



A 501 (c)(3) NONPROFIT CORPORATION

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Tall Oaks from Little Acorns Grow

2020 – 2021 Policy Information

Welcome to The Acorn!

As the school year begins, there is a great deal of information we need to pass on to you. **We urge you to read this entire booklet** and save it to refer to throughout the year. If you ever have any questions regarding The Acorn policies or your child’s program, please feel free to call us.

In this brochure please find information on the following:

- Calendar
- Home Visits/Children’s Records
- Arrival and Dismissal - Carpools
- Visiting and Observing
- Teacher Pre- and Post- Sessions
- Late Fees
- Parent/Teacher Communication
- Tuition Payment
- Children’s Appropriate Dress for Play
- Outdoor Play
- Absences/Attendance/Health
- Policies and Illness
- Nutrition Policy
- Food Allergies/ Medical Requirements  
Photographs, Media, Web site
- Birthday Gift Traditions
- Child Safety
- Guidance and Discipline
- Parking
- Parent Participation
- Field Trips
- COVID-19

Smoking is prohibited everywhere on The Acorn property, including in vehicles and on field trips.

## Acorn Calendar for the 2020-2021 School Year

**17 First day of classes**

This is a tentative calendar allowing extra weeks at the beginning of the year. In case of closure dependent on state and federal guidelines, we will provide distance learning and will expect tuition to be collected so teachers can remain on staff to facilitate activities.

AUGUST '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

JANUARY '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**1 Winter Break  
4 Back to school  
18 MLK Day**

**7 Labor Day**

SEPTEMBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

FEBRUARY '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

**15 President's Day**

**12 Columbus Day  
31 Halloween**

OCTOBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

MARCH '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**8-12 Spring Break**

**11 Veterans Day  
13 Battle of Flowers  
23-27 Thanksgiving Break  
26 Thanksgiving Day**

NOVEMBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

APRIL '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**02 Good Friday  
04 Easter Sunday  
23 Battle of Flowers**

**18 Teacher workday(?)  
21-31 Winter Break  
25 Christmas**

DECEMBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

MAY '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**09 Mother's Day  
21 Last day of school  
31 Memorial Day**

## Home Visits/Children's Records

Each child will receive a home visit from his/her Head Teacher to help make the transition to school a successful one. The home visit gives the opportunity for your child to get to know his/her teacher in the comfort and security of their own home. At this time, we will be planning an outdoor visit.

This policy book is one of several informative letters for parents. You were sent a link to a packet of several forms upon enrollment, which you should have completed and turned in at that time. The teacher will bring the printed forms and have you sign them on the home visit. If there is any remaining information needed for your child's file, the teacher will obtain it on the home visit, as well.

Online student records form and other downloads include the following information:

- **Student Directory Information**
- **Emergency Information**; The Texas Licensing Board requires an alternate person (**not mom or dad**) be listed as a contact in case of emergency. You must complete the section "Persons Other Than Parents to Be Notified In Case of Emergency When Parents Cannot Be Reached". We must have an address and zip code for this person. Please make sure to bring any food allergies, such as to milk products, peanuts, wheat, etc., or any other chronic or contagious conditions to the attention of your child's teacher.
- **Permission Slip/Operational Policy Receipt/ Waiver and Release of Liability**
- **Volunteer Waiver Form** (at this time, we can not have volunteers in the building)
- **Parent Questionnaire**
- **Health and Immunization Form**, completed by a physician, including an attached immunization record, with DTP, polio, MMR, Hib, Hep A, Hep B, and varicella. Please note that children four years of age and older need an annual vision and hearing screening. All new students will need a Health Form completed before school starts. Those students who attended The Acorn last school year should have a current health form in their records; an updated form will need to be completed and turned in after their birthday.
- Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (for allergies), as needed
- COVID Policy

Texas Child Care and Health Standards legally require that each preschool child have this information on file at school within one week of admission in order for that child to participate in the program. To ensure that we will not have to exclude your child from classroom activities, please make sure required school records ARE COMPLETE by the first day of school. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Additional letters available on the website:

