

The Nest



AT PALM VALLEY

Parent Handbook



"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence." - Maria Montessori

Policies and Procedures

About Us

The Nest at Palm Valley is a state licensed child care center; however, this campus is dedicated exclusively to upper elementary and adolescent students. Our focus is on providing a rich, developmentally appropriate educational program—not child care—for older children. While we remain in compliance with child care licensing regulations, our primary mission is academic and social-emotional growth through hands-on, purposeful learning. **At The Nest at Palm Valley, we are committed to nurturing the whole child, academically, socially, and emotionally.** Our upper elementary and adolescent programs are designed to foster independence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning. Through hands-on experiences, collaborative projects, and intentional guidance, students develop not only strong academic skills, but also resilience, empathy, and self-direction.

We believe education is a partnership between school and family. When parents and educators work together with mutual respect and shared purpose, children flourish. At The Nest at Palm Valley, we strive to create a safe, respectful, and inspiring environment where each child is seen, known, and supported.

Our goal is to help every student grow into a confident, capable, and joyful learner, prepared not just for school, but for life.

Curriculum & Activities

At The Nest at Palm Valley, our upper elementary and adolescent programs are designed to support the intellectual, emotional, and social development of the growing child. Our educational approach empowers students to take ownership of their learning while engaging in purposeful, meaningful work.

Students at this stage are naturally driven by curiosity, a desire for independence, and a growing sense of social awareness. Our guides (teachers) support this developmental phase by offering a curriculum that is rich, integrated, and deeply connected to real-world experiences.



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Core Areas of Study:

- **Language Arts** – reading, writing, literature studies, and research projects
- **Mathematics** – arithmetic, geometry, and algebra concepts applied through hands-on learning
- **Cultural Studies** – history, geography, biology, chemistry, and physics
- **Practical Life Skills** – cooking, environmental care, entrepreneurship, and real-life responsibilities
- **Social & Emotional Learning** – respectful communication, self-awareness, and community-building
- **Creative Expression** – art, music, performance, and creative writing
- **Physical Education & Outdoor Exploration** – daily movement, outdoor play, and nature-based experiences

Project-Based and Purpose-Driven Learning

Students regularly engage in long-term, interdisciplinary projects that connect academic learning to real-world applications. These projects often involve research, collaboration, presentations, and creative problem-solving.

A key feature of our program is the student-run **micro-economy**, which funds class projects, trips, and special activities. Students develop and manage small businesses, including the sale of handmade and 3D-printed items, and by leading after-school extracurricular classes for younger children at our sister campus. Through these ventures, students gain hands-on experience in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and leadership.

Global Opportunities

In alignment with our commitment to global citizenship, students may also participate in international programs such as the *Model United Nations Conference (MMUN) in Rome* or the *Sustainable Development Games*, which take place in various countries. These trips allow students to explore global issues, collaborate with peers from around the world, and present their work on an international stage.

Community and Collaboration

Our classrooms emphasize cooperation, initiative, and shared responsibility. Students plan events, organize service projects, engage in peer teaching, and help shape the culture of their community through meaningful collaboration.



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Cooking and Practical Work

Students participate in regular in-class cooking activities, from planning and preparation to shared meals. These experiences foster independence, practical skills, and community connection while reinforcing concepts across subject areas.

Field Experiences

Learning often extends beyond the classroom through walking excursions, local field trips, and community-based learning. These experiences deepen student understanding and connect classroom topics to the world around them.

Outdoor Time

All students have daily outdoor time to move, explore, and recharge. Activities include group games, nature walks, gardening, and unstructured play that supports well-being and social growth.

Summer Activities

During the summer, students participate in dynamic, camp-style experiences that blend fun, learning, and adventure. Activities may include hands-on creative projects, science experiments, themed challenges, team games, and cooking workshops. Weekly highlights could feature things like maker days, water games, creative writing labs, entrepreneurship challenges, film production, outdoor adventures, and community service projects. Special events and field trips are also incorporated to keep summer engaging, purposeful, and socially enriching.

