

Welcome Parents

A handbook of operational policies for
parents of children
enrolled in
Rolling Plains Management Corporation's
Head Start and Licensed Day Care Programs

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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OPERATIONAL POLICIES

1. Hours, Days, and Months of Operation

Rolling Plains Management Corporation, the sponsoring agency for the Centers, operates three program options:

Option I: Head Start Part-Day, Part-Year (Archer City, Crowell, Vernon, Paducah, Chillicothe, Quannah, Olney, Graham, Knox City, Munday, Seymour)

Hours of operation for this program will be 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. This program will follow the same days of attendance as the public school system in the community where the Head Start program is located. The only exceptions will be for emergency situations specific to the center, i.e., busted pipes, power outages, outburst of communicable disease etc. The center will be open on all days that the public school system is open and will be closed all days that public school has no classes. If the public school has an early dismissal, Head Start will dismiss early also. You will be given a copy of your public school calendar. **There is no fee for a Head Start program.**

Option II: Head Start Full-Day, Full-Year (1 classroom in Olney only)

This option is for working parents only. Hours of operation for this program will be flexible based on the working hours of the parents of the children enrolled but not earlier than 7:00 a.m. and no later than 5:30 p.m. Days of operation will be the same days of attendance as the public school system in Olney as well as all days in June and July with the exception of Memorial Day and Fourth of July holidays. There will be no children in attendance from August 6 until school starts. **There is no fee for a Head Start program.**

Option III: Day Care (Quannah only)

A comprehensive child development class for preschoolers, ages 3 & 4, is offered for a reasonable fee. Hours of operation are flexible to meet the needs of the parents of the children enrolled. This class offers many of the same services as the Head Start program. This classroom does not follow the public school calendar in that there will be classes except on major holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas and the day after, New Year's Day and the day after, and Good Friday. This classroom does begins and ends the same day as the public school.

2. **Procedures for the Release of Children**

At the time of enrollment, parents are required to fill out a form “PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION” and place the names of all individuals that the parent anticipates and gives permission to release their child/children to.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES will any child be released to anyone other than the parents or persons designated by the parent on the **Pick-Up Authorization Form** the parent signs at the time of enrollment. Parents who wish to change designated persons after the date of enrollment must make changes in writing on the current Pick-Up Authorization Form or complete a new form to reflect all changes. If new form is made, it must be attached to the previous form. In two parent households, the enrolling parent shall list the other parent on the authorization form if the other parent has permission to pick up the child.

In instances where the custody/guardianship of the child changes after a child has been enrolled, the following policy will apply: If the new custodial parent/guardian is not the one who originally enrolled the child, the new custodial parent/guardian must show evidence of such custodial change. Evidence shall be a court document (signed by a judge) or a notarized statement signed by the parent who originally enrolled the child.

a. Children picked up at the Center

To protect children, the identity of a person authorized to pick up a child by someone unknown by the caregivers must be verified. In order to verify identity, Site Directors are required to ask to see photo identification before releasing a child to their care. If no photo identification is available, a driver’s license number and the license tag of the vehicle will be recorded before the child is released. Copies of the photo identity and/or record of DL#’s and tag numbers will be retained in the child’s record for at least three months.

Law enforcement officers and PRS Child Protective Services staff have the authority by law to remove a child without a parent’s permission. Staff must ask to see identity of such persons unknown to them.

If caregivers have reason to believe that the person picking up the child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will call local police and request their assistance.

b. Children Receiving Transportation

If a child is being transported, the names of the persons that will receive the child after being transported must also be listed on the Pick-Up Authorization form. Identity of the person to whom a child is released must also be verified. If the person is unknown, a picture will be taken with a disposable camera carried on

the van by the caregiver. Caregiver will also request driver license information, address, etc. before leaving the child.

c. Emergency Contacts

During the year, there may be situations that may make it a necessity to contact parents. Parents are asked to give us the name of some emergency contacts in the event that we can not reach them either at home or at work. (Some employers do not want employees to receive calls at work.)

