

The ABC'S of Prekindergarten Handbook for Parents of Turner Prekindergarten Academy Students



Welcome Prekindergarten Families,

Turner Pre Kindergarten Academy is a unique campus in that the faculty and administrators are fully committed to educating young students. This pamphlet is not intended to replace the Waxahachie Student Handbook or Student Code of Conduct. Please visit the Waxahachie ISD website to view those documents. This pamphlet will explain some of the procedures at Turner Prekindergarten Academy to ensure that all students and parents have a successful and rewarding year. Again, welcome to Turner Prekindergarten Academy and know that our efforts are done in hopes that your child will always remember Turner Prekindergarten Academy as the school that *“Encourages learning for all through love and unity”*.

Sincerely,

Normal Gilliam, Principal
Turner Pre Kindergarten Academy
614 N. Getzendaner Street
Waxahachie, Texas 75165
972-923-4690



Absences-Excessive absences hinder a child's progress. If your child is absent, you must send a note to the school when he/she returns. Please include your child's name, teacher's name, date of absence, the reason for the absence and parent signature. See example below. Also see Attendance.

October 8, 2019
Student: Jonathan Smith Teacher/Class: Mrs. James
Please excuse Jonathan Smith on October 6 and October 7, 2019 . He was sick with strep throat.
<i>Mrs. Laurie Smith</i>

Alphabet Knowledge-Our younger students will learn to recognize the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that the letters make.

Arrival- Doors open at **7:15 AM**. Students should be dropped off in the drop off lane on Eubanks Street. Please have students ready to exit from the passenger side of the car. **If you choose to walk your child up to the door in the morning, please park in the parking lot and not on Eubanks St.** Turner staff will then escort the students to the cafeteria for breakfast and then to the classrooms at the **7:55 AM** bell. Adults will stop opening car doors and return into the building at 7:45 AM. The breakfast line will close at 7:50 AM. We will start morning announcements at 7:45 so please try to arrive before that time. If you arrive after 7:55, an adult must walk the child into the building and sign them in at the front office.

Attendance-Regular school attendance is essential for each student to make the most of his/her education. Your child's attendance is essential in order to acquire all of the skills necessary for a successful year in school. Please make every effort to have your child at school every day and on time. It is a disruption to the learning environment when a student arrives late or is checked out early.

Please take special note of the attendance policy in the student handbook, which can be located online on the Waxahachie ISD website. If your child has an absence, please write a note with the date and reason for the absence and send it to school with your child when he/she returns to school. If a student acquires excessive absences (even if notes are written by the parent), a conference will be held with parents to discuss attendance. The school may also request doctors' notes if the absences continue. In the event of excessive absences, the parents could possibly be taken to attendance/truancy court. If absenteeism continues to be an issue, the principal has the right to administratively withdraw your child.

B

Backpacks-Backpacks should be big enough to hold a folder. Backpacks help your child carry folders, notes, projects, and books to and from school. Please check and empty your child's backpack **DAILY**. Rolling backpacks are not permitted.

Birthdays-We understand that birthdays are special occasions for young children. If you choose to send cupcakes for your child's birthday, they must be store bought. Please do not send party favors, flowers, balloons, cakes or decorations. District policy prevents us from distributing any birthday or party invitations or giving out parents' phone numbers or addresses for celebration of birthdays. If you choose to send cupcakes or cookies, they must be free of peanuts or any type of nut.

C

Cafeteria- Students that eat in the cafeteria will be treated to a nutritious and healthy meal. It is the expectation that all students have been taught and can perform basic table etiquette/skills (feeding themselves, drinking from a milk container, etc.). Please encourage independence at home by allowing your child to feed himself/herself. It is the expectation that all students will sit properly at the tables and feed themselves. We also discourage parents and/or siblings from eating from the students' tray.

If a parent wishes to eat lunch with a student, the parent must purchase a tray for himself/herself or bring a lunch. We have a designated area for parents to eat with their children. Please make sure to **only** bring your child to the table to eat with you. Breakfast is \$2.50 and lunch is \$3.25.

Checkout-We understand that emergencies happen. However, we discourage early and frequent check out of students. We encourage perfect attendance. If a student has a large number of early check outs and late arrivals, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss these issues and come up with an attendance plan. All early checkouts must happen before 3:00.

