

Welcome
to
Sheldon Early Learning Center

SHELDON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
EARLY LEARNING CENTER
OPERATIONAL POLICIES AND PARENT HANDBOOK

The childcare program is available to students of Sheldon ISD and children/grandchildren of all district employees. We provide care for children from 6 weeks to 5 years in age. Our goal is to provide your children with an environment that is nurturing, safe, clean and where children are encouraged to grow as unique individuals. By offering developmentally appropriate programs, we are allowing children to learn at their own pace and in ways which are best for them. If you have any questions regarding our Center Policies, please feel free to contact the Center Director at any time.

Philosophy:

The Sheldon Independent School District (SISD) Early Learning Center is designated to create a safe, wholesome environment where children may enjoy learning in a nurturing and caring atmosphere. We foster children's positive self-image and allow them to become confident in their ability to learn.
The Center offers a curriculum committed to establishing and maintaining a positive and stable environment for all children involved. Your children will learn more about themselves, others, and the world around them. This center is sensitive to the needs of the children in all areas of development: social, physical, emotional and intellectual. The curriculum is in accordance with the criteria for accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the highest national accreditation available for childcare providers. Children ages 6 weeks to 4 years of age will all actively participate in learning and exploration.

Sheldon Early Learning Center participates in the Texas Rising Star Program. The Texas Rising Star program is a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for Texas early childhood programs participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Child Care Services program. Texas Rising Star certification is available to licensed programs that meet the certification criteria. The Texas Rising Star program offers three levels of quality certification (two-star, three-star, and four-star) to encourage childcare and early learning programs to attain progressively higher levels of quality. These certification levels are tied to graduated enhanced reimbursement rates for children receiving childcare scholarships. Programs that participate in Texas Rising Star meet higher quality standards than many other childcare programs.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

At Sheldon Early Learning Center, equal education opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, disability or parent /guardian political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, or special needs or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all children.

TEXAS RISING STAR:

Sheldon Early Learning Center participates in the Texas Rising Star Program. The Texas Rising Star Program is a quality rating improvement system for childcare programs participating in the Texas Workforce Commission

Childcare Services Program. The certification is available to licensed centers that meet the certification criteria. TRS offers three levels of quality (two-star, three-star and four-star) to encourage childcare and early learning programs to attain progressively higher levels of quality. ***Sheldon Early Learning Center is rated a four-star center.***

PROGRAM OPERATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Hours of Operation:

MONDAY – FRIDAY 6:00 AM – 5:30 PM unless otherwise specified.

During regular school calendar days and professional development days, we are open. **On professional development days we have modified hours of operation 7:00 am – 5:00 pm.** We are open on Fridays during the month of June and closed the entire month of July. Staff holidays during the school year will be observed by the Center. Refer to the current school year calendar for a list of those days.

The After-School program meets Monday – Friday on regularly scheduled school days. We do not offer full day care for after-school students on professional development days or during the month of June.

2. Tuition and Fees:

- An annual registration fee of $125.00 per child is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. This fee covers administration costs and supplies. The registration fee will need to be paid in advance to secure a spot on our class roster. The fee for two children is $200.00 and for three children is $275.00. The registration fee for the After-School program is $75.00.
- Tuition payments can be made through payroll deduction (employees of SISD), or through the brightwheel app. **No cash will be accepted**.
- Tuition Rates:
  - **Infants (6 weeks - 17 months)- $225.00 per week**
  - **Toddlers/Twos (18 months – 2 years) - $180.00 per week**
  - **Preschool / Pre-K (3-4 years) - $170.00 per week**
  - **After School (SECA Pre-K & Kindergarten) - $90.00 per week**
- **LATE PICK-UP FEE: Because late pick-up negatively impacts the children and staff, it is heavily fined.** An additional charge will be assessed for parents who pick up their children after 5:30 PM at the rate of $1.00 per minute per child. We encourage all parents to pick their child/children up on time. If you realize that you are going to be late, please notify the center immediately so that your child can be prepared for this change in his/her schedule, and staff arrangements can be made. **Late fees will be charged regardless of notification**. The late fee must be paid at the time of pick-up or by the start of the next business day. Any child picked up late three times will be subject to dismissal by the director.
- **There will be no discount given for days missed due to absence or for the weeks containing a holiday. The full tuition is to be paid, regardless of actual attendance. This applies to both payroll deducted and self-pay families.**
- When multiple children from the same family attend the Center, there will be a $10 discount off the tuition of the oldest child.