In the event that a child needs to leave the Center in an emergency, it is very important that some of the same persons are on both the pick-up authorization and the Emergency Contact form. Even if someone is shown on the emergency contact form, if we do not have their name on the pick-up authorization, we cannot allow the child to leave the center with them.

d. Sign-in and sign-out logs

Whenever a child is brought to the Center for care or whenever he/she leaves the Center, the child must be signed in and out. Staff in each classroom will have the log of the class' participants. The log will include the name of each child, the date, time of arrival and time of departure, employee's initials and parent's initials. All caregivers will be aware of where each classroom's log is kept so that they can readily assist the parents. In the event that the child is taken home, both the employee releasing child to van caregiver and the van monitor will initial as well as the person that the child is released to. **The person to whom the child is taken must be the parent or someone on the pick-up authorization list. IF NONE OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE AVAILABLE, CHILD WILL BE TAKEN BACK TO THE CENTER AND SOMEONE FROM THE PICK-UP LIST WILL BE CALLED TO COME FOR THE CHILD.**

If children have not been picked up within one hour of the scheduled pick-up time and attempts to reach those on the pickup list are futile, local law enforcement officials will be called to assist in finding parents, etc.

ALL CHANGES IN REGARDS TO PICK-UP AUTHORIZATIONS, CHANGES IN DELIVERY ADDRESSES, ETC. MUST BE IN WRITING. CHANGES DONE BY TELEPHONE, WORD OF MOUTH, ETC. WILL ABSOLUTELY NOT BE ACCEPTED!!

Sign-in and Sign-out logs are kept for a minimum of three months.

3. Illness and exclusion criteria

Children will not be accepted for care if one or more of the following conditions exists:

- a. The condition (illness) prevents the child from participating comfortably in center activities including outdoor play;
- b. The condition (illness) results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care;
- c. Child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that the child can be included in activities:
 1. Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 2. Rectal temperature of 101.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 3. Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or systems of illness, or
 4. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child **may be** ill and/or have a communicable disease;
 5. Skin lesions/sores that is unidentifiable as to nature (ringworm, etc.) These should be covered with a bandage. For troublesome sores, a physician's statement **may be required** before the child can be included in attendance. The Health/Disabilities Coordinator will determine whether this will be required.
- d. A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that he/she is no longer contagious. (Communicable diseases that exclude a child from care are defined by the Texas Department of Health. This information is included as Attachment I.

Note: Children who begin to display any of the above after arriving at school must be excluded. Parents will be called to pick-up their child. If parents cannot be reached, someone on the pick-up authorization list will be called. Pick-up and release policies listed in Section 2 will be followed. Children will be kept in the Center Director's office apart from other children until they are picked up. Appropriate attention and supervision will be given the child until the child is picked up. Extra attention to hand washing and sanitation will be practiced by staff and ill children when the child has diarrhea or is vomiting.

4. Procedures for dispensing medications:

There are written procedures for dispensing medications. These procedures are included as Attachment II.

5. Procedures for handling medical emergencies

Written procedures and policies for handling medical emergencies are included as Attachment III.

Written procedures and policies for handling dental emergencies are included as Attachment IV.

6. Procedures for parental notifications

A. Parents will be immediately notified (after child's safety is ensured) whenever a child:

1. Is injured and the injury requires medical attention by a health-care professional.
2. Has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the center as specified in Illness and exclusion criteria listed above
3. Has been involved in any situation that places the child at risk. For example, children wandering away from the center, left in vehicles, etc.
4. Has been involved in any situation that might cause the center to be unsafe: fire, flood, toxic spills, severe weather, etc.

B. Parents will be notified of less serious injuries when the parent picks the child up from the Center. Less serious injuries include, but are not limited to, minor cuts, scratches, and bites from other children requiring first-aid treatment by employees.

C. All parents will be notified in writing and within 48 hours of becoming aware that a child or employee has contracted a communicable disease that the law requires the center to report to the Texas Department of Health. See Attachment I.

D. Parents of all children in a group will be notified when there is an outbreak of lice or other infestation in the group. Individual notes will be sent to parents. Under no circumstances will names of individual children be released to other parents.

- E. Parents will be notified in writing of any changes in the operational policies and enrollment agreement. Notification receipt must be signed and dated by the parent and kept in the child's folder.
- F. Parents will be notified in writing prior to any screenings, evaluations, assessments, etc.
- G. Head Start parents will be notified prior to parent meetings, parent trainings, etc.
- H. All parents will be notified prior to field trips.

7. Discipline and guidance practices

The agency Discipline and Guidance policies are included as Attachment V.

