



THE
MATTISYN

SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

THE MATTISYN SCHOOL™

Policies and Procedures

SCHOOL-FAMILY HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS
(updated May, 2019)

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ACCREDITATION:

THE MATTISYN SCHOOL HAS RECEIVED NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BY THE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COMMISSION WHICH IS ONE OF THE HIGHEST ACHIEVEMENTS RECOGNIZED IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

WELCOME

We are pleased that you have chosen The Mattisyn School™, Where Education Begins, as your “partner” in the care and education of your child. We consider ourselves an extension of each individual child’s family. Like you, we are interested in the best care and education for your child. This handbook is essential to understand our policies and procedures so that we as a school-family can be effective in carrying out the goals of our program most beneficial to the child. In addition, we are licensed by the State of Florida and seek the highest accreditation, therefore it’s imperative that policies and procedures are followed and understood by everyone in maintaining our standards of excellence in early childhood education. ***WE STRICTLY ENFORCE OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN HIGHEST QUALITY OF EDUCATION.**

MISSION

The mission of The Mattisyn School™ is to empower and inspire the individual child to create limitless achievements. The Mattisyn School™ is committed to providing exceptional, positive experiences that create a foundation for life and instill a love for learning.

PHILOSOPHY & OBJECTIVES

At TMS our primary goal is to provide a safe, nurturing an educational environment. We believe in development of the whole child. Learning results from interaction between emerging cognitive systems and the environment. Research shows babies start to learn before birth, therefore with our infants, we capture these precious early moments and capitalize on their growth and development. We have several objectives for our children:

- to be competent and confident in their abilities
- to be self-directed in a constructive, creative manner
- to be successful in future educational experiences
- to develop a love for learning and the ability to know how to learn
- to develop self-control and a sense of right and wrong; to learn skills to manage our thoughts, feelings and actions
- to feel good about who they are and promote self-esteem and self-confidence
- to learn cooperation with other children as well as adults
- to reach their full potential in emotional, intellectual, physical and social development

CURRICULUM

The Mattisyn School™ is a language-rich learning environment and our curriculum begins with infants and goes through pre-kindergarten preparing the child every step of the way. Empower, Educate and Achieve is our motto.

An important part of the daily schedule is a time for individual choices from a wide variety of activity centers. These centers allow for exploration, discovery and play, allowing the child to be a self-directed learner and enrich his or her ability at creative play. During this important time of the day, teachers can observe each child's interests, identifies your child's learning style preference and leadership skills. We use this information to deliver knowledge that has the greatest affect on a child's ability to process information. Unlike traditional teaching, our teachers teach in the style that is best for the learner, rather than the child adjusting to the teacher's style of teaching. The respect that we show for the child's way of learning generates classroom success, creating confident learners with high self-esteem and self-confidence and that's what makes us different.

Our program is based on the works of the greatest theorists of all time Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson and Lev Vygotsky who each found a strong relationship between behavior and socialization to the cognitive process. It also incorporates the more recent findings of cognitive research and optimization. The utilization of major child expert theorists and brain-based research in the field of Cognitive Learning form a solid foundation for the cornerstone of the curriculum of The Mattisyn School. It is a fluid doctrine that works with the "whole child", including; emotional, social, physical, affective and cognitive development. The uniqueness of each child is allowed to thrive, since the faculty recognizes that children do not all develop at the same rate nor do they all learn in the same manner. Incorporated into our program is the well-renown *Conscious Discipline* program which is specifically designed to create a positive school climate. This program has been named the National Model for character education by Florida State Legislature.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

WAITING LIST PRIORITIES

Priority for available spots is given to families already enrolled. Having priority does not guarantee that space will be available when needed.

