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*Welcome to Maple Tree Academy!*

We are delighted that you have chosen Maple Tree Academy (MTA) for your child(ren) to begin his or her exciting learning adventures at a home away from home.

Maple Tree Academy’s philosophy is based on a belief that each child is a unique individual and has his or her own learning style. Our preschool programs provide inclusive settings that recognize children’s varied abilities, interests, needs and learning styles. We believe that children learn best through meaningful play.

The mission of Maple Tree Academy is to create a safe and caring learning space where every child feels valued and respected. We strive to create a stimulating educational environment where children can explore their creativity and nurture social development skills while having FUN with a small group of their peers.

*Please take the time to go over your parent handbook and registration packet to ensure you understand the policies that are in place to help keep MTA a happy environment for everyone involved. This allows us to answer any questions you may have and to discuss important things we need to know about your child. This is also to ensure that all paperwork is filled out completely and correctly prior to your child starting their educational experience with us.*

Thank you,

*Lee Barfield*, President/Owner

*Crystal Barfield*, Director/Owner

Admissions Process

*Interview Procedures*

MTA Administration will meet with all new families. It is imperative that both parties feel comfortable and confident that the arrangements will work.

We invite you to contact the Director to arrange a tour of Maple Tree Academy on Tuesdays-Fridays between the hours of 10:00am-1:30pm. At the time of your tour, you will receive information about MTA to include curriculum, tuition rates, school hours, calendar and meal program.

If you are interested in applying, please go online and complete your application to be considered for admission. At the discretion of the administration, students will be admitted to MTA and placed in classes with consideration given to age range and cognitive or social development. Child(ren) physical form, immunization record, and age-appropriate Developmental screening will need to be provided before admission.

*Priority for Admission*

Children will be admitted to Maple Tree Academy according to the following categories below. There are no guarantees, and we do not accept teacher or friend requests. Each student must apply, this includes siblings from the same household, even if one is already a student at MTA.

* Currently Enrolled Students: Child is currently enrolled in MTA.
* Siblings of Current Students (Current Families): Child is not currently enrolled but is a sibling of a currently enrolled child.
* MTA Staff: Child’s parent(s) is a faculty or staff member at MTA.
* MTA Alumni/Legacy: Child’s relative is an alumnus of Maple Tree Academy or child’s older sibling attended MTA in previous years.
* Community-At-Large: New applicants to MTA

*Timeline*: Enrollment is available on a first come first serve basis to new applicants and will be considered when Registration and supply fee is collected. If spots are filled for a certain age group, student(s) will be placed on a waiting list and contacted as soon as a spot is open.

*Summer Program:* MTA offers a summer program contract to currently enrolled VPK and school aged students for two different sessions: June and July. This is a separate registration from the school year. Priority for admission will follow the above protocol.

Space is limited; as a result all contracts that are not returned by the date stated on the email, will then be offered to newly enrolling students, which would include any new siblings and our community waitlist.

School Hours of Operation

MTA’s standard hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00am-6:00pm. Part time stand hours of operation are Monday through Friday 8:00am-3:00pm. The school Calendar is posted at MTAwakulla.com and on the school announcement board. Any deviation from the standard hours or the listing of school calendar will be communicated in writing to each family through ProCare Connect App notifications, email or posting on social media websites.

VPK is 8:30am – 12:30pm, Monday through Friday.

Non-discrimination Policy

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired result of inclusive experiences for all children and their families includes a sense of belonging, positive social relationships, development, and learning to reach their full potential.

MTA ensures the defining features of inclusion (access, participation and support) are included throughout daily activities and daily parent-teacher-student interactions.

MTA does not discriminate against anyone (adult, child, staff member or parent) based on sex, age, religion, national origin, color, race, marital status, physical or mental disability, or veteran status.

Tuition Agreement

The tuition agreement is a separate document and must be reviewed, signed and turned into the office to complete the registration process. The tuition agreement lists all other fees. The agreement must be signed by both parties prior to enrollment with MTA. Failure to adhere to the policies and procedures could result in termination of care at MTA.

Fee schedule 2024-2025

TUITION and FEES FULL TIME

Tuition rates follow September to August to May school terms (Age of child on August 1st)

\*\*Example: Your child is one year old upon enrollment and turns two mid-year, your tuition will not change until the new school term in August.