3. Enrollment:

To enroll your child in the Early Learning Center, parents must complete and return an enrollment packet with all required information and signatures. Included in the enrollment packet is a form that is to be signed by your

child's doctor stating that your child can participate in the childcare program. We will also need a copy of your child's current immunization record for our file. A child enrolling must be between the ages of 6 weeks and 4 years of age as of September 1st. Children are placed in classrooms according to age and development. Children are not transitioned to new rooms until the following school year. Upon enrollment at the center, it is the responsibility of the parent to keep the center informed of any changes in personal information, including but not limited to phone numbers and addresses. ALL ENROLLMENT PAPERWORK MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR TO YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY OF ATTENDANCE AND/OR THE FIRST DAY OF THE SCHOOL YEAR. NO EXCEPTIONS!

4. Adjustment Statement:

There is a two to four-week adjustment period to determine the appropriateness of the program for the child and family. During this adjustment period, the best placement for the child will be determined.

5. Withdrawal Policy:

Written notice of intent to withdraw your child from the Early Learning Center must be submitted to the director two weeks in advance of the effective withdrawal date. The written notice must be signed by the parent/guardian and when submitted the Director will sign and give a copy to the parent and place a copy in the child's file. The tuition fee is due through the last day of attendance. **A two-week notice is required to discontinue payroll deductions.**

Sheldon ISD Early Learning Center reserves the right to deny services or withdraw a child due to aggressive and/or unsafe behaviors of a parent/guardian or adult visitor without prior approval.

6. Absentee Policy:

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the Center staff. If your child is ill, you should notify us of the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. In order to keep your child's space, tuition will need to be paid in full. There will be no alterations of the payroll deducted, or self-pay arrangement amount unless the child is withdrawn from the program. There will be certain times during the year that you will not be charged for childcare. These times are as follows:

- Fall Break
- Thanksgiving Break
- Christmas Break
- Spring Break
- Month of June if not attending
- Month of July

Tuition will need to be paid in full, partial payments will not be accepted.

7. Release of Children:

Your child is released only to you and the people you have listed as emergency and authorized contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an emergency and authorized contact to pick up your child, you must notify the center in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child is required to show a picture ID (current and not expired) as verification. Please inform your pick-up person of our policy. **Please note: Anyone picking up the child must have an age-appropriate car seat for the child to sit in.**

8. Check Policy:

If a check written to any SISD campus, club, or organization is returned unpaid by your bank, SISD, or its agent will redeposit your check electronically. Additionally, you understand and agree that we may electronically collect a returned check fee of $30.00 plus applicable sales tax. The use of a check for payment is your ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and ACCEPTANCE of this policy and its terms.

9. Health Precautions:

A statement signed by a licensed physician is required stating that your child can participate in the childcare facility activities. **To protect the health of other children, please keep your child at home if they have experienced any of the symptoms listed below during the past 24 hours. Also, parents will be called to pick up their child(ren) if these symptoms occur while the child is in care. Your child MUST be picked up within one hour from the time you are called. Children that are ill may not return to the ELC until they are free of all symptoms for 24 hours. ELC will not administer medication to regulate a fever.**

An ill child must not be admitted for care if one or more of the following exists:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities as determined by the Director.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.
3. The child has any of the following:
    a. Armpit temperature of 99.5 degrees or greater; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the facility's activities.
    b. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea (three or more loose bowel movements) not able to be contained, vomiting illness (two or more episodes in 24 hours), rash, fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior changes, or other unusual signs.
4. The child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, until medical evaluation determines that the child is no longer contagious and is able to participate in the facility's activities. Please notify the Center immediately so that proper precautions can be taken. **A written release from a physician must be presented before a child is allowed back in school after a contagious disease, extended illness or surgery.**

10. Medication:

Many over-the-counter medications have dispensing directions that state "Not for children under 2 years of age" including Infant Tylenol, Children's Motrin and Children's Benadryl. Please have a note from your child's pediatrician or the pharmacist stating recommended dosage for any over-the-counter medication you would like your child to receive that does not include a recommended dosage on the label for your child's age.