REGISTRATION

All children must be enrolled before attending. A registration fee is charged once annually. Once the decision for acceptance is made, families must complete the following items and return **prior to the child's first day of attendance (required per State licensing requirements) (TMS accepts children ages 4 months to 8 years):**

- (i) Signed and completed registration packet
- (ii) Annual Registration fee (renewable each year)
- (iii) Current Immunization Record with the Doctor's name
- (iv) Child medical examination report
- (v) Specialized instructions for infants and toddlers
- (vi) Authorization for pick-up
- (vii) Automatic deduction authorization
- (viii) The teacher will be responsible to orient the new children to the center and playground; introduce rules and procedures; for older children PK-4 and above, a shadow friend will be assigned to partner with the new child for the day.

NOTE: The above forms must be updated and current throughout the child's enrollment or enrollment may be subject to termination.

TUITION

The Mattisyn School tuition fees are charged monthly/weekly. The tuition is automatically deducted from an account or credit card provided by the parent. By using automatic deductions it allows the staff at TMS to focus on our program goals and the children. There are no discounts/reimbursements for days missed due to illness, absences, vacation, or the School being closed for holidays, weather or emergencies. Two weeks notice is required for all withdrawals.

NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS

An NSF fee of \$50.00 will be assessed when a payment cannot be withdrawn. Failure to promptly provide the tuition or provide a new account may result in termination of your child's enrollment.

LATE FEES FOR PART-TIME

Parents must adhere to the hours of their child's scheduled time block. For morning and afternoon sessions a fee of \$15.00, per child, will be charged for late pick-ups. This is necessary because of staffing ratios, which must be strictly followed per licensing requirements. A late notice statement will be completed and added to the next billing statement. The clock in the front office is our time clock.

LATE PICK UP

Late fees are assessed if you fail to pick up your child by closing time, we have teachers and staff that need to get home to their families as well. We ask that you respect our time for those reasons. The fee is calculated at \$15.00 for any part of the first 5 minutes, an additional \$10.00 for any part of the next 5 minutes. Repeated failure to pick up your child on time can result in enrollment termination.

NOTE: If we have not heard from the parent and we have not been able to contact other authorized person listed on the child's enrollment form by 6:30 p.m., we are required by law to contact the local law enforcement.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Mattisyn School operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am through 6:00 pm. Please have your child in his/her classroom

according to the teacher's planned schedule to begin the class curriculum.

Based on how the Calendar year falls the following is subject to change:

VACATION AND HOLIDAYS

In order to allow our school family to enjoy holidays with their home family TMS is closed in observance of the following holidays if the holiday falls on a weekend day, it will be observed either the Friday before the holiday or Monday preceding the holiday (subject to change):

New Year's Day

New Year's Eve half-day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day following Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

IN-SERVICE TRAINING DAY

Center employees will participate in two In-service Training Days per year. These days will be provided at the beginning of the academic year in August. Children will not attend on this day. These training/workdays are very important to providing quality care and education and continuing curriculum education to our staff. It is imperative for this training so your child is given the best education and care possible.

SIGN IN / SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

* Children must be signed in and escorted to their classroom each day

* Children must be picked up by an authorized adult. TMS **cannot release** any child to an unauthorized person; TMS commits to providing a safe environment and protecting the children. Therefore, parents

must call the Director directly AND provide a written signed authorization if someone other than an authorized person is to pick up the child who must provide identification upon pick up.

* No child will be released to anyone under the age of eighteen (18) under any circumstances

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

It is important that the child not be placed in the middle of times when parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation or remarriage. Therefore, please notify TMS promptly should this become an issue. However, TMS cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records, or picking the child up unless TMS has been furnished with current legal documents and/or Court Order. Copies must be kept in the child's file.

CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

By Florida State Law and the Department of Children and Families, TMS is required by law to report to the Child Abuse Hotline any and all suspected cases of abuse or neglect.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We require uniform shirts and appropriate bottoms with closed toe sneakers. We ask that you keep a change of clothing at school. Always label everything with your child's name.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Mattisyn School is a school that promotes diversity, differences, and uniqueness among us, at no time will TMS discriminate against any child or family based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made to provide services to all children enrolled in our program.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Mattisyn School respects and maintains the utmost confidentiality of each individual child and family. TMS shall have an obligation of confidentiality in disclosure of children's records. TMS respects the family's right to privacy, and will not disclose confidential information. However, by law, TMS must provide information pursuant to a subpoena or if a child's welfare is at risk to the appropriate agencies. AT NO TIME should a parent discuss another child's information with another parent.