There will be a yearly cost of living increase every August.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Age | Tuition Rate |
| 12 months-23 months | $1,122.70 Monthly |
| 24 months-47 months | $916.70 Monthly |
| 47 months-school age | $813.70 Monthly |
| VPK Wrap | $600.00 Monthly |
| VPK 9am-12pm with voucher | Free |
| Before School | $250.00 Monthly |
| After School | $250.00 Monthly |

*($600.00 is only available during VPK sessions and is subject to change by the Florida legislature)*

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Service | Rate |
| Drop-in | $60.00 Daily |
| Summer rates VPK-5 | $813.70.00 Monthly |
| Spring Break VPK-5 | $200.00 Weekly |
| Teacher planning days, early release, etc for school age  and VPK students only | $30.00 Daily |

OTHER FEES

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Fee Description | Frequency | Amount |
| Registration Fee | Initial Enrollment | $125.00 per child and  $100.00 for additional siblings |
| Before and After school Registration Fee | Initial Enrollment | $60.00 per child |
| Re-enrollment Fee | August 1st Annually | $60.00 per child |
| Annual Supply Fee | (Initial Enrollment-Pro-rated)  August 1st Annually | $120.00 per child  $10.00 per month pro-rated per child |
| Early Drop off fee for Part time students | Each Occurrence | $15.00 |
| Late Fee for monthly tuition | Daily | $25.00 per child |
| Re-Enrollment | $50.00 per account |
| Late pick up Fee (Double the day be- fore an MTA closure and includes  pickup past any MTA closure time) | First 15 minutes | $35.00 per child |
| Each additional minute | $5.00 per minute/child |
| Return check Fee | Each Occurrence | $30.00 per account |
| Diaper Fee | Each | $3.00 per Diaper |
| Weekly wipe-late fee | Each Occurrence | $5.00 |
| Waitlist Fee5 | Once | $50.00 |

Immunization and Physical Forms

MTA will monitor immunization and physical forms submitted. It is the responsibility of each parent or legal guardian to obtain valid immunization or physical forms as required by State law. Florida Certification of Immunization Form (DH681) must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment and updated as required by medical provider. Student Health Examination form (DH 3040) must be submitted within 30 days of Enrollment and updated every 2 years from date of physical exam completed by medical provider.

Health forms are not required for school-age children since all applicable health requirements are met when child(ren) enroll in school.

Students that do not have the required documentation on file will not be allowed to attend, until updated forms are provided, and reenrollment fees may apply.

Parents may request a religious or medical exemption from obtaining proper vaccinations; however, appropriate documentation must be submitted as required by state licensing requirements. These forms are not required for school age students enrolled in Private, Public or Charter School. (The facility may have children enrolled and in attendance who are not fully vaccinated or vaccinated at all)

Late fees

*Late tuition fee*

The late fee ($25.00 per child per day) is applied to the account based on the payment due date. If tuition is not paid by the invoice due date the student will not be allowed to attend. All late fees and original tuition amount must be paid in full for students to return. On the 6th business day of the month, there will be a re-enrollment fee charged to your account in addition to applicable late fees. The new balance, including all fees, must be paid in full for your child to attend.

Early Drop off fee for part-time students: Standard operation time for Part-time students is 8:00 AM-3:00 PM. Students arriving early will be applied a fee. (See chart above)

*Late Pick Up Fee*

Standard hours of operation are 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM for Full time students. Effective August 12th 2024 Part time students hours are 8:00am-3:00pm. Late pick-up fee (see above chart) is due immediately. Failure to pay the fee in a timely manner may result in the application of the late fee policy. If the school is not contacted by 6:30 PM, we are required by law to contact local police and Florida Department of Children and Families. Late Pickup fees are double the day before a school closure and/ or school holiday. These fees are charged if the arrival of parent/guardian is after the scheduled closing time for that day.

Items Supplied by Parents

* Formula or Breast Milk and bottles for infants – One bottle per feeding required.
* Blanket for naptime (must take home every Friday for washing)
* Diapers (please initial each diaper)
* Complete change of clothes (place in Gallon Ziploc Bag)
* Water Bottle/sippy cup (must take home daily)
* Wet wipes
* Items brought in should be labeled with child(ren) first and last name.

If parents fail to provide diapers, MTA will provide diapers at a cost of $3.00 per diaper. The brand of diaper may vary. The charge will be placed on the account and payment is due at the end of the month.

**Wipe Policy:**

Kindly ensure to provide one pack of unscented wipes (100 count) every Monday for your child. If your student is fully potty trained please provide one pack of unscented wipes (50 count) every Monday to avoid a charge. We have a high usage of wipes as

We utilize them not only for diapering but also for cleaning faces and in between hand washing. In the event that one pack of 100/50 count wipes are not provided on Monday, a charge of $5.00 will be applied to your ProCare account to assist in covering the cost of wipes for your child. Department of Children and families’ guidelines for wipes with diapering: One wipe per swipe.