Clothing-Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is appropriate for school (see WISD Handbook for the dress code policy). It is a good idea to label all coats and sweaters and to wear closed toe shoes.

Change of Clothes- All students need an extra set of clothes in their backpack. Place them in a plastic bag in case your child has an accident or gets sick. Please label the bag and clothes with your child's name. If your child is prone to restroom accidents, please ensure that she/he has a change of clothing daily.

Conferences- Open communication with your child's teacher is vital to a successful year. When you feel the need to contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference, send a note with your child, email the

teacher, or call the school to make arrangements. Throughout the year, the teacher may also schedule conferences. It is very important that parents meet with the teacher to discuss the progress of their child. Please keep in mind that teachers have very busy and full schedules. Teachers may not be able to meet with parents the same day in which the conference is requested.



Developmental milestones-

Developmental Milestones for Four Year Olds

Taken from: *Learn the Signs. Act Early*

How your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about your child's development. Developmental milestones are things most children can do by a certain age. Check the milestones your child has reached by his or her 4th birthday.

What Most Children Do at this Age:

“ Social/Emotional

- Enjoys doing new things**
- Is more and more creative with make-believe play**
- Would rather play with other children than by himself**
- Cooperates with other children**
- Often can't tell what's real and what's make-believe**
- Talks about what she likes and what she/he is interested in**

“ Language/Communication

- Knows some basic rules of grammar, such as correctly using “he” and “she”**
- Sings a song or says a poem from memory such as the “Itsy Bitsy Spider”**
- Tells stories**
- Can say first and last name**
- Speaks in sentences of five or six words**

Speaks clearly enough for strangers to understand

.. **Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)**

Names some colors and some numbers

Understands the idea of counting

Begins to have a clearer sense of time

Remembers parts of a story

Understands the idea of “same” and “different”

Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts

Uses scissors

Starts to copy some capital letters

Plays board or card games

Tells you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book

.. **Movement/Physical Development**

Runs and crawls without problems

Hops and stands on one foot up to 2 seconds

Catches a bounced ball most of the time

Throws ball overhand

Moves forward and backward with ease

Feeds himself, pours, and mashes own food

Bends over without falling

Kicks, throw and catches a ball

.. **Be concerned if your child:**

Cannot jump in place

Has trouble scribbling

Resists dressing, sleeping, and using the toilet

Cannot retell a favorite story

Does not follow 3-part commands

Has major outbursts or meltdowns when experiencing changes in routine

- ☐ **Does not understand “same” and “different”**
- ☐ **Does not use “me” and “you” correctly**
- ☐ **Speaks unclearly**
- ☐ **Loses skills he/she once had**
- ☐ **Still clings or cries whenever parents leave**
- ☐ **Does not use sentences of more than three words**
- ☐ **Ignores other children**
- Cannot copy a circle**

Dismissal- Please make sure you always bring the yellow/white Turner issued car tag when you come to pick up your child. If the school issued card is not presented, the parent must report to the office, show photo identification and obtain a pick up tag. If the person that has been sent to pick up the child is not listed on the student’s information sheet, the person will not be issued a tag nor will the child be released to that person. The parent will have to be called. In order to add someone other than you (the parents/guardians) to the list for pick-up, you must come to the front office and make changes.. We cannot accept phone calls to approve someone not listed to pick-up your child.

The only way to pick up your student is by going through the car pick up line or walking up to walkers dismissal. Do not pull into the car loop until 3:00 in order to let buses and daycare pick up their students. The pickup/drop off line will enter the loop and exit back onto Eubanks St. Please refer to the map that is attached. We will begin dismissal every day at 3:30 PM. Once students get the hang of dismissal, we should wrap up by at least 3:45 every day.

Drills- For the safety and security of our students, the school conducts drills of various types throughout the school year. These drills include fire, tornado, and drills addressing other possible emergency situations. We explain to the students that these events are practice drills for safety and security.



Emergency Information-Your child will have emergency information on file in the nurse’s office. At least two working phone numbers are needed in order to contact parents in case of illness or emergency.



Family Engagement- The teachers and PTO will host many family engagement activities. We want you to be a part of our team and want you to participate in your child’s educational experience. We hope to

see you at all of our family events. You will be made aware of family events through notes sent home, Skyward, and social media. Please follow us on Facebook as it will be updated daily with school news.