GENERAL CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

Teaching staff develop individual relationships with children by providing care that is responsive, attentive, consistent, comforting, supportive, and culturally sensitive.

ROOM ASSIGNMENT

Placement of a child in a classroom is determined by age and developmental level. We want your child to be placed where his/her needs are met and their interest challenged. While we do accept input from parents about room assignments, the center director and teachers will make the final decision based on what is best for the child, other children, teachers and the School.

ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL

Classrooms begin curriculum instruction at 8:30 a.m. In order for children to receive the full benefit of our program and to participate with the group activities, we ask that you have your child here by this time. * NOTE: Do not drop your child off during naptime at the School.

When you arrive at the School, plan to spend a few minutes with your child. Seek out a familiar adult or favorite activity. A teacher will be there to greet you, especially if you and your child are new to the School. Sometimes children need to share this time with parents before they can try it on their own. Interestingly, in most cases when children sense their parents' willingness to spend some time with them, they feel comfortable enough to move out on their own. However, when they

think parents are anxious to leave, children sometimes feel they have to cling all the more. When you leave, be sure to say good-bye, then follow through and leave. Continually returning makes it more difficult for the child and parent to separate.

When you depart, your child may cry and protest. This protest is what psychologists call separation anxiety. It is part of the normal developmental process of establishing an independent and autonomous existence, separate and apart from parents. The intensity of a child's distress seems to depend mainly on the child's personality and temperament. It also depends on the way teachers handle the anxiety and the way in which parents leave. Children may show this kind of behavior at the initial separation. As they become familiar with the teachers in the classroom their protest will taper off. If you are experiencing difficulties in this area, please let one of the teachers know. We want to work with both you and the child to create positive experiences. ****NOTE:** please apply sunscreen and bug spray prior to bringing the child to school. Due to allergies and other concerns our teachers will not be allowed to apply sunscreen and/or bug spray to each child.

Please note that The Mattisyn School has an open door visitation policy for parents.

DEPARTURE

Parents sometimes find it difficult to get their child to leave at the end of the day. It is important for the parent not to feel rejected or unneeded when this happens. In fact, the child may be feeling more secure with a parent present, and may feel freer to participate in activities with other children. If possible, it is helpful for the parent to come into the room and tell the child that they will be leaving soon. However, if a speedy exit is necessary, tell the child that it is time to go and stick to the decision. Our teachers will support you by telling your child it is time to go. If you have questions, teachers are able to help with this process. Take the time to stay with your child at the School when time permits.

SNACK TIME AND MEALS

We serve two daily snacks. Our snacks are nutritious; however you must notify us of any allergies. Lunch will be provided by the parents

and we strongly encourage nutritious meals which are imperative for the proper growth and development of your child. Class snacks and mealtime schedules are posted in each classroom and Parent Board. Infant feeding – parents are to provide all bottles and meals, labeled and prepared for infants. Parents are responsible to inform caregivers of any changes in child’s nutrition or allergies. Infants are on individual schedule according to their needs. We follow PBC Health Dept. procedures when handling food and recording food temperatures.

TOYS FROM HOME:

We ask that toys be kept home; we cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys.

NAPTIME

By licensing requirements as well as an important part of the child’s development is to provide a supervised sleep or rest period after lunch for the children. Please provide a sheet for the cots and a familiar cuddly blanket, labeled which will be sent home each week to be laundered to protect your child’s health. The cots are sanitized after each nap.

TOILET TRAINING

Starting in our two year old classroom, our staff will assist your child in toilet training. We will approach this developmental milestone with patience, support and ongoing communication. Our staff will identify early readiness signs and offer many positive opportunities to use the restroom throughout the day.