Items Supplied by School

* Baby Food rice/oatmeal baby cereal
* Table food for breakfast, lunch and one afternoon snack
* Crib Sheets (If parent supplied, a new sheet must be brought to school daily)
* Individually assigned mat or crib

Attendance Policy

MTA expects every student to attend daily. The first key to your child’s success at any school is consistency.

Educational instruction begins each day at 9:00am. Students should arrive by 8:30am to limit interruptions in the classroom. Students that are expected to arrive after 9:00am on a consistent basis must be approved by the administration.

Students not in attendance by 9:00am will be marked absent for that day and will not be permitted to stay at school that day. In order for late arrival to be excused, parents must call or message the school on ProCare prior to 8:30am to notify the administration that the student is coming to school. Students can arrive by 11:00am if a Doctor’s or Dentist note is provided.

Parents should notify the administration of planned or unplanned absences. Parents are expected to notify the school if a student is expected to miss two or more consecutive days. Students absent for more than five business days, with no successful contact with parents will be unenrolled and their spot will be filled with another student.

If a child is unenrolled for failure to comply with attendance policy, tuition will not be prorated or refunded. Tuition will not be refunded or prorated based on student attendance records.

VPK begins promptly at 8:30am and will conclude at 12:30pm Monday-Friday. VPK will observe the same holidays as the Wakulla County School board. VPK contract states that children cannot miss more than three days per month without written documentation and explanation. Vacation days are not excused.

Emergency Policy in Case of Failure to Pick Up Child

In the event that a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. or the designated pickup time for that day (this includes days in which the school closes early), staff shall use all contact information in attempting to arrange for the earliest possible pick up. If parents are not reachable and another approved person (as indicated on Application for Enrollment) picks up the student and MTA staff leaves for the evening, the information will be left on the parent’s voicemail and a message will be posted on the Center’s front door.

If a child has not been picked up 30 minutes after school’s closing time or notification of emergency evacuation, and all attempts to reach parent/guardians have been unsuccessful, staff shall call the local authorities, including Florida Department of Children and Families to request assistance in locating a responsible adult to pick up the child. Staff will fully document all efforts, including names and times, throughout this process and provide documentation to the Director the following workday.

Sick policy

We are partners in your child’s education, health, and wellbeing; as a result, MTA prioritizes maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all. Therefore, we have a strict policy for sicknesses in the school. Parents are expected to adhere to this policy, as this is the most important step in controlling the spread of typical childhood illnesses.

Parents shall keep children home if they are displaying the following symptoms:

* Fever 100 degrees or above (CDC guidelines)
* Severe coughing
* Abnormal discharge from the nose, eyes or ears
* Diarrhea/vomiting
* Pink Eye
* Exposed, open skin lesions
* Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
* Yellowish skin or eyes
* Lice, (Strict no-nit policy; Students can return when hair has been treated and no nits are located)
* Has symptoms of possible communicable disease

If a student is to become ill while not at school and the student will be absent from school, parents shall notify the school the next business day through phone or

ProCare application. If it is determined that your child has a communicable disease, MTA MUST be notified immediately. A doctor’s note clearing the child from being contagious may be required in order to accept him/her back to school or symptom free for 24 hours without medicine.

If a child becomes ill, while at school, with one of the above listed symptoms, he/she will be isolated from other students. MTA has a designated area for ill children. Parent/guardian will be contacted to arrange immediate pick up. Parents/guardians are expected to have the student picked up within 1 hour of being contacted by the school. Parents that do not promptly pick up sick children from school are subject to the fee that is charged for late pickup. (See Tuition Agreement for Fees)

Children MUST be symptom free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school or cleared by a medical doctor. MTA reserves the right to request a doctor’s note stating the child is not contagious and may return to school before the student can return to school.

MTA will administer medication as authorized by custodial parent or legal guardian. The authorization to Dispense Medication form must be completed for each medication to be given and the form must be updated weekly unless it is approved by the Department of Children and Families to be used for 6 months or more. (Such as Epi-pen, asthma medications, sunscreen, bug spray or other medications that may be required due to a medical need as part of the medical treatment plan).

Infants and Toddlers may exhibit indications of illnesses that are associated with erupting teeth and the staff will help you determine this, since this is clearly not contagious. MTA reserves the right to request a doctor’s note confirming indications of the above illnesses are not contagious.

Should the school experience any unusual level or type of communicable disease, after notifying the proper authorities, we will inform you verbally or in writing if your child may have been exposed with information including signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that have been implemented at the center and/or measures that should be implemented at home.

Absences, regardless of the cause, will not entitle the parent to a refund or discount on the regular rate.