- Class introductory letters
- Lunch Bunch/Adventure Club information –Postponed at this time until October
- (Kindergarten Only) The Race: Tortoise and the Hare Geography information

## Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Due to the large number of children arriving and departing at the same time, we will be using a staggered drop-off and pick-up system. Parents will need to exit their vehicle to unbuckle their child. A teacher will take

your child's temperature and if it is below 99.6, the child may attend school. The school driveway is a one-way, so please enter from Avenue B and exit onto Broadway. Please remember to pull forward as far as possible just past the gate or to the car in front of you. This will help keep vehicles off of Avenue B and minimize waiting times for all involved. Please do not use your cell phone or audio visual players during this time. This is for safety reasons and also allows you to greet your child and have brief communication with the teacher. If you need to speak at length to your child's teacher, a time to call can be arranged. Thank you very much.

**There should be no lap sitting or standing in the vehicle while moving.**

We will not accept children later than 9:15 for the morning session or 1:15 for the afternoon session.

At pick-up time, you will need to exit your vehicle to receive your child and buckle them in or park and check them out.

If you arrive late for pick-up, your child will be brought to the porch where you may pick him/her up. A late fee of \$15 for the first 10 minutes will be added to your account starting at 11:40 for the morning preschool, 12:10 for Kindergarten, and 3:40 for the afternoon preschool. We have been lenient in the past but cannot afford to miss cleaning and disinfecting time. There will be an increase after 10 minutes (See Late Fees.)

In case of rain, different classes will be dismissed from separate entrances off the drive and south side of the building.

A child will be released only to his/her parents, family, or those whose names are on the emergency form, unless other prior notification has been made. A parent should write a note or call us personally in a pinch. We will not accept calls from secretaries, employees, etc., only a parent or guardian. We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we try to make pickup time go as smoothly as possible.

Dismissal times for the preschool and Kindergarten classes are staggered to help with traffic flow. If your family or carpool is picking up children in both preschool and Kindergarten, please be prepared to pick up your preschool child, then park and wait for the Kindergarten student to be dismissed from class.

**Carpools**

In accordance with state guidelines regarding social distancing and infection prevention, we do not recommend carpooling at this time.

**Kindergarten Arrival/Departure Schedule**

Kindergarten classes are scheduled from 8:40 to 12:00, Monday, Thursday, and Friday and 8:40-2:00 on Tuesday and Wednesday starting in September. In August, all kindergarten school days will end at 12:00. Kindergarten teachers will greet their class from 8:30 to 9:00 on the south side of the building each morning. On Mon., Thurs., and Fri., pickup time is 12:00 on the south side of the building. Starting in September and throughout the first semester, dismissal on Tues. and Wed. will be at 2:00 from the playground. Thursday will be added as a longer day in the second semester the last week of January, with dismissal at 2:00. Please pack a nutritious lunch for your child on these days. A late fee will be charged for those picking up children after these times. (See Late Fees.)

**Morning Preschool Arrival/Departure Schedules**

The morning preschool classes are scheduled from 8:40 to 11:30. There will be a teacher outside to greet the

children and take them out of the cars from 8:30-9:00. Pickup time is 11:30. A late fee will be charged starting at 11:40. (See Late Fees.)

### **Afternoon Preschool Arrival/Departure Schedule**

The afternoon preschool classes are scheduled from 12:40 - 3:30. There will be a teacher outside to greet the children and take them out of the cars from 12:35 – 1:00. Pickup time is 3:30. A late fee will be charged starting at 3:40. (See Late Fees.)



**Adventure Club / Tuesday, Wednesday Extended Day/ Early Wednesday, Thursday Lunch Bunch** will not meet in August or September. We hope to begin these programs in October and will communicate at that time and add the additional fees to your tuition.

### **Visiting/Observing**

At this time we are limiting visitor access to the building in order to minimize germs and potential spread of infection. All visits must be scheduled ahead of time and visitors will be required to wear masks, sign in at the front desk after a temperature check, and wash hands upon arrival and leaving the classroom. We cannot allow drop in visits but if you'd like to observe, we can make arrangements to accommodate this safely or provide videos.