Camera Viewing

The Nest at Palm Valley Administrators have the ability to view your child at any time throughout the day. Cameras are installed across campus and in each classroom and outside. These cameras are not for public use and are only accessible by administrators.



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Rates and Registration

****Deposit fee of \$1,500.00****

Deposit is refundable when given a 30 day written notice

Upper Elementary and Adolescent Program

9 years - 14 years	Academic Day	\$1,500 per month
After School	3:30 pm - 6 pm	\$360 per month
Transportation	7:50 am & 4:00 pm	\$200/family

*The Nest at Palm Valley does not charge annual fees for registration or enrollment

Family Discounts

10% discount for each additional child

*does not apply to after school only programs



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Payment and Late Fees

The Nest at Palm Valley accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover, Checks, Cash, and Money Orders. You can also make a payment through the Family app or online account. A 2.8% fee is assessed for payments made via credit or debit card. There is no fee for ACH bank transfers. Payment is due on the 1st of each month. If tuition is not paid by the 4th day of the month a \$35.00 late fee will be charged to your account on the 5th of the month and every 5 days that an outstanding balance remains. Children with a past due balance will not be allowed to attend the following month unless the past due balance is paid in full. No account will be held for more than one month. We do not carry balances. If for any reason you decide to withdraw your child from our school, a 30 day notice is required. If your child is picked up after 6:00pm you will be assessed a late fee.

Academic Day Dismissal (3:30 pm):

Students must be picked up by **3:45 pm**, which includes a 15-minute grace period. Pick-ups after 3:45 PM will incur a **late fee of \$35.00**, plus an additional **\$35.00 for every 15-minute increment** thereafter.

After-School Care Dismissal (6:00 pm):

For children enrolled in after-school care, pick-up must occur **no later than 6:00 pm**. Because the school is officially closed at that time, **there is no grace period**. Pick-ups at or after **6:01 pm** will be assessed a **late fee of \$35.00**, plus **\$35.00 for each additional 15-minute increment** past 6:00 pm.

Admission Requirements

To enroll, you must provide the school with the following required documents: enrollment papers, current immunization record, and deposit fee.

***Children ages 4 and up are required to have a hearing and vision screening from a qualified health professional annually and prior to enrollment. These screenings can be done at your child's regular well checkup.**

If during your child's stay with us, there is a change of employment, home address, or telephone number, it is the parent's or legal guardian's responsibility to notify the school management in writing of such changes. Our management must be able to always contact responsible parents/guardians during the normal hours of operation of the school.



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The Nest at Palm Valley admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies or admission policies.

Holiday Closings

We are closed for the following holidays: Labor Day, Fall Break, Winter Break, Martin Luther King Jr Day, Spring Break, Good Friday, (Please see calendar) If the holiday falls on a weekend, we will close the Friday before or Monday after. If we close for any reason other than an emergency situation, you will be given a two week prior notice.

Inclement Weather

We follow **RRISD schools** for inclement weather closings. If **RRISD schools** close, we will also be closed. We will also leave a message on the answering machine at the center and post it on our Facebook page.

Policy for Drop Off and Pick-Up

Students should arrive by **8:30 am** to ensure a calm and productive start to the day. Upon arrival, it is the responsibility of the adult dropping off the child to complete the check-in process via the **Famly app**.

Students may walk into the building **without an adult escort** if they are dropped off at either:

- The **circle driveway**, where they can safely walk along the sidewalk to the front entrance, or
- The **right-side driveway**, where they can walk directly to the door without crossing through the main parking lot

However, for safety and licensing compliance, **children may not be dropped off in the main parking lot and left to cross unsupervised**. If using the parking lot, an adult must walk the child to the door.

Parents are welcome to:



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- Escort their child inside
- Walk them to the school entrance
- Remain in the car if using the circle driveway for drop-off

While families are always welcome in the building, we kindly ask that parents **refrain from entering classrooms unless invited by a guide**, in order to protect the learning environment and support student independence.

Each parent or legal guardian must designate authorized pick-up individuals in the enrollment paperwork. All parents and authorized contacts will use the **Family app** to sign children in and out, and will receive a secure **entry PIN** for building access during business hours.