Hand washing

Employees, volunteers, substitutes and children must follow the Center for Disease Control guidelines for hand washing.

*Hand washing should occur:*

* + Upon arrival
  + Before, during, and after preparing food
  + Before eating food
  + Before and after caring for someone who is sick
  + Before and after treating a cut of wound
  + After using the toilet
  + After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
  + After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
  + After touching garbage

*Hand washing*

Wet your hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap, and apply soap.

Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

Scrub your hands for at least 10 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.

Rinse your hands well under clean, running water. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

The use of hand sanitizers does not substitute for hand washing. However, in areas away from the facility where no running water is available, hand sanitizers may be used. Employees, volunteers, and substitutes with open wounds and/or any injury that inhibits hand washing, such as casts, bandages, or braces, must not prepare food.

Medication Policy

Maple Tree Academy will administer medication to children after the following requirements have been completed.

1. Written permission from the custodial parent or legal guardian to dispense prescription or non- prescription medications in the authorization to Dispense Medication form.
2. Prescription or Non-prescription medication (including diaper rash cream) must be brought into the facility by the custodial parent or legal guardian in the original container. Prescription medication must have a label stating the name of the

physician, child’s name, name of the medication, and medication directions. All prescription and non-prescription medication shall be dispensed according to written directions on the prescription label or printed manufacturer’s label.

1. All medicine must have child resistant caps, if applicable, and shall either be stored in a locked area or must be inaccessible and out of a child’s reach.
2. Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered shall be returned to the custodial parent or legal guardian or discarded if the child is no longer enrolled at the facility.

Guidance/Discipline policy

Corporal Punishment is NEVER used. The staff is trained to re-direct children, use logical consequences and teach self-control. There is absolutely no punishment associated with toileting, eating or napping. Maple Tree Academy WILL NEVER use humiliation, anger, scolding, hitting or fear to control a child’s behavior.

Positive techniques are used within a safe, connected environment to guide the behavior of children by setting appropriate limits, teaching missing or developing skills, and encouraging children to choose positive behavior.

Infants establish their own schedules, are diapered when necessary and are NEVER permitted to cry for an extended amount of time. Research clearly states that infants must have their needs met to develop trust.

Below are strategies Maple Tree Academy staff will use to respond to child misbehavior.

* + Redirection
  + Logical consequences
  + Participate in the solution
  + Natural consequences
  + “Take a break” or “Calm down chair.”
  + Time out for the minutes of a child’s age

*If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:*

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director and/or Assistant Director(s).
2. The Director and/or Assistant Director will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed will the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Director and/or Assistant Director, Lead Teacher, Assistant Teachers, and

parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made. \*\* If a child’s behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff, or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program.

Biting Policy

Maple Tree Academy recognizes it is not out of the ordinary for young children between the ages of 10 and 30 months of age to go through a period of biting. Biting occurs for a variety of reasons. Some of the most common reasons young children bite are due to:

Teething, a lack of ability to communicate, frustration, being overly tired or overly hungry, and/or a need for more attention. It is highly likely that all children between these age ranges will either bite or be bitten at some point (often more than once) while in the childcare setting.

Our teachers and administration work closely and quickly to extinguish this undesirable behavior by the following these guidelines for children who have been identified as having a biting habit:

If a child bites two times within an eight-hour time frame, the parents will be called and required to remove the child from the center for a day.

If a child has been required to leave the facility twice for biting within a five-day period, a parent/ teacher/ director conference will be held. During this conference, a formal plan of action will be developed.

After the parent/ teacher/ director conference, if improvement is not seen, the parent will be required to temporarily withdraw the child from the center.

If improvement is not seen after temporary withdrawal, the child will be required to be taken out of our center permanently.

Expulsion Policy

Although we will try very hard to meet the needs of every child, there are circumstances that will force us to terminate a child from our center. Below is a list of most of these behaviors or circumstances but not limited to:

* Any and all repeated behavior from the child that could be harmful to your child, classmates, or teacher.
* Repeated offensive language
* Repeated disturbances at rest time
* Excessive absenteeism
* Failure to make payments
* Lack of toilet training past three years of age, unless there is a documented developmental delay (at the discretion of the director on a case-by-case basis)
* Failure of a one-year-old child to be weaned from their bottle at home
* Not being able to have a respectful, good, working relationship with a parent or caregiver.

Child Abuse policy

All childcare personnel are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect, or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with s. 39.201 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.).

Failure to perform duties of a mandatory reporter pursuant to s. 39.201, F.S. constitutes a violation of the standards in ss. 402.301-319, F.S. and is a felony of the third degree.