**The Acorn Playground will also not be available for families and siblings until further notice.**

We will not be sharing the door code for access to the building to promote physical distancing. There is a video monitor and doorbell located at each entrance on the north side of the building, which will alert us to greet you.

### **Teacher Pre- and Post- Sessions**

All teaching teams meet before the children arrive for a pre-session and setup. During that time we discuss interest areas, small groups, and activities to be offered that day and talk about the most effective ways to present them. After the children are picked up, the staff meets for post-session to discuss how the children responded to all activities, the gains they are making, and the areas in which we can plan to help each child. We keep written anecdotal records for each child which the teachers update during post-session. And we give our staff feedback so they can constantly improve their teaching techniques. These pre- and post- sessions are extremely important to our program. We will also need more time for hygienic cleaning routines immediately after the children leave; that is why it is important for you to pick up your child punctually.

### **Late Fees**

There is a late fee for lack of punctuality, similar to that charged by other preschools. In general, a late fee of \$15.00 will be charged for the first 10 minutes that a family is late to pick up their child. A fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed thereafter. You will receive an immediate invoice for this fee and it will be added to your next month's tuition bill. If you are late, you can pick up your child on the porch.

We hope that everyone will be punctual and that we won't have to use this arrangement. Thanks for your cooperation and understanding!

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

The children will call all the adults by their first names, and we invite you to do the same. We believe in building a close, "family oriented" relationship with everyone at The Acorn.

A weekly update will be emailed to parents from the office, and you will receive a weekly notification from the

webpage as well. Newsletters are posted every week. You can always access the website for information, calendar dates, etc.

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year with each family. Fall/Winter conferences will be scheduled starting mid-November through early January. Final conferences will be in May during the week after the children finish school. Additional individual conferences may be scheduled anytime, as needed. Feel free to e-mail or telephone your Head Teacher after school or in the evening to discuss any concerns or questions you may have. You can check with your child's teacher regarding convenient times at which she is available. We strongly believe in maintaining clear lines of communication, and your teacher wants to hear from you. Please note that teachers do not have access to their cell phones at all times during class time. Therefore a text is not the most efficient way to communicate during the day. Please call the office first; if unable to get through, please Wendy or Carrie's cell phones (given to you at your home visit).

Please inform us of any events in your child's life that might affect his/her behavior, such as serious illness or a death in the family (including pets), separation of parents, parents traveling, etc. We may be able to help your child at such a time, and an awareness of what is going through his/her mind is important to us. In addition to your child's Head Teacher, you are free to call Wendy, Mara, or Rich anytime. Please remember that while this communication is important, pickup time does not allow time for a lengthy conversation. You are welcome to park and speak briefly to your child's teacher to schedule a convenient time to call or visit.

At times during conferences, recommendations are made to parents that will help further the development of the child and be beneficial for his/her successful school and family experiences. We appreciate open, honest communication with the parents, as we know everyone has the best interest of the child in mind. Follow-through with such recommendations can offer the child a chance to succeed in areas in which there may be difficulties. If a family continually rejects recommendations made and it is reflected in the child's classroom behavior such that their behavior negatively affects the learning environment for the other children, then we reserve the right to terminate that child's enrollment.

### **Tuition Payment**

We request that you pay your child's tuition in full for the year, or by semester, if you are able; it helps the school's cash flow immensely. **We offer a 2% discount on tuition paid in full for the semester and a 3% discount on tuition paid in full for the academic year.** If this is not possible, you may pay by the month and tuition will be due on or before the first of each month. Please mark your calendars with a reminder for your payment. Tuition not received by the 10th of the month will incur an additional \$25 late fee. **The school also reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment for nonpayment of tuition.** Should that be necessary, the family would still owe all tuition and late fees due, and would be responsible for paying interest at 12% per annum until it is paid off. If a check is returned with insufficient funds, we will charge a \$30 fee. If a second check is returned, an NSF charge of \$30 will be made, and tuition due must be paid in cash or by credit card.

