidents with young children will occur. All Kids' Zone staff members are trained in first aid/CPR for infants, children, and adults. In the event of a minor injury (i.e. scrape, bump, bruise or bite) a staff member will administer appropriate first aid and comfort the child.

Appropriate classroom first aid is limited to cleansing, applying ice, and bandaging the affected area. Further first aid will be administered by a member of Kids' Zone administrative staff. An Incident Report Form will be completed and signed by a Kids' Zone teacher and administrator explaining both the nature and treatment of the injury. The Incident Report will be sent to the parent via the Brightwheel app. A parent/guardian will be contacted for any head bump or bruise involving a child under the age of two or if the administration feels contact is necessary. If an injury is major (i.e. possible broken limb or stitches required), the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. Should a parent/guardian be unavailable, the emergency contact person on the child's enrollment form will be contacted. Should immediate medical attention be required, Kids' Zone will call 9-1-1.

Nap Time

Children 12 Months and younger and non-walking are provided a crib to sleep in with a fitted mattress and fitted sheet. They are positioned on their backs and the environment is free from any choking hazards or other harmful materials. Blankets or any other items such as sleeping aids are prohibited for infants 12 months and younger while in the crib. When children transition out of the cribs, Kids' Zone will provide nap mats for rest time. At this time, you are encouraged to bring a blanket and/or fitted crib sheet for your child. Each child will be provided a clean designated space to store their nap mat and other belongings in the classroom.

Health

We can only accept well children. If your child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or any other signs of illness, please do not bring them and expose the other children to the illness. If a child is sent home with a fever (tympanic (ear) temperature 101 degrees or greater and/or an axillary (armpit) temperature 100 degrees or greater), they must be fever-free without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours before they return. If your child is sent home with diarrhea or vomiting, they must be illness-free for 24 hours before they return. We want to keep Kids' Zone a place that is as "bug" free as possible. Your child's health is as important to us as it is to you.

Kids' Zone will give prescription medication to your child as long as it is in the original container with your child's name on it. Kids' Zone will also give over-the-counter medication if the dosage on the label is appropriate unless accompanied by a doctor's note. You must sign and date a consent form before any medication is given. The consent form is only valid for 14 days from the date it is filled out.

If a medical emergency occurs that involves your child, Kids' Zone will try to reach you by calling the numbers listed in your child's file. If you cannot be reached and your child requires medical assistance, 9-1-1 will be called.

Children age 4 and older will be screened for vision and hearing each Fall. You will receive a copy of the results. If your child is not present on the day of the screening, you will be responsible for obtaining a screening and providing the results to Kids' Zone prior to December 31st.

It is important to Kids' Zone that parents and educators collaborate to support the whole child's development. Kids' Zone invites you to ask about our resource material regarding screen time, oral health, health benefit resources, and various Professional Development and Healthy/Nutritional best practices.

Immunization

We recommend all employees follow the adult immunization schedule provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services, although not required. Each child enrolled must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services in 25 TAC 97. If the child is not current on immunizations, they may only be admitted if they comply with the rules for provisional admittance established by the Texas Department of State Health Services. Children are required to have CURRENT immunizations by the time they enroll. Parents are required to continue to provide up-to-date shot records as their child receives additional shots after the time of enrollment.

Tuberculin Testing

All staff and enrolled children are not required to obtain tuberculin testing per law in Williamson County.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Kids' Zone will be happy to apply sunscreen and insect repellent to your child before the afternoon outdoor recess. Kids' Zone will provide sunscreen daily. Kids' Zone will not provide insect repellent. If you would like to provide your child with your sunscreen, please bring the sunscreen and/or insect spray of your choice labeled with your child's first name and last initial. We will apply the sunscreen/insect repellent according to the product label instructions. Please apply suns

Meals

Kids' Zone provides breakfast and an afternoon snack. Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing their child's lunch each day. Kids' Zone is not responsible for the nutritional value of the lunch or for meeting your child's daily food requirements. We provide milk or water to drink if there is not a drink in their lunch. We realize that occasionally your child's lunch will be forgotten, in that scenario, Kids' Zone will provide a lunch and a \$5.00 fee will be added to your tuition for that week. Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of reach. All staff is educated on food allergies, and they take precautions to ensure children are protected. On days providers serve meals, prepared food that is brought into the program to be shared among children is commercially prepared OR prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials. On days providers serve meals, milk, fresh fruit, and vegetables are available for children who bring lunches from home. Healthy snacks (as listed by the Texas Department of Agriculture) are available for school-aged children as children arrive.