8. Meals and food service practices

During a regular school day, children in Head Start/Day Care are provided with breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Meals are served family-style and staff sits with children and eats the same foods as the children. Each child receives approximately ½ of their daily nutrition requirements during the normal day. At least one-half hour is allowed for the children to eat unhurriedly. We participate in USDA Child and Adult Center Food Program; therefore, there will be a lapse of at least 3 hours between the beginning of breakfast and the beginning of lunch. Breakfast is always between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.; lunch is always between 11:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Children who arrive after breakfast has been served that have not eaten breakfast prior to arrival will be given a glass of juice or milk "to tide them over until lunch." Snack is always between 2:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Children enrolled in Olney's full day classroom will receive breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Snacks will be served between 2:30 & 3:00 p.m.

On late arrival days or early dismissal days, children will be served only those meals that they normally would eat during the time they are in attendance, i.e., if school started at 10:30 a.m., children would eat lunch but not breakfast.

Children are never forced to eat. We encourage children to try new and different foods and to at least taste; but they are never forced. **Food is never used as a reward or punishment.** We understand that offering food as reward or punishment places undue importance on food for the child and may have negative effects by promoting responses that lead to obesity or poor eating behavior.

All children will be served milk. If a child is allergic to milk, we must have a statement as to this condition from the child's physician. Reasonable substitutions will be provided at no cost.

Any child who has a food allergy will not be served that/those foods if we are presented with a statement from the child's physician indicating the allergy. Both the staff preparing food and the staff serving food will be given this information. Appropriate nutritional substitutions will be made a no cost.

Children are not allowed to bring food/snacks from home. The only exception to this is for parties, etc. and food brought to the center must be provided in the store container with wrapping intact. For family activities where others assist with food, food must be in original, unopened containers and prepared at the center.

Daily menus are posted in each classroom and parents receive a copy of the monthly menu as a part of the parent newsletter. Menus are recyclable and are kept at the center for a period of 3 months.

Foods served will be in compliance with USDA requirements for meal patterns and nutrients. A registered dietician assists with menu planning and does training and observations of meal service.

Health inspections are performed annually to ensure that food and drinks are of safe quality and stored, prepared, distributed and served under sanitary and safe conditions.

There are water fountains in each center to ensure that children have clean, safe drinking water available at all times.

A copy of meal patterns and amounts is included as Attachment VI.

9. Immunization Requirements

A part of the application process is obtaining a copy of the child's immunization record. After review of the record, if the child is not up to date or current, parents are referred to the next immunization clinic in order that the child can be current. All immunizations should be completed by the first date of attendance. A copy of the minimum state vaccine requirements for Texas Child-Care Facilities is included as Attachment VII. The law requires that students be fully vaccinated against the specified diseases. A child may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule. To remain enrolled, the child must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the center. The site director will review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every thirty (30) days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a child has not received a subsequent dose of

vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the center shall exclude the child from attendance until the required dose is administered.

Since many types of personal immunization records are in use, any document will be acceptable provided a physician or public health personnel have validated it. The month, day, and year that the vaccination was received must be recorded on all immunization records.

Exemptions: The law allows (a) physicians to write a statement stating that the vaccine(s) required would be medically harmful or injurious to the health and well-being of the child, and (b) parents/guardians to choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. The law does not allow parents/guardians to elect an exemption simply because of inconvenience (a record is lost or incomplete and it is too much trouble to go to a physician or clinic to correct the problem).

For children needing medical exemptions, a written statement by the physician should be submitted to the center.

Instruction for the affidavit to be signed by parents/guardians choosing the exemption for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, as well as a sample letter requesting the affidavit is included as Attachment VIII.

10. Tuberculin testing requirements

Children are not required to have a tuberculin test unless their physician indicates that it is necessary or if there is an outbreak of tuberculosis within the community. Should this screening become necessary, parents will be notified in writing.

11. Hearing and vision screening requirements

All children enrolled in Head Start and Day Care beginning at age 3 will have hearing and vision screenings. If the child is unable to understand what is expected of him/her, the child will be considered “untestable” and the screening will be redone in 6 weeks. Children who wear glasses will be screened with their glasses: children with hearing aids will be screened with their hearing aides. Children who fail the vision or hearing will be rechecked in 2 weeks. If they fail again, parents will be contracted and a referral made to the appropriate professional. Hearing screenings are performed with a calibrated audiometer. A symbols chart will be used for vision screening.