If someone **not listed** as an authorized or emergency contact needs to pick up your child, we must receive **written authorization in advance**. No child will be released without prior consent. Staff will request photo identification from any individual not recognized, even if they are listed, so please inform all pick-up contacts of our policy.

For your child's protection:

- Only individuals with valid photo ID will be allowed to pick up a child
- Custody-related restrictions require official court documentation on file

If a child is not picked up by closing and we cannot reach a parent or emergency contact, a staff member will remain with the child as long as possible. If **two hours** pass without contact, we are legally required to notify **Child Protective Services**. Thank you for helping us keep our school community safe and secure.

Front Door Access & Security

For safety and accountability, The Nest at Palm Valley uses a single front door access code for families. We ask that parents only share this code with individuals who are **regularly authorized to pick up their child**. Please **do not share the code with anyone who would only pick up your child occasionally or on a one-time basis**.

To further support security, we ask all families to avoid holding the front door open for anyone they do not personally know. Even with the best intentions, this can compromise the safety of the school community. All visitors and unfamiliar individuals should ring the doorbell and wait for staff assistance.



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Pandemic Policy Changes for Drop Off, Pick-Up, and Operations

In the event of a pandemic, the school will follow the state's licensing department and governor's guidance on operations and the CDC's recommended guidelines to prevent the spread of illnesses. These guidelines may include but are not limited to;

- Posting a door sign at all entrances to the facility.
- Restricting families' access to the front door of the facility or limiting access to entry only.
- Only allowing children and staff who are required for daily operations and ratio inside the building and classrooms.
- Modifying sign-in/sign-out procedures. Staff sign children in and out of the facility for the families if they use a computer/keypad system. If pens are used, sanitizing with a disinfectant wipe or other means before another person uses the pen.
- Daily temperature checks and health screening of all staff and children upon arrival. Further, excluding all visitors, staff, and children if they have a fever above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or exhibit respiratory symptoms, including cough or shortness of breath. Staff conducting daily health screenings using the appropriate PPE.
- Ceasing all unnecessary child transportation.
- Staggering arrival and drop off times and/or plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.
- Staff walking children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walking them back to their parents or cars.
- Hand hygiene stations are set up at the entrance of the facility, so that staff and children can clean their hands before they enter.
- Following proper hand hygiene guidance for adults and children such as washing hands frequently with soap and water:
 - upon arrival in classroom in the morning
 - before and after eating meals and snacks
 - after blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing or when in contact with body fluids after using the restroom.
- limiting or reducing the number of children in each classroom and outside.
- Keeping each group of children in a separate room and not mixing children.
- Routinely cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.
- Cleaning and sanitizing all materials and surfaces at the end of the day.



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Guidance and Discipline

At The Nest at Palm Valley, our goal is to create a respectful, safe, and emotionally supportive learning environment where every student can thrive. Our program for upper elementary and adolescent students is designed to honor their growing independence while helping them develop strong interpersonal skills, emotional regulation, and a sense of personal responsibility.

We believe discipline is not about control or punishment, but about guidance, connection, and learning. Our approach focuses on:

- **Proactive support** to help students understand expectations
- **Open dialogue** that encourages students to reflect on their choices
- **Natural and logical consequences** that help reinforce accountability
- **Restorative conversations** to repair harm and restore relationships when conflicts arise

When challenges do occur, our guides will work with the student to understand the root of the behavior, provide coaching or redirection, and support them in developing strategies for self-regulation. If behavior becomes disruptive to the learning environment or affects the safety or well-being of others, the student may be removed from the group for a reflective break and a conversation with a staff member.

Families will be notified of any ongoing behavioral concerns, and we ask for partnership in reinforcing shared expectations at home. In cases of persistent or serious behavioral challenges, the Director will meet with the family to develop a support plan. In rare cases, a student may be dismissed from the program if behavior remains unresolved and significantly disrupts the community. **These decisions are never made lightly, and only occur after thoughtful collaboration between the guides, the Director, and the family, once all other avenues of support have been explored and it is clear that our environment is no longer in the best interest of the child or the classroom community.** Dismissal decisions are made at the Director's discretion with the well-being of all students in mind.