Kids' Zone cannot store lunches in the refrigerator. Please include an ice pack in your child's lunch to keep food cold if necessary. Kids' Zone will provide resources upon request regarding proper nutrition, sample menus of healthful lunches, and foods that may cause allergic reactions.

Our menu policies are structured to provide children with a variety of foods with different colors and textures including whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables; less processed items; and foods that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans guidelines established by the USDA. Menus are provided in our weekly newsletter.

Curriculum

Our hands-on curriculum begins at the age of 6 weeks. Each classroom utilizes Frog Street Curriculum. Teachers are provided Frog Street Curriculum training, planning time, access to Frog Street Portal to obtain resources, as well as timely feedback on lesson plans. Our curriculum is theme and center-based; age-appropriate and child-directed which promotes the development of:

- Enthusiasm for learning
- Self-confidence and a positive self-image
- A feeling of belonging, love, and respect
- Problem-solving ability
- Complex skills and learning in the physical, social, cognitive, and emotional areas of development

Our daily program is flexible, with opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and discovery. Activities are varied and include art, dramatic play, music, science, manipulatives, reading, and outdoor play. Kids' Zone will limit screen time to ages three years old and up.

Children need a balance of inside and outside play. Your child will have multiple opportunities throughout the day to play outside weather permitting. Please send your child in clothing and footwear appropriate for the weather and indoor and outdoor play.

Child Assessment Policy

Parents are offered an annual written evaluation at the end of each school year upon request. An evaluation may be requested at any time throughout the year by the parent. We utilize anecdotal assessments such as Frog Street Developmental checklist for observing developmental progress as well as informal/spontaneous assessments to measure your child's progress.

Accommodating Families and Children

Our program supports families and children who may need additional accommodations, including home language, special needs/differing abilities, and cultural backgrounds. We accommodate family culture in various ways: bilingual staff, Spanish/English labels in each classroom, flexible teaching methods, and designated space for intervention sessions or therapies when needed are a few ways we accommodate families.

Abuse and Neglect of Children

Each employee is required to have annual training on grooming, recognizing, and reporting the signs of abused and neglected children.

Warning signs of abuse and neglect in children include: Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn, comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home, is reluctant to be around a particular person, discloses maltreatment, shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance, has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parent's attention, has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes, is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen, and lacks adult supervision.

The Williamson County Advocacy Center located at 1811 SE Inner Loop Georgetown, Tx 78626, is a great community resource for information and training on the abuse and neglect of children. Kids' Zone may provide a list of trainings The Williamson County Advocacy Center has available for recognizing abuse and neglect upon request.

If your child is a victim of abuse or neglect, please utilize these phone numbers for assistance:

To report an emergency, call 911.

Call the Abuse Hotline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free at 1-800-252-5400. For situations that do not require 24-hour contact, use the secure internet website: www.txabusehotline.org

Clothing/Personal Property

Children should wear comfortable clothing that allows them to participate in all activities both inside and outside. Dress your child appropriately and wear appropriate footwear considering the weather and play activities. Girls should wear shorts underneath their dresses and skirts. Please label all jackets and additional outerwear.

Breastfeeding

We will supply a chair and private area in our infant room for breastfeeding moms. If a more private area is needed, please see the front office. Breastfeeding resources are available upon request.

Transportation

If any field trips are taken, parents are notified a week in advance and must sign a permission slip for their child to participate. If parents choose not to allow their child to attend the field trip, they will remain at the center with another class until their class returns.

Field Trips

Field trips can be fun as well as educational. It is our priority to keep each child safe. If your child's behavior prior to or during the field trip jeopardizes safety, you will be called to pick up your child. This could also limit your child's ability to participate in future field trips. Field trips are a separate fee.