12. Enrollment procedures, including how and when parents will be notified of policy changes

A. Enrollment Procedures

After the application process is completed, before children can be left at the center, parents must complete the enrollment process. The application form has the child's name and birth date, the child's home address and telephone # and the parent's name and address. The enrollment process includes the parent agreement which includes telephone numbers where parents can be reached while the child is in care, emergency numbers of other responsible persons, and names and telephone numbers of persons to whom a child may be released. It includes permission for transportation if applicable, permission for field trips, for participation in water activities, name, address and telephone number of the child's physician or an emergency-care facility and authorization to obtain emergency medical care and to transport the child for emergency medical treatment. It also includes permission for specific special services as well as a statement of the child's special problems or special care needs. Parents are required to sign parent agreements before child can be left at the center. A copy of these operational procedures will be given to parents at the time of enrollment with documentation of receipt of operational policies kept in the child's record. Parents will be responsible for notifying staff of changes in telephone numbers, emergency contacts, etc.

B. How and when parents are notified of changes in operational policies:

Parents will be notified in writing within five working days of any changes in operational policies.

13. Transportation

Transportation is not provided at all sites. Please contact your center director.

14. Water Activities

There will be no swimming activities at the Center. Occasionally children will be allowed to play in sprinklers on warm days.

15. Field Trips

Field trips that are safe in nature will be taken from time to time. Notices to parents that children will be taking field trips must be posted at least 48 hours in advance of leaving the center. Transportation to and from field trips will be well supervised and parents will be invited to attend whenever possible.

16. Animals

Most animals will not be kept at the center on a regular basis. Occasionally, for special events/activities, an animal may be at the center. Documentation of vaccinations will be required for animals brought to the Center and the Center Director will determine (based on her own judgment) whether or not children will

be allowed to hold, pet, or feed such animals. Small animals in cages/aquariums will be allowed.

17. Procedures for Parents to Review and Discuss questions and concerns

If parents have questions or concerns regarding any policies and procedures of the child care center, they may ask to meet with the Center Director to discuss them. If the concern is of an emergent nature, the Center Director will address the concern/questions immediately. If the concern/question is not of an emergent nature she will schedule a meeting within three working days during working hours to answer any questions or address any concerns. Specific procedures are in place to address conflicts that can not be resolved by talking to the Center Director. (See attachment IX)

18. Parent Visitation to the Center

All Centers operated by Rolling Plains Management Corporation have an “open door” policy in regards to parents visiting the center to observe their child, the center’s operation and program activities without having to secure prior approval. Both mothers and fathers are always welcome.

19. Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged to volunteer and participate in numerous activities at the center. The Head Start program needs volunteer hours to help meet the non-Federal match that is required. Parents may volunteer by reading to children, assisting with classroom activities, nutritional activities, playground supervision and field trips. Parents are always encouraged to be present when their own child is being screened for hearing, vision, developmental areas, etc. We request that parents sign a volunteer “inkind” form each time they volunteer.

20. Parent’s Review of Minimum Standards and Inspection Reports

A copy of the minimum standards and a copy of the most recent inspection report is kept in the Center Director’s Office. In order to review these documents, please request to see them. It is not necessary to schedule a time to do so. Simply ask the Center Director. These documents may not leave the center. The Center director will find a quiet place within the Center for you to review them at your leisure.

21. Contact Information

Rolling Plains Management Corporation has 11 sites in 8 counties. To contact the local Licensing Office for your child’s center, the Offices are listed below:

For Knox County: TDPRS
3610 Vine St.
Abilene, TX 79602
1-325-691-8232

For Young County: TDPRS
1202 Packing House Rd.
Graham, TX 76450
1-940-549-6403

For Archer, Baylor,
Cottle, Foard, TDPRS
Hardeman, Wilbarger 3910 Jacksboro Hwy. Ste. C
Counties Wichita Falls, TX 76302
1-940-763-7123

You may also obtain information about Licensing standards or procedures by calling toll-free 1-800-862-5252 or visiting the website at www.tdprs.state.tx.us.

To report suspected child abuse, the PRS child abuse hotline telephone # is **1-800-252-5400**.

22. Method of Informing Parents of Gang-free Zone

Any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty. This information is provided in the parent's handbook. Parents are also informed of this at parent orientation.