Prohibited Practices

In accordance with Texas state law and our ethical commitments as educators:



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- **Physical punishment is never used.** Staff may not spank, shake, jerk, pinch, or handle any student roughly.
- **Verbal abuse, humiliation, or belittling** is strictly prohibited. This includes threats, profanity, or negative remarks about the child or their family.
- **Isolation in a dark room, closet, or unsupervised area** is not allowed.
- **Mechanical or physical restraints** are never used for discipline purposes.
- **Any form of abuse—physical, emotional, or sexual—will result in immediate termination and reporting to the appropriate authorities.**

We strive to uphold a culture of dignity, mutual respect, and emotional safety. By modeling compassionate leadership, we help students learn how to lead themselves and contribute positively to their community.

Child Abuse

We are required by law to report any suspected child abuse, child neglect, exploitation, or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children's Services.

Meals

At this campus, **meals are not included in daily tuition.** Children are expected to arrive having eaten a healthy breakfast and must bring their own **nutritious lunch and snacks** each day.

From time to time, the class will plan and prepare **community meals** together as part of their learning experience. These shared meals offer valuable opportunities for students to develop practical life skills, work collaboratively, and explore food and culture. Families will be notified in advance when these meals are planned, and contributions (such as ingredients or supplies) may be requested.

The school may also occasionally provide snacks for special classroom events or celebrations. Parents will be informed ahead of time if this applies.

Please note:

- **The campus is a nut-free environment.** Please do not send any food items that contain peanuts, tree nuts, or nut-based products.



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- **Water is available throughout the day**, and students are encouraged to stay hydrated.
- The school is **not responsible for the nutritional value of food brought from home**.
- **Food allergies can be life-threatening**. Any child with a diagnosed food allergy must have an emergency care action plan on file, completed by the family physician.

Special Needs Children

We are committed to creating a supportive, inclusive environment where each student can thrive. If your child has any diagnosed or suspected needs, whether medical, developmental, behavioral, or learning-related, we ask that you notify the Director as early as possible. Open communication allows us to prepare effectively and ensure we're able to meet your child's needs without disruption to their experience or the classroom community.

How We Partner with Families

1. Early Communication

Please provide a written summary from a physician, therapist, or other qualified professional outlining your child's needs, diagnoses (if applicable), and any recommended accommodations. If your child has an IEP, 504 plan, or therapy service plan, we welcome that documentation as well.

2. Collaborative Planning

Our team will work closely with your family to develop a school-based support plan. Together, we'll determine how best to implement accommodations and ensure alignment between home, school, and outside providers.

3. On-Site Support Options

We maintain working relationships with a network of trusted professionals who already work at our campuses, including speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, ABA therapists, and learning specialists, who provide services directly at the school. These services are billed independently through private insurance or out-of-pocket, and families maintain a direct relationship with the provider.

Alternatively, families may choose to work with their own preferred providers. In



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either case, the therapist or specialist will develop a care or learning plan in coordination with our team to ensure continuity and alignment.

4. **Ongoing Communication**

We believe in transparency and partnership. Our staff and support providers maintain open communication with families throughout the school year to monitor progress, adjust strategies, and ensure each child receives the support they need.

By sharing information early and working collaboratively, we can provide meaningful support that honors your child's individuality and ensures the classroom remains a positive space for everyone.

Postings

In accordance with state licensing requirements, the following items are posted in a visible area of the school for parent and visitor access:

- Our current **State License**
- A copy of the **Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers**
- Our most recent **Licensing Evaluation Report**
- A **Communicable Disease Chart**
- A **Statement of Parental Access**
- Names of the **Director and staff in charge**
- Our **Emergency Plans** for fire, severe weather, and other critical situations
- A **Visitor Policy Statement** (see below)
- Our **weekly activity and meal menus** (when applicable)

These postings are intended to promote transparency and keep families informed. If you have questions about any of the posted documents, please speak with the Director.