DISCIPLINE POLICY: Conscious Discipline

An important part of our program and curriculum is positive guidance. We utilize Conscious Discipline practices, by Becky Bailey, a longtime leader in the early childhood social-emotional learning. It transforms daily conflicts into opportunities to teach critical life skills to children. Children are taught the importance of self-regulation, respect, treating others with care. It is our belief that the goal of discipline is to help young children identify their feelings and gain inner self-control so they

become aware of what is acceptable behavior. Our staff is trained in Conscious Discipline and we try to foresee and prevent problems by structuring an appropriate environment and setting limits and using the skills and tools taught in Conscious Discipline. Developmentally appropriate guidance and classroom management promotes positive social skills, fosters mutual respect, strengthens self-esteem, and supports a safe environment. Please see Administration for more information on Conscious Discipline techniques and program, and things you can do at home as parents using this program. We aim to teach the children proper behavior not punish the child for undesirable behavior. If a child displays an unprovoked act of aggression, kicking, punching, hitting, etc, toward another child or staff, we will immediately contact the parent.

At some times children will exhibit severe behaviors that cannot be managed in the classroom setting. Severe behavior is: danger to self or others; consistent disruptive behavior that interferes in classroom activities. In these types of situations, the parents will be contacted. The parents will need to meet with the teacher and/or the director to discuss the situation and appropriate measures. Behavior that is chronically unacceptable may be an indicator that further support or assessment is needed. This support may include a referral process for further assessment and additional outside services. If the School's procedures for dealing with severe behavior problems do not result in the restoration of an acceptable and safe educational environment, the School Director reserves the right to temporarily or permanently remove a child from the Center.

BITING

We realize that biting is a normal part of a child's development, we work quickly and efficiently with our parents to resolve biting issues. If there are three bites reported in one day the incidents will result in a one day suspension from our program. If the child is three years and older, three reported biting incidents will result in termination of enrollment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCIES/FIRST AID

TMS works hard to provide a safe environment for the children at all times. However, part of growing up can include bumps and bruises. Our School is equipped with simple first aid supplies and if a child has a minor accident the staff will provide appropriate first aid to the child.

When injuries do occur, we make two copies of a written report to inform parents about the accident because we know parents want to be advised. One copy is for the parent and the other copy is to be signed by the parent and kept in the child's file.

If a child sustains a serious injury, a trained staff member will provide first aid and you will be contacted to pick up your child. If there is an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, 911 emergency personnel will be called and the parent and/or the child's physician will be notified. If a child needs to be transported by an ambulance, a staff member will accompany your child if the parent is not available. When the parent is unavailable, alternate names in the child's file are contacted as well. *NOTE: There are staff members including Administration, trained in Early Childhood First Aid and CPR.

HYGEINE

Every effort is made by staff to prevent the spread of germs. We strive to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness, which includes required hand washing for children and teachers and instruction in hygiene to help minimize the spread of germs. Children are required to hand wash throughout the day. TMS follows PBC Rules and Regs regarding any pets or other animals brought onto the premises.

SICK CHILD POLICY / SYMPTOM FREE RULE

One of the most serious challenges facing group care situations for young children is preventing illness. The children must be protected and therefore this policy is in place applicable to all families. We take this policy very seriously to prevent illness. The front office has an isolation room for sick children to utilize while waiting for parents.

TMS uses the following guidelines to protect your child as well as others from contagious illness. We realize that this can sometimes be an inconvenience for parents but we trust that you will understand the necessity for such a policy. If any of the following conditions occur,

while your child is in attendance, you will be notified and your child must be picked up from the center as soon as possible:

1. Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools).
2. Difficulty or rapid breathing.
3. Vomited.
4. Yellowish skin or eyes.
5. A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and/or has had a fever during the previous 24 hours.
6. Mucus with green or yellow color, unless child has been on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours.
7. Undiagnosed rash.
8. Sore throat.
9. Severe cough.
10. Chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, diphtheria or herpes simplex.
11. Untreated scabies, tinea corporis or capitis (ring worm).
12. An ear infection, unless provided notification that child is under physician's care.
13. Head lice.
14. Pinkeye.