Folders-Each student will have a folder that will come home every evening and needs to be checked by the parent each night. The folder will contain information such as a classroom newsletter, student behavior, monthly lunch menu, or homework, communication pages, etc. Please be sure to sign your child's folder every night.

Fundraisers-Our school participates in a few fundraisers throughout the year. The money raised from the fundraisers goes directly back into helping our school and purchasing items for teachers and students.



Guidance-Our school counselor, Mrs. Northcutt, will conduct classroom guidance lessons. Each week your child will participate in a classroom guidance lesson following the WISD Counseling curriculum. Throughout the year students will learn about character education, conflict resolution, goal setting, and personal safety. In addition to classroom guidance some students might need more assistance with needs that arise. Small group and individual counseling are conducted to address these unique needs. Please contact Mrs. Northcutt to discuss any issues your child might need assistance with.

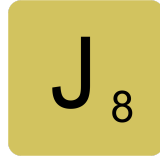
Getting Messy-We do a lot of things in pre-k that can get us messy! Playing outside, using paint, gluing things, water play, using markers, and cutting are all things that can get our clothes and shoes messy. Please make sure you send your child to school in clothes and shoes that can get messed up. Please also make sure your child has an extra set of clothes in his/her backpack. (See "Change of Clothes")



Homework and Home Projects-Throughout the year students may bring home readers and homework activities to complete. These activities will complement concepts that will be discussed in class. These activities promote home involvement and allow for reinforcement of the different concepts taught in class. Please take time to enjoy this special learning time with your child as homework time should never be stressful. The time it takes to complete homework should never exceed 20 minutes.



Illness- Children function more effectively in the classroom when they are healthy. Children should be fever free, vomit free, and diarrhea free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school, per district policy. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be called to the school to check the student out. The school needs at least two working phone numbers at all times in order to contact parents in case of illness or emergency.



Journal-For our younger students, one strategy that will be used to help convey the vital concept that “print conveys meaning” is the frequent use of journal writing. In these journals, the students combine their emerging writing skills with their drawing skills. As students are introduced to a variety of phonics and reading experiences, journal entries will move from drawings and “phonetic” spellings towards more conventional writing.



Kindness- All students are encouraged and expected to treat everyone with kindness and respect. Hitting, fighting, name-calling, bullying and making fun of others will not be tolerated.



Language and communication- It is important for students to have clear speech and use words in a way that will help teachers and others understand what they need. Language is both receptive and expressive. It is essential that children are listening, receiving accurately and processing effectively what they hear. Ask yourself if your child can:

- Be understood by others when he/she speaks?
 - Understand others when they speak?
- Understand and answer simple questions?
 - Tell others how he/she is feeling?
 - Ask for what he/she needs or wants?

Engage children in listening exercises. Spend time with your child and ask him/her to repeat back what he/she has heard you say or have your child relate key elements of a story or an activity. Your child should know and be able to tell first and last name, age, gender, foods he/she cannot eat, names of parents and siblings, etc. Please make your child’s teacher aware if you do not feel your child is struggling with language skills.

Library- Ms. Allen is our librarian. Students love to hear stories and check out books. All classes visit the library each week. Our librarian will read to the students and teach them basic library skills.

Beginning in October, students will have the opportunity to check out a library book each week. It is important that each child does not write in or damage their book. Also, please make sure that the library book is brought back in the provided library bag on or the day before students go to the library, so that students may check out a new one.

Lunch- All Pre-K students will receive free breakfast and lunch.

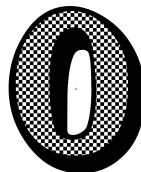


Mission of Turner Prekindergarten Academy- Turner Prekindergarten Academy connects the home and academic world, striving to meet each individual student’s physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs. We will implement best practices to foster success through developmentally-appropriate instruction that addresses state standards, individual differences and learning styles. Faculty, parents and community members will work together to achieve this mission. Through this joint effort our hope and expectations are that all students will become lifelong learners.



Notes- Please place all notes in your child’s folder that is located in his/her back pack or “safety-pinned” to your child’s shirt.