Please mail your check; please do not send it with your child or give it to a teacher. Credit card payments may be made by on the website. Should you need to come into the office to pay with a credit card, please call ahead of time to schedule an appointment. Another method of payment would be to set up a recurring check payment with your own online banking establishment. There are no refunds for missed days, whether due to sickness, your own vacation time, or cancellation of school due to some natural disaster (like state or government required closings, illness, flooding, snow, or ice in San Antonio!). Please remember that once paid, enrollment fees, annual fees, and tuition are non-refundable and non-transferable for any reason. If a child drops out, the family is responsible for paying tuition until another child takes his/her place.

## **Dress for Play**

For day-to-day wear, please dress your child in play clothes so he/she can move around freely and comfortably and participate in all motor and outdoor activities without worry. Every child will get dirty on the playground or in the art room from time to time, so please expect it and dress your child so it won't matter to you. Please choose clothing that encourage their self-help skills as much as possible, such as velcro shoes, pullover shirts, elastic waist pants. We also recommend that if your child wears earrings or other jewelry, please refrain from hoops or dangling items that could interfere with their play or pose safety issues while moving about.

## **Outdoor Play**

Our outdoor play time is very important and an integral part of our total program. It is a wonderful opportunity for large motor development and social interaction. We plan to play outside every day in all kinds of weather. The only exception would be a hard rain. Whether it is hot, raining, or cold, make plans now to dress your child appropriately for all kinds of weather. It is essential that you clearly mark all outer clothing, including sweaters, jackets, etc. with your child's name. Every year our lost and found is bulging with good clothing that was never labeled, which, if unclaimed, we donate to a local charity.

## **Absences /Attendance /Health Policies and Illness Please see our separate Covid-19 insert**

We want to urge everyone at the outset of school to be aware of keeping your child home from school if he/she is obviously getting sick or is not yet sufficiently recovered from an illness to return. As a child is recovering from an illness, the recommended practice is that he/she be fever or contagion-free for 36 hrs. before returning to school without fever reducing medication. If a child is listless, feverish, recently vomited or had diarrhea, or is showing signs of illness, sometimes he/she will still say they want to go to school. Even so, they need to stay home. No one likes to miss school, but it is unfair to all the healthy children, teachers, staff, and families to be exposed. When you do keep your child at home, please call ahead to inform us, as it will help us to plan for the day. You can call your Head Teacher the night before at home, or call school in the morning. Also, if your child contracts something very contagious, like chicken pox, please remember that in this example the most contagious period is the 48 hours before your child breaks out. Therefore it is very important to notify the school about that timing, as well as calling the parents of friends your child played with so they can be on the lookout for symptoms. Another possible contagious situation which children are occasionally exposed to in public places is head lice. Contracting head lice is not shameful, nor is it due to uncleanliness. Lice are spread by person to person contact, or by sharing infested clothing, hats, helmets, etc. While it is very inconvenient and a nuisance, it poses no serious health threat. Nevertheless, it is important that we are informed at school, so that we can immediately remove all hats, helmets, and soft elements in the exposed areas and place each child's outer wear in individual plastic bags on their coat hook. Parents will be notified as necessary. There are several online resources for more information.

If you know in advance your child will be absent on a given day for an appointment or a family vacation, please send a note with your child as far in advance as you can. Thanks!

The Acorn will not dispense any medication at school. No medication should be sent to school with your child. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Exceptions can be pre-arranged for emergency situations only; forms and legal requirements for documentation are available in the office.

## Nutrition Policy

Snacks will be nutritious and wholesome. They will be prepared and served individually.

Parents count on us to keep this policy a consistent one, continually offering nutritious foods. We are not accepting outside snacks at this time.

### Food Allergies/ Medical Requirements

There are times when in a class or lunch group a child is enrolled who has a particular food allergy or sensitivity. As you are made aware of these, we appreciate your cooperation and understanding as you consider what foods to send. Reasonable accommodations will be made as necessary and healthy hygiene practices will be followed. This year we will once again provide a nut free environment. (Please refer to our Nutrition Policy.)

The Acorn- A School for Young Children is devoted to the safety of our students and staff and has developed this policy to reduce the risk of children and staff having allergy-related events. While The Acorn cannot guarantee that food allergens will never find their way into the school and classrooms, we can—with everyone's help and attention—greatly minimize the risk of exposure to a food allergen.