Outdoor Play

Weather permitting, all children, infants through school-age go outside each morning and afternoon, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Children are allotted 90 minutes of outdoor play daily.

To ensure your child's safety while playing outside, all children are encouraged to wear tennis shoes or closed-toed and heeled shoes. Due to the playground surface the following shoes are considered unsafe and should not be worn while in attendance at Kids' Zone: house shoes or soft soled shoes.

It is our policy that all children will remain indoors when the wind chill falls below 35 degrees, or the heat index climbs above 100 degrees. Kids' Zone staff monitor children's physical activity and health during outside time and can make the decision to end outside time early if children appear to be uncomfortable.

Television/Video/Computer/Video Game Usage

The use of televisions, videos, computers, and video games is discouraged.

Exceptions will be made for planned curriculum-related resources for ages three and up. In these instances, usage will be limited to two hours per day.

Infant through two-year-old classrooms will not be allowed television, video, computer, or video game access.

Televisions will be used periodically throughout the year in school-aged classrooms. Video/DVD content will be limited to G and PG ratings. All movie selections must be previously approved by the Kids' Zone Director/Assistant Director.

School-age children may bring handheld video games such as DS, PSP, Gameboy Advanced, Leapster, etc. Video game use will be limited to one hour during the afternoon "rest" time on any given full day of care through the course of the school year and summer care. Kids' Zone is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items or equipment.

Bad Weather Days

If inclement weather occurs, Kids' Zone will follow Jarrell ISD. If Jarrell ISD is delayed by bad weather, Kids' Zone will open one hour before Jarrell ISD start time. For updates regarding any school delays or closures we will send out a notification on the Brightwheel app, or you may watch your local news station or refer to the Kids' Zone Facebook page.

Gang-Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1,000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION/RELOCATION PLAN

1. Director/Assistant Director will contact JISD transportation for pick up and relocation, then call the local fire and law enforcement.

School Administration—512-746-2124

Law Enforcement—9-1-1

Fire Station—512-746-2505

2. **Teachers will gather necessary items the children will need (ex. diapers, wipes, bottles, etc.) and put them into bags labeled with the child's name. Teachers will meet at the designated "MEETING PLACE" as labeled on evacuation posters.**
3. Teachers will take their classroom tablet to access the Brightwheel app. Each teacher will use their cell phone to notify parents. The office will also notify parents.
4. **Director/Assistant Director will call the local news station to report the situation. KXAN: (512) 476-3636; KVUE: 512-459-9442**
5. Start transporting children by class in GISD buses to our relocation spot located at, Kids' Zone, East 104 Copper Lane, Jarrell, Tx 76537. Children 24 months and younger will be placed in a carrier/booster seat during transportation.
6. **Once we have arrived at the relocation spot and determined all children are safe, teachers and the office will use their cell phones to notify parents of our safe arrival. All parents will have directions to our relocation spot.**
7. Director/Assistant Director will call the Licensing Representative to inform licensing of our situation.
Licensing: 512-834-3233
8. **As the parents pick up their children, we will notify them of our opening/closing plan during the evacuation stages.**

Number to contact after relocation:

Kids' Zone East

512-746-23333

Kids' Zone Parent Orientation Form

Name of Facility: _____

Name of parent/ guardian: _____

I have received information on the following:

- Overview of the parent handbook
- Policy for arrival and late arrival
- An explanation of the Texas Rising Star Program
- Expectations of families
- Family support resources and activities in the community
- Kids' Zone emergency evacuation/ relocation plan
- Arrival and departure procedures
- Policies regarding illnesses
- Tour of the facility
- Introduction to Staff
- Parent visit with the classroom teacher
- Child development and developmental milestones
- Statement about limiting technology use on-site to improve communication between staff, children, and families
- Opportunity for an extended visit in the classroom by both myself and my child for some time to allow us both to be comfortable

I have received my copy of Kids' Zone Policy Handbook and acknowledge receipt of the information above.

Child's Name

Parent's Signature

Date