Nurse’s Clinic- If a student becomes ill, Nurse Hanson will take care of him/her until a parent can be reached to pick him/her up from school. She also administers all medications to students during school hours. If your child is to take medicine at school, a parent/guardian must bring the medicine into the school, complete the district’s form, and speak in person with the nurse. Please do not send medication/cough drops to school with a student.



Officer Butler- Ms. Butler is our campus security officer. She is there to keep us safe, but she is also there to foster a relationship with our students. You will often see her interacting with students and assisting the front office. Always feel free to let her know if you have any safety concerns.



Parent Involvement- We love Parent Involvement! Please be involved in your child's school year as much as you can. Parents can volunteer as a PTO parent or help in class. If volunteers are able to help outside our classroom (i.e., cutting or gluing at home), that is just as important. A background check is required for anyone assisting at the school. Check with your child's teacher for times to help. It is requested that proper attire is worn at all times when volunteering at school. You can get involved with PTO by contacting our campus PTO rep- Laura Northcutt.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence-Each morning all students and staff recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags and observe one minute of silence. If parents or visitors are in the building or hall, it is requested that you stop your activity or walking and join us for the pledge.

Principal- The principal of Turner Pre-K Academy is Veronica Schaeffer. Please feel free to contact her at vschaeffer@wisd.org. You will see her out and about at arrival/dismissal, in the cafeteria, and walking in and out of rooms throughout the day.



Questions-Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's education. The quickest way to contact them is through their email or Bloomz/Remind. Teacher's are not allowed to check their email while students are in the classroom, so please be patient if they do not get back to you immediately.



Read-Read to your child daily and let your children see you reading daily.

Recess-All students will have two 20 minute recesses each day. If weather permits, recess will be held outside. Students should be dressed appropriately for the weather. In cooler weather, please be sure **all** jackets, caps, and scarves are labeled.

Report Cards-The district reporting period is a nine-week grading period. After the first nine-week reporting period, your child's teacher will request a face-to-face conference with you. Beginning with the *second* nine weeks, a report card will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks. Please sign and return report card. The final report card will not be returned to the school.

Restrooms- It is the expectation that all students have been taught and can perform basic, personal self care practices before beginning school. If frequent accidents occur, a conference will be held with parents to discuss these concerns and come up with an action plan. If there are medical issues surrounding restroom use, please inform the teacher and submit information from a medical facility so that the school nurse will also be aware of this issue.

Routine-Routines are an important part of any child's life, because they help children develop a sense of stability and order. When things are predictable—when the same things happen in a certain order at a certain time of day—children are reassured that the world is a safe place in which they can learn to make their way. Every classroom will have a visual schedule. Students will be prepared ahead of time for any foreseen changes in the daily routine.



Safety-Student safety is a top priority. The school takes every precaution when your child is in our care. Please send a note with your child or email the teacher if he/she is to go home a different way. Parents must NOT drop off children in the morning before the doors open or before Turner staff is present to receive them.

All visitors will check into the Raptor system with their driver's license. This runs ID's through a background check and ensures safety for all of our students.

Shoes- It is very important to wear comfortable shoes, especially for PE and recess purposes. Closed toed shoes with velcro are recommended for students. Plastic dress up shoes, loose fitting sandals and flip flops are discouraged.

Social Media- Please find us and like us at the Turner Pre-K Facebook page. We will use Facebook to post photos and reminders of our events.

Specials- Music, Art, Library, and Physical Education are called "specials". Each day your child will attend one of these areas through a weekly rotation. Your child's teacher will inform you of the schedule for your child's class.

Student of the Month- Each month, each teacher selects a student of the month. The student is chosen based on citizenship skills and classroom behavior. With parental permission, the student is photographed and will appear in the newspaper, our Facebook page, and our website. Students will also bring home a student of the month sign for your yard. Please return this sign promptly upon request of the teacher.



Tardies-Please remember that it is a disruption to the learning environment when students enter the classroom late. Doors open for morning drop off at 7:00 AM. Students are counted tardy if they arrive after our school clocks display 7:40 am and after our tardy bell rings. Parents of students exhibiting excessive tardies will complete an individual sign in sheet and be called in for a conference.

Toys-Toys from home are not permitted.

Transportation- All parents are responsible for transportation of their child to and from school. Please make sure you are on time to pick your child up from school.