Upon enrollment, parents are required to notify the school of their child's current allergies and medical needs. An Individual Health Care Action Plan or Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan must be completed and signed by the parents. If medication is to be administered by school staff, a medication release form must also be completed and signed. As a child's medical diagnoses change during the course of their education, parents should update this information in a timely manner. Up-to-date medication clearly labelled must be provided by parents and replaced when expired. A child will not be allowed to attend without life-saving medications.

We have adopted the following recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention\*. Acorn-specific procedures are listed in italics.

#### Classroom

- Avoid the use of identified allergens in class projects, parties, holidays and celebrations, arts, crafts, science experiments, cooking, snacks, or rewards. Modify class materials as needed.
  - *Teachers and staff will make reasonable efforts to reach out to parents about the appropriateness of snacks and any food-related activity such as cooking or an art material containing food products. Reasonable accommodations will be made so that a child may observe an activity that may be unsafe for them to touch when a substitute activity is not available.*
  - *Before the beginning of each year any parent whose child has a food allergy will be asked to submit in writing a list of known allergens and their severity, and a list of choices for acceptable snacks. A class list of foods will be compiled, if applicable. Parents in those classes affected will be made aware of these lists of food allergens and acceptable snacks.*
- Use non-food incentives for prizes, gifts, and awards.
- Avoid ordering food from restaurants because food allergens may be present, but unrecognized.
  - *Depending on the allergy needs in any particular class.*
- Encourage children to wash hands before and after handling or consuming food.
- Have rapid access to epinephrine auto-injectors in cases of food allergy emergency and train staff to use them.

- *The Acorn will allow EpiPens, which will be stored in the front office student files unless requested in writing to be kept safely near the child at all times, securely out of the reach of students.*
- *Staff will be provided training in recognizing the symptoms of an allergic reaction and how to respond appropriately. Staff will be provided training in first aid and the use of an EpiPen should a child with a known food allergy go into anaphylaxis.*
- Help students with food allergies read labels of foods provided by others so they can avoid ingesting hidden food allergens.
  - *Teachers will read food labels and supervise snack time.*
- Consider methods (such as assigned cubicles) to prevent cross-contact of food allergens from lunches and snacks stored in the classroom.
  - *Tables and equipment will be cleaned and sanitized after coming into contact with foods.*
  - *If applicable, separate seating may be made available.*
- Consider designated allergy-friendly seating arrangements.
  - *When known allergens are present, a safe space may be provided.*
- Support parents of children with food allergies who wish to provide safe snack items for their child in the event of unexpected circumstances.
  - *The Acorn requests that parents provide a supply of sugar-free, safe snacks that can be offered in place of an unsafe snack.*
- Include information about children with special needs, including those with known food allergies, in instructions to substitute teachers.
  - *Members of staff will be made aware of students with specific food allergies and information sheets with photos of children with allergies and special needs will be kept in the student's classroom snack cupboards.*

*\*Reducing the Risk of Exposure to Food Allergens*

*Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

*On October 30, 2013, the CDC published national guidelines for food allergy management in schools.*

*The recommended practices can be found on p.41-43 of the CDC Guidelines.*

### **Photographs, Media, Web site**

Throughout the school year the teachers will be taking pictures for class scrapbooks or projects. As parents visit and observe their child at play with their friends, they may be taking photos for their own personal memories. In addition, from time to time throughout the years, we have had opportunities to have local media visit the school to photograph or video the children in action. Generally, these are quick candid shots in which the children remain anonymous. In the past the children have participated in answering questions about their special moms before Mother's Day, interacting with animals, "voting", playing with grandparents on Grandparents Day, enjoying the rides at Kiddie Park at our fun fest, planning a class donation to the Red Cross or Food Bank, playing with the Spurs Coyote, or participating in the school anniversary celebrations. If we receive advance notice of any such event, we will, of course, inform you beforehand. But sometimes we do get very last minute notice of such opportunities, in which case you could be informed after the fact.