Corporal Punishment is NEVER used, and the withholding of food, sleep, or rest will not be tolerated at Maple Tree Academy.

Meals and Nutrition Policy

MTA will provide breakfast, lunch and one afternoon snack. Breakfast is served school- wide at 8:00am. If you arrive after breakfast has been served (8:20am), please feed your child Breakfast at home.

Each classroom eats lunch at a different time. Lunch is served between 11:15am and 12:30pm.

Afternoon snacks are served by staff between 2:00 p.m. and 3:30p.m.

We are hopeful that MTA will be able to transition on to the USDA Childcare Food Program soon.

If your child will be picked up at 4:00pm or later, please provide an additional snack for your child.

Allergy Policy

Parents must document on the Application of Enrollment all possible allergies that their child may have.

An allergy list is maintained by the director for all children who are enrolled. It is posted in every classroom, in the kitchen, on ProCare connect app. It is revised and reviewed monthly with staff.

No food will be served to children with allergies if a label of ingredients is not available for that product. Teachers of children with allergies will double check regarding the appropriateness of foods for the children with allergies. Teachers will not serve any food to children with allergies if there is any doubt about the food content.

\*Parents are required to update their emergency medical information immediately upon any change in allergy conditions.

Clothing/Dress requirements

Since the activities planned for your child may involve paints, clay and outdoor play, we suggest the following for your child to receive the maximum benefit from play:

* Dress your child in play clothes that are washable, roomy and easy for them to manage- they will get messy
* Provide a change of clothing in case of spills, accidents or emergencies
* Label all items brought to the school including outer garments with a permanent marker (MTA is not responsible for lost items)
* Closed-toed shoes are always recommended (Flip-flops and loose sandals are not permitted). Teachers prefer shoes with Velcro as laces are a trip hazard.
* For health and safety reasons, children two and under with beads in their hair will not be permitted. Please limit the use of bows, barrettes, earrings and other small, potentially hazardous items.
* For health and sanitary purposes, the use of a pacifier for children one years of age and older is limited to nap time and/or other transitional times as agreed with the parent.

Lost and found items

Unlabeled items are placed in the lost and found box located in the front lobby. We will announce a deadline for claiming lost items. Those that are not claimed are recycled to the needy or used at the center. The center is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Bag policy

Maple Tree Academy does not accept backpacks or diaper bags inside our facility.

Birthday celebrations

Birthdays are exciting events for children! Although birthdays are special, MTA requests that they be celebrated simply – no gifts, please. Feel free to visit with your child and his or her classmates during the day. If you would like to provide a special treat at snack time, MTA will be glad to include that treat at snack time. For birthday parties, allergy policies must be followed precisely. All food must be store bought with a list of ingredients on the label.

Rest times

MTA makes every effort to provide an environment that is quiet enough for those who need to nap yet not too restrictive for those who do not. Parents may bring one small pillow or stuffed animal and blanket that is no larger than a standard size crib sheet. Toys that encourage children to play during rest time are not permitted. Teachers assist children in resting by reading stories, providing soothing music and rubbing backs. Children are not required to sleep but are expected to rest quietly on their mats during this time.

Infants follow a BACK to sleep policy, requiring all infants to be placed in a crib on their back with only a tight fitted crib sheet. Bottles, toys, mobiles, bumpers, blankets, or other items that could pose a safety risk are not permitted in the crib. The only exception is a light blanket for swaddling when medically necessary and documented by the child’s pediatrician.

Vacations

Please notify the Director in person or through ProCare application if your child has a scheduled vacation. Children that do not attend school for vacation will not be credited tuition for missed days.

Bringing personal items from home

We have ample toys for the children’s play. Do not allow students to bring toys from home other than a small, soft, cuddly toy for rest time and a special toy for “Show and Tell” days. Children MAY NOT bring money, small items, or toy weapons to school.

We understand that many children have a need for security items. Although the school cannot be responsible for toys or other items brought from home, security items may be used by the child during the day when needed and stored in the child’s cubby at other times.

Child Pick Up

MTA must be notified by legal guardian if someone other than parent/legal guardian is picking up child(ren) for safety purposes. Valid ID must be provided.

Emergency Contacts

MTA requires two additional emergency contacts other than parent(s)legal guardians. If for any reason parent/legal guardian cannot be reached in case of an emergency MTA will contact additional emergency contact as indicated on application enrollment.

If parents are not reachable and another approved person picks up the student and

MTA staff leaves for the evening, the information will be left on the parent’s voicemail and a message will be posted on the Center’s front door.

# Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome to call or visit the school anytime. We do ask that you minimize times that may be disruptive to the other students, teacher and school including lunch time and rest times.