23. Emergency Preparedness Plan

The following is an example of the center's Emergency Preparedness Plan. Each center enters their own information in the underlined spaces.

Disaster Plan and Checklist for Turner Child Development Center

This daycare center is owned and operated by:
Rolling Plains Management Corporation.

The address is: 219 East Third Street
Quanah, Texas 79252

The phone number is: (940) 663-2541

Two evacuation locations have been established and they are:

- Just outside the daycare center we will meet at:

The northeast corner of Third Street and King Street.

- The meeting point away from the daycare center is:
The Baptist Church Life Center
601 King Street
Quanah, Texas 79252

If evacuation to a shelter is necessary, a sign will be placed outside the daycare center alerting parents where the children will be located.

To ensure the safety of the children in our care, the following steps have been taken:

- We have posted emergency numbers by every phone that is used for the center.
- Every staff person has a current First-Aid and CPR Card.
- Our First-Aid Kit is located: Office Supply Closet.
- Our emergency preparedness plan is reviewed quarterly or whenever a new staff person is hired.
- We conduct fire and evacuation drills every month and severe weather drills every six months.
- In the event of high winds or a tornado warning, children and staff will move to the enclosed hall way, kneel on the floor with heads down and their hands/arms covering their heads.
- Emergency evacuation and relocation diagrams, including two exit paths from each room, are posted in a prominent place in each classroom, the office and the parent information board at the building entrance.
- Our fire extinguishers are located:
Elbert Street Entrance
Third Street Entrance
Kitchen
Supply Room
- Fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors are inspected annually and kitchen fire systems are inspected semi-annually by Vernon Fire and Safety Equipment Company. Service and repairs are performed by the company as needed and recommended by the manufacturers.
- Our smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are checked monthly and the batteries are replaced as needed.
- We have one dedicated battery-powered Weather Alert Radio in the center.

The center director or acting center director will contact the local fire department in case of fire or danger of fire, explosion, toxic fumes or other chemical release.

Families will be notified by posting at the center, land or cell phone, local radio and/or television announcements.

The center director will notify the program's Licensing Representative as soon as possible or no later than two days of any occurrence that renders all or part of the program unsafe or unsanitary.

Licensing Representative: Norm Larsen
925 Lamar Street
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301
(940) 249-0172
or
Statewide Intake
(800) 252-5400

Emergency Preparedness Statement

The way we respond in an emergency situation, whether positive or negative, usually depends on how well prepared we are beforehand. It is especially important to be prepared in a child-care setting since young children may be physically and/or developmentally unable to protect themselves. Providing a safe environment for the children in our care is a priority for Rolling Plains Management Corporation's Head Start and Day Care Programs. In the event of an emergency, whether it is small and impacts only a few, or is very large with widespread damage, young children deserve the protection of a carefully crafted plan. We have researched the most effective means to respond immediately when an emergency arises and we will continue to strive to find more accurate and efficient ways of responding to specific emergencies. We have developed partnerships with our local police department, sheriff's department, EMT units, fire department and hospital in order to provide the most expedient security possible.

Our goal is to attend to the safety and well being of each child and staff member. By working together, we can resolve emergencies quickly and return to our regular activities.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

	Emergency	Alternate Numbers
Fire	911	663-5336
Ambulance	911	663-2334
Sheriff	911	663-5374
Dept of Public Safety	911	1-940-937-2548
Poison Control Center		1-800-764-7661
		or
		1-800-POISON-1
AEP		1-877-373-4858
Atmos Energy		1-888-286-6700

National Weather Service	1-800-275-3139
<u>City of Quanah, Water</u>	1-940-663-5336
<u>Hardeman County Memorial Hospital</u>	663-2795

24. Provisions to Provide a Comfortable Place With a Seat for Breastfeeding

There is an adult rocking chair in each classroom that can be moved into the Center Director's office for breastfeeding. The mother can also choose to stay in the classroom as well.

Child's Name: _____

Receipt of Parent Handbook

I have received a copy of Rolling Plains Management Corporation's Operational Policies for Licensed Day Care Centers. I understand that these policies will be utilized in operating the center while my child is in care. It is my understanding that I will be notified of any changes in policy in writing during my child's enrollment.

Parent Signature

Date

Printed Name

ATTACHMENTS