Visitor Policy Statement

For the safety and security of our students and staff, **all visitors must check in at the front desk upon arrival**. Visitors include any individuals who are not currently enrolled students, staff members, or parents/legal guardians with regular pick-up/drop-off privileges. Our official visitor policy outlines the following:

- All visitors must enter through the main entrance and be acknowledged by staff before proceeding beyond the lobby.



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- Visitors are required to **sign in** and may be asked to present a **valid photo ID**.
- Visitors may only access the classroom or program areas **with staff escort or explicit approval** from the Director.
- Parents are welcome to visit during school hours; however, we ask that **classroom entry be limited to invitations or pre-scheduled visits** in order to preserve the learning environment.
- Unrecognized or unauthorized individuals are not permitted in the facility beyond designated public areas.
- Any suspicious or unknown persons on site will be reported and handled according to our safety protocols.

This policy is posted publicly and reviewed with all staff and volunteers. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a secure and respectful school environment.

Staff Qualifications

At The Nest at Palm Valley, we take great pride in the quality, passion, and professionalism of our teaching team. While we meet all state licensing requirements, we hold ourselves to a much higher standard in order to provide the best possible educational experience for your child.

All staff members:

- Meet or exceed the **minimum qualifications set by the State of Texas**
- Complete **criminal background checks and fingerprinting**
- Maintain **current CPR and First Aid certification**
- Participate in thorough **orientation and onboarding**
- Engage in ongoing professional development in the areas of:
 - Child growth and development
 - Creating safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments
 - Developmentally responsive teaching practices
 - Positive guidance and social-emotional support
 - Family engagement and cultural awareness
 - Ethical conduct and professionalism

In addition to meeting these standards, **many of our lead teachers hold specialized credentials and training in Montessori or Montessori-inspired education**, bringing years of experience guiding children through hands-on, individualized, and



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purpose-driven learning. Our educators are chosen not only for their qualifications, but for their warmth, insight, and deep commitment to the well-being and growth of every child.

We are proud to offer your family a learning community led by skilled, compassionate, and dedicated professionals.

Administering Medication

Medication will only be administered at school when **absolutely necessary**, and only with **written authorization** from a parent or legal guardian. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Requirements for Medication Administration:

- A completed **Medication Authorization Form** must be submitted for each medication that is administered. These forms are available at the front desk.
- All medication must be provided in the **original container**, clearly labeled with the **child's full name**.
- **Prescription medications** must:
 - Include a current pharmacy label with the prescribing doctor's instructions
 - Be prescribed specifically for the child named on the label
(If prescribed to more than one child in the family, both names must appear on the label.)
- **Over-the-counter medications** will be administered only according to the instructions on the label, and only if:
 - A medication form is completed
 - The container is labeled with the child's full name
- **Fever-reducing medications** (such as those containing acetaminophen or ibuprofen) will **not** be administered under any circumstances, as they may mask symptoms of illness.

Storage and Handling:

- Medications must be handed directly to the Director or the designated administrator **at drop-off**.
- All medications must be taken home **each day** unless otherwise approved by the Director.



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- **Children may not carry or store medications in their bags, classrooms, or personal items.**

If your child requires medication during school hours, please plan accordingly to ensure compliance and safety for all students.

Adverse Reaction to Medication

If your child experiences any type of adverse reaction to medication, food, or an insect sting while at school, you will be **notified immediately**. This includes symptoms such as rash, swelling, difficulty breathing, unexpected drowsiness, or any behavior that is out of the ordinary following exposure.

In the event of a reaction:

- Staff will respond promptly to ensure your child's safety
- The Director or designated administrator will contact you right away
- A formal **Incident Report** will be completed by staff, documenting the observed symptoms and actions taken
- You will receive a copy of the report the same day for your records

If your child has a known allergy or risk of reaction, please ensure we have an **up-to-date emergency action plan** on file, signed by your child's healthcare provider.

Immunization

In compliance with state regulations, all children enrolled at **The Nest at Palm Valley** are required to have a current **Certificate of Immunization** on file. This is a state-mandated requirement for school attendance and must be kept up to date at all times.

We ask that you submit an updated immunization record **each time your child receives a new vaccine**. Timely updates help us maintain accurate records and ensure the health and safety of our entire school community.