Emergency Plans

*Lockdowns*

Lockdowns will be initiated if there is a potential threat in or close to the childcare center. This can include the center itself, the church, the parking lot, or the surrounding neighborhoods.

If the center is placed in lockdown, parents will be notified through ProCare application and updated as needed.

Trained staff will escort all children to the classrooms, lock doors and turn off all lights.

*Fire*

Practice fire drills will be held monthly for preparation if a true fire ever occurs at Maple Tree Academy.

Fire emergency protocol: Children will be taken to the designated assembly area located at the outdoor lobby. Emergency personnel (911) will be contacted by the Director after all children and staff have been evacuated. Parents will be contacted (ProCare application text message) to be made aware of the situation.

*Emergency*

In case of an emergency and the facility cannot be reentered then all children will be taken to the designated evacuation area located at 318 Shadeville Road, Crawfordville, FL 32327 (Wakulla County Community Center).

If necessary, all parents and emergency contacts will be contacted via phone to arrange for pick up. \*\*\*If parents arrive, students must be signed out through ProCare.

Inclement Weather policy

*Severe Weather Conditions*

If severe weather occurs while the children are attending school, MTA will follow the required emergency procedures. Once the threat has passed, the children will then be returned to their classroom.

IN THE EVENT OF THREAT OF HURRICANE or any other natural disaster, MTA will follow Wakulla County Schools inclement weather protocol for closure. MTA will make every attempt to update our website, ProCare Connect App, social media sites and / or school voicemail system with closure information.

The school must have functional electricity (temperature in the building must stay at a required temperature per DCF), working water and plumbing in order to continue operation.

Should one of these systems malfunction, MTA will make every attempt to get system repaired immediately. If the problem is expected to take more than 2 hours to repair, we cannot remain open per rules of DCF. MTA will close for the day and parents will be contacted to pick up their children. Parents will not be allowed to drop off any students if these systems are malfunctioning. MTA has frequent inspections by local contractors to assist in minimizing system malfunctions.

Injuries and Accidents

While MTA has put measures in place to attempt to prevent and reduce the chance of injury to students, some incidents are unavoidable. All incidents are documented and reviewed by the school administration so that trends or patterns can be identified. This allows the opportunity for MTA to put additional safety measures in place to assist in preventing these types of injuries.

MTA requires that all staff receive First Aid/CPR within a certain timeframe of hire and maintain these certifications for their entire tenure with MTA. If a child becomes ill or injured anywhere in the facility, the supervising staff member will make an immediate decision as to whether the incident is a non-emergency or an emergency situation.

In the case of a non-emergency:

1. Child is coherent and composed immediately after injury or illness
2. Child has a small cut or scrape with little bleeding
3. Child has little or no swelling
4. Child is able to move injured area, or does not experience pain when touched

The staff will apply first aid measures such as stopping the bleeding, applying band aid and washing injury with soap and water. The staff member will immediately notify administration if there is excessive bleeding, abnormal swelling, or the situation involved a child getting bitten by another child.

The staff member will fill out an Incident report. The incident report will be reviewed by a member of administration and be available for parent to review and sign at pick up. Parents may request a copy of the incident report, which will be available the next business day. Originals are maintained in the student’s file. If the situation may require medical intervention of a doctor or involves a bite, MTA administration will contact the parent to discuss the next appropriate action.

Field Trips

At this time, no field trips will be scheduled at Maple Tree Academy.

Photos

Maple Tree Academy will be taking photos of children on occasion. These photos and/or recordings may be used for promotional materials, educational purposes and on our website or social media platforms.

Internal Camera System

MTA has an internal camera system that is utilized for monitoring of the classrooms by administration. Administration is the only staff that have access to view camera recordings. As childcare personnel, MTA staff and administration are required to sign a confidentiality statement. This means that MTA staff and administrators are not, under any circumstance, able to discuss another child, staff member, or family with other people. Parents may request to view a “particular” situation on the camera recordings if the footage does not include another child. Viewings of the recordings cannot be guaranteed.

*Security and Check-In Procedures*

MTA takes student safety seriously and works closely with local law enforcement and other agencies to ensure student safety. MTA is a “secured” facility and procedures are in place to maximize security. The facility is equipped with monitored fire alarm, electronic access system, internal camera system and electronic check in/out system.

*Electronic Access System*

The legal guardian(s) of the child will receive a code to gain access to the facility. This code is attached to that specific guardian and should never be shared or used by anyone else. If a pickup person does not have a code to enter, they may call the phone number listed on the front door to be let in. The electronic access system keeps a record of who is entering the facility.

*Electronic Attendance System (ProCare)*

MTA utilizes an electronic student attendance tracking system (ProCare) for parents to check in and out students.