Also, The Acorn has a community web site with both public pages and private parent pages in which calendars, newsletters and school events will be posted. The private site will feature photographs of the children in action as examples of some of the fun activities here at school. This private area is a secure site, which can only be accessed by those who have passwords. This could include current families and teachers, and Acorn alumni. Some photos and a slideshow will be available to the public - we ask that you initial your approval on

the permission slip to allow your child's images to be included in this Acorn promotional material. The web site address is [theacornschoo.net](http://theacornschoo.net).

If you would prefer that your child not be included in photographs, you must give us a written note stating your wishes; otherwise, it will be assumed to be acceptable. Thanks!

Around the third week of school we will publish a student directory in the private section of our website, including names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of all students at The Acorn. We assure you that this list is for parents only; it would never be sold or used for advertising or other purposes and we ask that you honor this as well.

### **Birthday Gift Traditions**

At The Acorn we have a tradition of the children giving a favorite book, manipulative toy, Lakeshore or educational store gift certificate, poster, or other educational item to the school on their birthdays. This has been such a success, and it goes hand in hand with our goal of helping the children think about what they can do for others, rather than what they are going to ask for and "get" for themselves. The children have been really excited about giving their gifts. Of course, this practice is voluntary. It need not be an expensive item. You may ask your child's teacher or check the wish list on the website. These gifts in honor of your child's birthday are greatly appreciated and help build our libraries and supply of classroom materials. Thanks!

### **Child Safety**

Texas law requires all teachers to report suspected cases of child abuse, molestation and neglect. The state also requires that parents are informed of this law. Also, as required, background checks are run on all staff and they receive annual training regarding these matters. We want everyone to be assured that child safety is of the utmost concern to us all.

Copies of the Texas Minimum Standards and our Licensing Report are available for review in the office.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: 210-337-3399

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Texas Licensing requires that we inform you of our school emergency policies. The Acorn teachers are trained in first aid and CPR, and will handle minor medical injuries. In case of a health emergency concerning a child, we would call 911, call the parents, and transport the child to the emergency facility specified on the emergency card. In case of an evacuation, we would relocate south of the school in the neighboring lot. In case of extreme weather conditions, we would gather in the downstairs hallways away from windows, in restrooms, or in the basement. Security procedures are in place with the staff, and fire/evacuation drills are conducted as required by licensing.

### **Guidance and Discipline**

The Acorn handles all of our guidance and discipline in a positive manner, and, in fact, we are careful to phrase everything positively. If a child needs redirection, we suggest alternate appropriate behaviors; we also set reasonable limits, and are consistent in enforcing those limits. Guidance is individualized and appropriate to the child's level of understanding. A teacher may separate a child from the group to speak privately or to help him/her gain composure. Teachers and parents can consult to encourage consistency in handling certain situations. As teachers, educators, and parents, our goal is to help each child achieve self-control, good

decision making, and the ability to make good choices.

### **Parking**

When visiting the school, please park in the paved parking lot, or in the slanted parking off the driveway in front of the school. When parking behind the playground off Avenue B, please avoid keeping your vehicle at the rear space, while blocking an empty space in front of you. Also, unless you are just staying for a short time, please refrain from parking behind the teacher’s cars that are marked with an Acorn window placard. They have staggered schedules, with some leaving mid-day, and you may be blocking them in. Please, always avoid parking behind any car and leaving the school grounds for a field trip, picnic, or any reason. This might prevent someone from leaving for hours! For parents whose children attend school in the morning, we need for you to adhere to our dismissal times. Because our morning teachers and staff already take up a number of parking places, we need to have enough available parking places for our afternoon teachers. We have designated a number of spaces behind the playground along Avenue B as afternoon teacher parking from 11:00-4:00. Please avoid using these spots during these times. Also, if parents linger on the playground taking up parking spaces, it creates a problem. Please note that our neighbor’s drive at the back of the playground is his private property; there is no Acorn parking allowed in his drive at any time. Thanks!

### **Parent Participation**

The Acorn is a non-profit, tax exempt, educational nursery school offering programs to 150 children from the age of 2 years 9 months old through Kindergarten (age 6). We have one teacher for every five or six children in our classes, which enables us to individualize with the children and ensures a great deal of personal nurturance and enrichment for each child daily.