You can obtain a valid immunization form from your child's **pediatrician** or **local health department**.



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If your child is exempt from immunizations due to medical or conscientious reasons, please provide the appropriate **notarized affidavit** or **medical exemption form** as required by the state.

Exclusion of Sick Children

To protect the health of all students and staff, any child who exhibits signs of illness will be sent home and must remain out of school until they are symptom-free.

A child will be excluded from school if they present with:

- A temperature of **100.5°F or higher**
- **Vomiting** or **diarrhea**
- Any symptoms of contagious illness, including but not limited to: **rash, persistent cough, sore throat, or conjunctivitis (pink eye)**

If your child develops any of these symptoms while at school, you will be contacted and asked to pick them up promptly.

Return to School

Children may return to school when:

- They have been **symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication**
- They are able to participate comfortably in daily activities
- If symptoms were due to a contagious illness, medical clearance may be requested

We do **not administer fever-reducing medications** to keep a child comfortable during the day, as doing so may mask symptoms of an active illness. If you wish to provide a medication for minor cold symptoms (such as a cough or runny nose), it must **not contain a fever reducer** and must follow all school medication policies, including a signed authorization form.

Staff Wellness Policy

Staff members and any supervised individuals may not remain at the school if they are exhibiting symptoms of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. We hold our team to the same health standards as students to ensure the safety and well-being of the entire community.



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Thank you for partnering with us to maintain a healthy learning environment.

Notifiable Communicable Diseases

Certain infectious illnesses are classified by the state as **notifiable communicable diseases** and must be reported to the local health department, as required by law. A full list of these illnesses is posted on the **Communicable Disease Chart** located on our school bulletin board.

We are legally obligated to report any **suspected or confirmed case** of a notifiable communicable disease among students, staff, or visitors to the appropriate health authorities.

Family Responsibilities

If your child is diagnosed with or exposed to a notifiable communicable disease, it is your responsibility to notify the school as soon as possible. This helps us take appropriate steps to prevent further spread and protect vulnerable members of our school community.

School Responsibilities

If a child in our care has been exposed to a notifiable communicable disease, we will notify affected families promptly, while maintaining confidentiality. We will also provide guidance on recommended next steps, including exclusion periods, symptoms to monitor, or when to seek medical advice.

By working together, we help maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff.

Handwashing, Health & Safety

Maintaining a healthy environment begins with strong hygiene habits. At The Nest at Palm Valley, we teach and model proper handwashing practices as a key part of our daily routine and school culture.

Hand hygiene stations are located at the school entrance so that staff and students can clean their hands upon arrival. Throughout the day, all children and staff are expected to follow proper handwashing procedures using soap and water.



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Handwashing is required at the following times:

- Upon arrival at school or into the classroom
- Before and after eating meals or snacks
- After using the restroom or assisting a child with toileting
- After blowing noses, coughing, sneezing, or contact with bodily fluids
- After outdoor play or physical activity

Staff support and guide children through proper handwashing techniques, helping them understand the importance of hygiene as part of caring for themselves and their community.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

We maintain high standards for cleanliness to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all students, staff, and visitors.

Frequently touched surfaces—including tables, door handles, counters, desks, phones, keyboards, faucets, toilets, sinks, and light switches—are cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.

At the end of each day:

- All toys and classroom surfaces are **thoroughly cleaned and sanitized**
- Any toy that has been placed in a child's mouth or comes into contact with bodily fluids is immediately removed from circulation and placed in a designated **"to be sanitized" bin** for proper cleaning before reuse

We use cleaning products approved for use in child care settings, and all staff are trained in safe and effective cleaning protocols in accordance with health and licensing guidelines.

Written Parental Authorization

We are required to obtain **written authorization** from a parent or legal guardian before a child may participate in the following activities:

- Routine or scheduled **transportation**
- **Field trips** or off-site excursions



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- **Special activities** that take place away from school grounds
- Any **water-related activity** occurring in water more than two feet deep

If a public facility is used for a water-related activity, a **certified lifeguard** will be present at all times. For safety, all participating students will be required to wear **flotation devices** such as U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets or arm floaties when entering pool areas.