*Any other condition deemed necessary by the Director/Teacher for the well-being of your child and the other children enrolled. *Department of Health requires strict guidelines in following these policies and procedures concerning illnesses and communicable disease and there are no exceptions due to our licensing requirements.

One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease is to have strictly enforced standards regarding the exclusion of ill children. We need your help for this. *Do not bring ill children to the School and if your child becomes ill at the Center, please pick the child up immediately. NOTE: NOTIFY the School if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease immediately.

THE 24-HOUR 'SYMPTOM FREE' RULE

The School's policy requires that your child be free of symptoms of illness: fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication.

Please keep in mind that if we send your child home because of illness, the child will not be admitted back to School the next day because the 24-hour period will not have elapsed. Do not rush a child's return to school following an illness. The School reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be re-admitted to the School.

MEDICATIONS

In order for TMS staff to administer medication we are required to adhere to the following and **MUST** have a doctor's written prescription on the medication bottle labeled to administer any medications as well as the following rules:

- All medication must be in the original container.
- The container must be labeled with the child's name.
- We are not allowed to give over the counter medicine
- All medicine must be labeled with the date (if prescribed) or the date brought to the School.
- The medicine must include directions on how to administer the medication.
- If the medication, the name of the physician prescribing the medication must be on the container.
- All medications must have an expiration date and we cannot administer medication after the expiration date
- The medicine can only be administered to the child for whom it was intended. The Director shall administer the medicine no more than 2 times per day; if the Director is not available the Assistant Director or Lead Teacher shall administer the medicine.
- The parent must sign an authorization form and include the dates and times for the Center to administer the medication and these directions must follow the label directions. These forms are available in the office.

TMS does not apply sunscreen to the children due to allergic reactions:

***PLEASE APPLY ANY SUNSCREEN; LOTIONS; OR CREAMS AT HOME**

DIAPER CHANGING PROCEDURES

Parents must supply disposable diapers and wipes. Changing areas have running water and are disinfected after each use. Teachers wear a fresh glove each time they change a child's diaper. Every precaution is made to keep the diaper changing areas as germ free as possible. Licensing regulations are adhered to in all areas of sanitation procedures. Your Teacher will provide you with a list of items required for diaper changing and re-filling.

DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS

Emergency fire drills are mandatory by law and conducted monthly to prepare the child should an emergency situation arise. Our School is equipped with fire alarm system, ceiling sprinklers, and fire extinguishers. We also have the benefit of having the local fire department as a neighbor. It is important to talk to your child should they raise questions or concerns about the drills and we will prepare them in advance as well. Each classroom has an exit to the exterior outside. In event of a fire, each classroom will be escorted by the staff through the appropriate exits onto the enclosed playground. Infants are placed in evacuation cribs and exited by the staff. Staff will take attendance records with them and attendance is taken once outside to make sure all children are accounted for. No one can enter the building until a final sweep and clearance has been given to return to the building.

EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

IN CASE OF A THREAT: In the event there has been made a threat on the TMS facility or nearby facility, the local law enforcement officials will be called and a lock-down of the School will take place. During a lockdown and as with all times during school hours, all exterior doors will remain locked and during a lock down no one can enter or exit the building until the appropriate authorities arrive.

IN CASE OF SEVERE WEATHER/HURRICANE: All parents will be notified immediately to pick up the child if a hurricane watch becomes a hurricane warning, however, the child will not be released until it is safe to do so. TMS has impact resistant windows to prevent flying glass and

breakage. In the event of a Tornado, the children will remain in their classrooms moved away from the doors and windows. Older children from threes through pre-kindergarten will go under the tables in the classroom in the tuck and cover back of neck position. Children will remain in the classroom until the Tornado warning has been lifted. Infants will be placed in the evacuation cribs in the center of the room.