The check-in station is located in the Front Lobby. Custodial parents, legal guardians or other authorized individuals are required to check students in and out utilizing this system.

Each user of the system will be given a code, or they may download the ProCare connect app to sign in and out. All individuals that are not recognized by the administration must have a government issued ID available. Without proper authorization from custodial parent or legal guardian and a government issued ID, the student will not be released.

Arrival: Once child(ren) is properly checked in at lobby, parent will walk child to classroom and greet teacher for drop off.

*Departure:* After properly checking out child(ren) through ProCare check in-out system in front lobby, parent will walk to get child from classroom for child to be

released. Parent/guardian must sign child’s folder daily and speak with teacher if there is any concern.

Under no circumstance will a child be released to an intoxicated or impaired individual. MTA staff has been trained to detect individuals that appear to be intoxicated or impaired. Staff will not release the student(s) and will immediately contact administration. The intoxicated or impaired individual will be asked to leave, and another authorized person listed on the enrollment form will be contacted to pick up the student. Staff will always air on the side of caution when making this decision.

Program and Curriculum

Children will be taught on an individual basis unique to their own stage of development. For all children, toys and materials are rotated to ensure that they are never bored and maintain their interest in their surroundings.

All children one year of age and younger experience a language rich environment with a variety of developmentally appropriate toys and materials. The infant and toddler staff primarily focus on valuable, secure experiences.

The staff promotes security since this is the number one indicator of successful experiences for a toddler.

Children two years of age and older participate in developmentally appropriate activities which are planned using specific thematic topics to enhance their learning experience.

Classrooms are arranged into learning centers, which allow children the freedom to play and develop skills.

These stations include:

* Art and creative expression
* Science and discovery
* Language and reading development
* Block and transportation play
* Imaginative and dramatic play
* Music and movement

The daily schedule is a carefully planned balance between self-directed and teacher- guided activities. During “free play” children have the freedom to choose activities and playmates. Each child is offered large and small group experiences, one-on-one interactions, as well as time to play alone if he or she chooses. Children are encouraged to participate in activities but are never forced to do so. Children who choose not participate in activities can not pose a distraction to other children. The activity plan for the week is posted for your review and we encourage families to participate in our curriculum activities as often as they desire. We offer children an opportunity to play outdoors daily, weather permitting.

We use Learning Beyond® system in our program. This system includes curriculum, assessment, implementation and evaluation, as well as professional development. All our staff have received training on the curriculum and are available to answer any of your questions.

MTA staff will, occasionally, include an educational film in the class lesson plans. Television or video viewing is NOT a regular occurrence. Screen time rules are displayed in each classroom where televisions are installed. Administration must approve all videos before the videos can be utilized in the classroom.

Toilet Learning

Deciding when the right time to go through the process of toilet learning is different for every child. When you feel your child is ready to toilet-learn, we will be happy to assist you. Your child may be ready to potty- train if he or she is:

* Walking well
* Staying dry for several hours
* Able to communicate the need to use the toilet
* Appears to be aware of when they are wet or have a soiled diaper (body awareness)
* Is not fearful of the bathroom

There is no definite age when a child is ready but should be done when parents and MTA staff agree that it is appropriate. Both the parents and staff should use the same procedures for training, so it does not confuse the child. If there is too much anxiety or stress, it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time. During training, it is very important to dress your child in suitable clothing (elastic waist pants that the child can easily pull down and up, no belts or snaps) and provide at least three changes of clothing. The student may switch from pull-ups to underwear once the child has gone without any accidents for a continuous period of two weeks for hygiene reasons. In the event that a potty trained student experiences two accidents within a week, they will be required to wear pull-ups to school until they can go accident-free again.

THE PARENT ROLE

Parent Conferences

Parents are invited to speak with their child’s teacher or MTA administrator at any time concerning their child’s development or any other concerns. If the discussion is a disruption to the classroom, then a meeting will be scheduled for a later time. It is best to talk directly to your child’s teacher if you have concerns regarding your child or your child’s classroom and to a director if you have concerns about a staff member, policy or procedure.

Parent / Teacher conferences are pre-scheduled and will be announced.

Parent/Teachers conferences can be scheduled at any time if the parent or MTA staff member feels it is necessary.

Parent Engagement

Parents are encouraged to become involved with the program. MTA honors the important role of parents. Current research shows that children enjoy a more

enriched learning experience when their parents take an active role in their education. As partners with your child’s school, parents are encouraged to:

* + Volunteer in their child’s classroom
  + Have lunch with your child.
  + Participate in seasonal events.
  + Participate in “Children’s Week” activities!
  + Sharing talent (music, art, sewing, etc.)
  + Donating items for Dramatic Play

MTA understands that the world is becoming increasingly busy, and individual’s time is limited and very valuable. We encourage your involvement but don’t want to overburden you with high expectations, so it’s up to you as to how involved you would like to become with the program.