As a non-profit school, we count on parent involvement and support. If you are in a position to make a monetary donation, that will be greatly appreciated. Currently, all volunteering is on hold.

### **Field Trips**

**Field trips are currently on hold because of Covid-19 policies**

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**The Acorn Board of Directors** serves to support and maintain the ideals and practices of The Acorn – A School for Young Children, and to insure its financial security and continuance into the future.

### **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

The Acorn - A School for Young Children, Inc., a Texas non-profit corporation, 3501 Broadway, San Antonio, admits students and hires teachers on the basis of merit alone. All are afforded the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students and teachers at the school. The Acorn does not discriminate on the basis of any prohibited characteristic in administering any of its educational policies, admissions and hiring policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic or other school-administered programs.

## Covid-19

We plan to comply with current state and federal guidelines and will be ready to adapt as the guidelines are updated or there is a cure, vaccine, or proven treatment for the virus. We encourage you to visit the following links and read each of the documents around which we are creating our new policies.

[Open Texas Checklist for Child Care Families](#)

[Open Texas Checklist for Child Care Operations](#)

And please bear with us in this unprecedented time as we are learning and adapting daily. Things to expect:

- Drop off and pick up procedures will change. We have increased drop off time and some classes will drop off on the south side of the building. Parents (wearing masks/personal protection equipment or PPE) will need to exit their vehicle to unbuckle their child and are not allowed to leave until the child has passed a temperature check. Each child will use hand sanitizer upon entry to the playground and immediately wash hands once inside the building. We will encourage developmentally appropriate social distancing and avoid combining groups.
- Classes will be split into smaller groupings. Personal protection equipment like masks or face shields will be required for teachers and staff, optional for children. Each group will have dedicated sets of toys that will be sanitized at the end of each session. Classes will have staggered playground times. Children will have their own sets of crayons, scissors, playdough, glue, etc. We will encourage developmentally appropriate social distancing (i.e., two or three children at a table designed for 6) and activity centers will be limited to one or two children at a time. If a teacher is reading, demonstrating, or leading circle time at a distance, the PPE may be removed. Teachers will wear smocks or have extra clothing to change into in case a child has shared a face full of moisture (from eyes, mouths, or noses!)
- We are planning for extra staffing to help with all the extra disinfecting. Touch free hand sanitizer dispensers will be available in multiple places. Each class will have its own touch free thermometer. Teachers will have enough paid sick days to insure they stay home if needed. **ALL STAFF WILL GET TESTED BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK**

This is what we are asking of you as concerned and responsible parents:

- Do not bring your child to school if they have ANY SYMPTOM AT ALL. This includes cough, runny nose, rash, change in temperament (tired, lethargic, loss of appetite, etc.), diarrhea, and of course, fever. If we see any of these symptoms, we will separate them from the group and call for pick up. They must be symptom free for 72 hours-which is the amount of time to be clear coming out of covid-19 quarantine. **If your child or someone in your household has Covid-19, we will require a physician's note before the child can return to school.**
- Please remain six feet apart from others. Please wear masks or PPE at drop off and pick up. Please use hand sanitizer where available.
- Inform us of any travel and quarantine as directed by health authorities.
- If you come into close contact with anyone who has tested positive for the virus, please get tested and do not come to school for two weeks. **If you or someone in your household has tested positive, we will require a physician's note before your child can return to school.**

We know that on the surface these new guidelines seem the opposite of what our pro-social program is all about. Please know that we plan to meet these requirements in the most developmentally appropriate way and that your children will adapt to all this and still have lots of fun. The Acorn will continue to be a warm, loving environment where the children will find joy in learning, the wonders of discovery, and the happiness of friendships. We intend to model best practices in our current situation with confidence and joy and fully expect that the children will rise to the occasion. Remember that children often feed off of the energy of trusted adults and we want to give them the tools they need to better cope with the current situation. Our hope is that as more information is learned about the virus, we will be able to adapt our policies in accordance with state and federal guidelines.