EVACUATIONS: Any time an evacuation is necessitated, each classroom will follow the primary evacuation route that is posted in the classrooms located on the Emergency Evacuation Procedure map. If it is inaccessible, the classes will follow the secondary evacuation route. All teachers must carry their attendance records with them and remain in their designated space with their class until the Director checks the facility and gives clearance to return to the building. If clearance is not possible and the children must evacuate away from the building, the children will be escorted by staff directly behind the school to Oakton Preserves Club House, 2024 Foxtail View Court, West Palm Beach, FL where they will be available for pick up. The secondary place will be Station 7 Fire Station, 8011 Okeechobee Blvd., West Palm Beach, FL, where they will be available for pick up.

COMMUNICATION

PARENTS: THE SCHOOL-FAMILY CONNECTION

Parents' involvement in their child's education is encouraged at TMS in both formal and informal ways. As a matter of fact, we believe it is imperative to the success of the child. It is important for parents to know what is happening in their child's classroom as well as at the School. TMS views itself as an extension of each child's family and we want to partner with you for the success of each child.

Please make every effort to stay informed; you are your child's advocate and their most important teacher.

CLASSROOM NEWSLETTERS

Each classroom publishes a monthly newsletter as a way to maintain communications with parents.

CLASSROOM PARENT INFORMATION BOARD

There is a bulletin board located in each classroom that contains both general and specific parent information. Please make a point to stop by and check the information on the board daily. This will help with the process of communication and connecting parents with the School.

PARENT CONFERENCE

All parents are invited to participate in parent/teacher conferences. These conferences will be held during school hours and at a time that is convenient for both the parents and the teacher. Occasionally a teacher may request a parent conference when there are special concerns in the classroom. We ask that parents respect this request with prompt attention.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

TMS has 3 members on the Management Team to assist with communication and supervision at the School. These administrators are the Owner, Director and Assistant Director. Any one of these managers may assist you with questions or concerns about the Center.

For problem solving at the classroom level we recommend the following three step process:

1. First, bring any concern to the teacher.
2. Next, if you are not satisfied, schedule a meeting with the Director.
3. Last, if you still have a concern, schedule a meeting with the Managing Owner.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS

When you have a concern, please remember...

- Teachers want parents to be satisfied with the care their child is receiving.
- Talk to the teachers directly whenever possible.
- REALIZE that if you have a concern with a teacher, the Director will need to investigate and talk with the teacher about your

concern in order to deal with the issue in a straightforward manner.

- Please give teachers a chance to correct minor issues.
- Sometimes we cannot make the changes you may request due to other restrictions, but we ALWAYS want to hear your suggestions. We promise to consider them seriously and respond to you in a timely manner.
- If at anytime a parent wishes to meet with their child's teacher to discuss issues that may arise, he/she can contact the teacher to schedule a meeting.
- We do ask that you schedule a conference with your child's teacher to discuss issues in depth, and not try to discuss them during drop-off and pick-up times.
- We do not recommend any of our staff for babysitting outside of their TMS employment for any Parents of TMS. It is highly not permitted.

**I understand that each classroom is equipped with web-based cameras for parent viewing and campus is monitored continuously.

**Smoking and tobacco use is strictly prohibited on any part of the premises owned by The Mattisyn School including but not limited to the parking lot, front entrance, inside any part of the campus and/or any other part of the facility which potentially may be occupied by the children or not.

**I understand that if I discuss negative, confidential, private information about a child to other parents, cause gossip or defame the school, I shall be asked to leave.

**I understand that failure to abide by TMS policies and procedures may result in my child's enrollment termination. Disregard of Center policies can include: ignoring state licensing rules and regulations; not keeping your account current; aggressive, loud and argumentative interactions with a Center employee; hostile communications.

**Above all, TMA reserves the right to maintain a harmonious and safe environment for the children. Our goal is to bring about collaboration between the home and school in ways that enhance your child's development.

Sign and return this page to front office:

Parent's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Child's Name _____

Additional Children:

Child's Name _____