Understanding – Your child is important to us. We will always treat your child with love, respect, and understanding. We can serve your child better if we know if he/she is happy, sad, sick, or frightened about anything. Changes in family life such as loss of a pet, death in the family, a new baby, or exciting upcoming events can affect a child's behavior at school. We would appreciate a note, an e-mail, or a phone call if there is anything that might affect your child.



Visitors-It is district policy that **ALL GUESTS** (*including familiar faces*) check in at the office by showing official photo identification which will allow them to receive a visitor sticker. Turner welcomes and encourages parent involvement and the presence of a guest sticker will help identify visitors to all faculty and staff. It is important to remember that while this may seem inconvenient to frequent visitors, it is the goal and responsibility of the school to create a safe learning environment. All visitors must report back to the office to check out and return stickers. It is requested that proper attire is worn at all times when visiting the school.

If you wish to observe in your child's classroom, then you must submit a request by filling out a form provided by the principal. The 20 minute observation will be scheduled and the principal will accompany you on your observation.

Volunteers-If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Turner office staff to receive a volunteer application form. We would love to have you! A background check is required for anyone assisting at the school. Check with your child's teacher for appropriate times to help.

Volunteer Info:

Arrival / Departure

- 1.Park in the designated parking lot, not in the driveway.
- 2.Enter through the designated door and sign in at the office.
- 3.Sign out in the office before you leave.

Attire

Remember that you will probably be getting up and down off the floor frequently while working with students. It is necessary that your clothing allow this movement without becoming revealing. All

volunteers must wear a visible volunteer or campus sticker at all times.

Classroom

Teachers and students have a daily routine that they must abide by each day. Your child has a schedule and this schedule should not be interrupted, if at all possible. If you are volunteering on the campus, your child may not be checked out early or pulled from classes during the day while you are here.

Professionalism

When interacting with the students, please model appropriate behavior. Do not encourage poor manners. Remember that you are here to help the teacher and staff. It is important that the students remain calm so that they are in the correct mindset for optimal learning. This applies in the classroom, hallways, cafeteria, and any other location on campus. If there is a problem with a student, inform the teacher.

Confidentiality

Remember that while working with students, you may overhear some information that is confidential. Do not share this information with others. Student matters, such as behavior or academic progress, should not be discussed with parents. If there is something the parent should know, inform the teacher. The teacher is solely responsible for all communication with parents.

Safety and Security

Please abide by all safety and security procedures that have been put into place by the district and school. Do not open side doors to allow others. Please remember to wear a visitor or volunteer sticker at all times, etc.

Cellphones and Technology

We request that volunteers please keep cell phones turned off while assisting on campus. Do not take pictures of students or events.

Drills

In the event that there is a drill, follow all procedures as stated by the teacher or Turner staff. If no staff is present in the area in which you are working, please refer to the Crisis Management information located by the door in each classroom.



Writing-Our writing instruction builds on what each child already knows. For younger students, writing begins with scribbles and proceeds to lines and circles, random strings of letters, words and spaces, and eventually sentences. Providing a risk-free environment is paramount to your child's progress in writing. If possible, please provide your child with writing tools, such as pencils, crayons, markers and paper at home, and encourage their writing at home as often as possible. You can also promote fine motor development by allowing them to make letters/numbers out of play-doh, draw with chalk, etc. Please speak with your child's teacher for more ideas.



You- YOU are the most important part of your child's success in school! We can do a lot at school, but we can do so much more with YOUR help! Doing all of the things we have talked about in this packet will give your child the best chance for success possible!
Please stay involved with your child's education every day!



ZZZZ's-It is so important for your child to be alert and ready to learn each day. Make sure your child's bedtime allows for them to get the recommended 8-10 hours of sleep during the night. Set a bedtime and be consistent. Make sure your child gets plenty of rest. A classroom is a busy place and you will probably find your child exhausted at the end of the day. Setting and keeping a routine bedtime is a wonderful gift you can give to your child. It will help them to be alert and ready to learn each day!

Students will also participate in a 20 minute rest time each day until January. This will be a time where the classroom lights will be off and your child will be able to rest his/her body and mind. When January arrives, we will slowly phase out the rest time. Students can bring a towel for rest time. The towel will be sent home every Friday to be washed and rid of germs. Please make sure to label your child's towel.