At this time, **our campus does not have a pool**, but we may occasionally participate in off-site water activities (e.g., splash pads or pools) with proper supervision and parental consent.

Permission slips will be provided prior to any such activity, and students will not be permitted to attend without signed authorization.

Parental Access

We deeply value the partnership between school and home, and we believe that open communication and accessibility are key to supporting each child's growth.

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time during the day while their child is in our care. Whether you choose to walk your child to the door, check in with a guide, or simply observe for a few minutes, you are always welcome here. We encourage you to stay connected and engaged in your child's experience, and we're happy to answer any questions you may have about their day or our program.

We provide daily communication—both verbal and written—especially for our younger or nonverbal students, and we invite ongoing conversations with families about their child's development, interests, and needs.

If your child is in our infant program, you are always welcome to come in to **nurse or bottle-feed** your baby during the day.

While we maintain an open-door philosophy, please know that all **exterior doors remain securely locked** during operating hours to protect the safety of every child and staff member. Families will be given an access code (or may ring in) and are asked **not to hold the door open for unfamiliar individuals**, even if it feels polite to do so. This small gesture makes a big difference in maintaining a secure campus.



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To preserve the focus and flow of the classroom environment, we ask that parents **refrain from entering classrooms during instructional time unless invited by a guide**. If you'd like to schedule an observation or participate in a special classroom event, we're happy to coordinate a time with you.

At The Nest at Palm Valley, you're not just dropping off your child—you're joining a community. We are grateful to walk alongside you in this journey and are always here to listen, collaborate, and support.

Prohibited Substances

To ensure a safe and healthy environment for all children, families, and staff, the use of **tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, alcohol, or any illegal or prohibited substances** is strictly forbidden on school property.

This policy applies to:

- All areas inside the school building
- Outdoor spaces, including parking lots, driveways, and playgrounds
- Any vehicle used to transport children, regardless of location
- Any time children are present, including field trips and school events

Violations of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in removal from the premises or further action as deemed necessary by school administration.

Emergency Plans

The safety of your child is our highest priority. To ensure we are ready for any situation, The Nest at Palm Valley maintains a comprehensive **Emergency Preparedness Plan** and conducts regular drills to practice safety procedures.

Emergency Drills

- **Fire drills** are conducted **monthly**
- **Tornado and other emergency drills** (e.g., shelter-in-place, lockdown) are conducted **every six months**

These drills help familiarize students and staff with evacuation routes, safe zones, and emergency protocols in a calm, proactive manner.



"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence." - Maria Montessori

Emergency Response Procedures

Our written plan outlines procedures for responding to a range of emergencies, including:

- Severe weather (e.g., storms, tornadoes)
- Power or water outages
- Injury or medical emergencies
- Missing or lost child
- Dangerous or threatening individuals on or near campus
- Natural disasters or other unforeseen crises

Key components of our plan include:

- **Evacuation procedures** and designated safe areas
- **Shelter-in-place** and **lockdown protocols**
- **Relocation and reunification plans** with families
- **Communication procedures** to keep families informed
- Steps to maintain the **continuity of operations** if the school is affected

A copy of our Emergency Preparedness Plan is available to all families upon request. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how we keep students safe, please contact the Director.



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Receipt of Written Operational Policies

I acknowledge receipt of The Nest at Palm Valley's operational policies, including those for (Check all that apply).

<input type="checkbox"/> Discipline and guidance	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for release of children
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspension and expulsion	<input type="checkbox"/> Illness and exclusion criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for dispensing medications
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for conducting health checks	<input type="checkbox"/> Immunization requirements
<input type="checkbox"/> Safe sleep	<input type="checkbox"/> Meals and food service practices
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for parents to discuss concerns with director	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for supporting inclusive services
<input type="checkbox"/> Promotion of indoor and outdoor physical activity including criteria for extreme weather conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for parents to contact Child Care Regulation, DFPS, Child Abuse Hotline, and CCR website
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for parents to participate in operation activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures to visit the center without securing prior approval

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____