Parents will be required to sign the volunteer affidavit prior to volunteering or assisting in their child’s classroom.

Communication

MTA values our relationship and communication with parents, as we serve as partners in the care of your children. MTA encourages you to let us know anything that might help us in our work with your child – a move, developmental or medical needs, the birth of a baby, divorce or separation, death in the family, a new pet, etc.

Parent/Guardian messages on ProCare received after business hours will be addressed on the next business day.

Although we want you to be aware of certain situations and behaviors your child may be exhibiting at school, the reason we are communicating it is not necessarily because they need to be “fixed” at home. We will handle situations that arise, but just want parents to be aware of what we are doing in the classroom as it pertains to your child.

To enhance parent communication, we ask that you refrain from talking on your cell

phone while dropping off or picking up your child. If you attempt to talk to an administrator or MTA staff and are on your cellphone, we will ask that you disconnect the call prior to conversing with you.

Grievance Procedures

If parents have any questions or have concerns, we ask that the following procedures be enforced.

* Directly go to the person with whom you have a difference (the teacher, another parent, or other staff member) address the issue in a non-accusatory manner and attempt to reach a resolution. It is not acceptable to discuss an issue with any person not directly involved.
* If the conversation with the person does not bring resolution, the concern should be addressed with the director. The director will then work with the parents to resolve the problem.

Once the issue has been discussed in the above order, it should be considered exhausted, and the above steps are final. MTA administration will make every attempt to work through all situations; however, an agreement may not be reached on every situation. Please understand that we must consider your students, other students, the school as a whole and all regulatory and licensing rules.

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of MTA or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited and may cause dismissal from our program. There will be no refunds given if a child is dismissed when a confrontational interaction occurs.

Annual Registration Process

Each year, ranging in the months of August-May, re-enrolling families are required to review all enrollment information to ensure updated information is on file with MTA. Information will include, but not be limited to, names, addresses and phone

numbers of parents and guardians; emergency contact information; medical information and immunization/physical records.

Suspension or Termination Policy

The policies outlined in this handbook are strictly enforced to provide fairness to all parties that render and receive services. Enrollment will be terminated if the

following actions occur:

* If receiving tuition assistance or VPK voucher, failure to maintain eligibility requirements and/or re-determination responsibilities
* Failure to provide updated Health and Immunization Records for each child as required
* Failure to abide by MTA rules and regulations (these are outlined but not limited to the registration process, parent handbook, and tuition agreement)

Parent Code of Conduct

* Read the bulletin boards, ProCare messages and emails. Important information is shared with you on a regular basis.
* Value staff members and show them common courtesy. MTA employs teachers who have training and education in child development. Show respect for their position as an important part of your child’s development.
* Staff of MTA are prohibited from being employed by any client (current or former). Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment. Employment refers to any relationship outside of the center’s services which involves an employee of MTA interacting with a current or former client of MTA. Such relationships include but are not limited to, baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother’s helper, nanny services, and carpooling regardless of whether those services are voluntary or paid.
* Do not pressure staff or other parents to release confidential information. Within MTA, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees on a “need to know” basis. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as MTA strives to protect everyone’s right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to- names, addresses, phone numbers, medical information or internal camera footage. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s privacy. Employees of MTA are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.
* Focus on your child when you pick him/her up. Take time to greet the staff and your child and see if there is anything the teacher wishes to communicate before you leave. Please refrain from using cell phone during pick up. If you are on your cellphone staff will ask you to disconnect prior to speaking with you regarding your child.
* Pay your fees on time
* Make sure your children follow rules
* Make sure your child is wearing appropriate clothing. Make sure clothing is

easy to remove if your child is in diapers or in the process of toilet training.

* Keep a sick child home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent spread of infections illness.
* Address concerns in a courteous manner, refraining from using offensive language or engaging in personal attacks.
* Smoking and alcohol consumption is always prohibited on the premises. This includes tobacco, tobacco less and electronic mechanisms.
* No sharing codes or holding doors open for parents that you do not recognize for security purposes. All parents should enter with their code.
* Make sure children get a good night’s rest so they are ready for their busy day!

(The Parent Handbook was updated On June 23rd, 2024 and may be modified as needed. In the event of any modifications, a notification will be sent to parents and guardians via ProCare, and the updated Parent Handbook will be accessible on our website for their review.)