★ **Any medication brought by parents for their child(ren) must:**

1. Be in original container with label that details the name and strength of the medication.
2. Be labeled with the child's first and last name.

3. Be labeled with the date (date medication was filled and the date of expiration).
4. Include directions to administer the medication (doctor's note will be needed for children under 2 years of age or medication that is suggested for use for an age older than the child).
5. Include the name of the licensed prescribing physician.
6. Provide directions for administering and storing the medication and a physician's signature of prescription form or letterhead stationery for any sample medicine which has been dispensed by the physicians.
7. Complete the Medication Authorization Form. **If we do not have this form, we will not be able to administer medication to a child.**
8. Medications will be kept in a locked drawer in the front office, except for everyday medications required to always be readily available.

11. Emergency Procedures:

In case of the onset of a critical illness or injury:

1. Parents will be notified and/or contact will be made with names provided on the enrollment form.
2. The child will be taken to the nearest emergency room or clinic, or an emergency vehicle will be called if deemed necessary.
3. Children will be given first aid treatment or CPR if necessary. All staff members here are certified in infant/child/adult CPR and First Aid.

12. Parent Notification:

The Early Learning Center will maintain a parent center/bulletin board with announcements regarding upcoming events, faculty changes, inspection reports and news. Announcements will be posted to our website on http://sheldonisd.com. Parents are encouraged to download the Brightwheel app to their phone for daily updates and notes from teachers. Any changes to policies or procedures will be given to you in writing with signature and acknowledgement required.

13. Guidance and Discipline:

Purpose of Guidance:

At Sheldon Early Learning Center, the purpose of guidance is to allow children to develop self-control and become responsible for their own behaviors. Children often repeat the same challenging behaviors again because they lack the necessary skills to cope. As a parent and teacher, it is our responsibility to model and guide appropriate behaviors. Working as a collaborative partner with the ELC staff will allow continuity and individualization for the social development of each child. A variety of strategies will be implemented in the classroom to enable each child to perform successfully at an appropriate age level.

Classroom Techniques May Include:

1. Using a consistent, predictable schedule with clear transition cues
2. Allowing adequate time to complete tasks
3. Reducing student frustration by breaking new or difficult tasks into small steps
4. Identifying sensory triggers such as loud music or being crowded by other children, too many materials on display in the classroom or center
5. Providing some alternative communication mode such as pictures or signs and visual schedule for a child who cannot express wants and needs
6. Establishing and enforcing consistent, clear rules (preferably no more than three or four), with consistent consequences

7. Providing extra attention and adult support before a child demands it or engages in inappropriate behavior
8. Redirection
9. Help children practice social skills they've learned consistently and on-going
10. Provide guided practice during classroom and outdoor activities

Parents / Teachers:

The partnership between parents and teachers is a crucial element in determining the needs for each child. This partnership in conjunction with assessments, observations and specialist input allows the staff to plan an age-appropriate program.

Goal:

The overall goal for each child is to develop skills that will foster a positive self-image. These skills will be used in forming friendships, making decisions and building self-esteem.

Outcomes:

To work toward a positive outcome for children and families, it may be determined that the Sheldon ELC is not the best placement for the child. If a parent refuses or neglects to follow through on an agreed upon plan of action to improve behavior or if the ELC in its sole discretion determines that the child jeopardizes the safety of the well-being of others it may be determined or necessary to suspend or terminate the child's enrollment. In determining suspension or termination the director will submit a recommendation to her supervisor and documentation that states the strategies and techniques used to work with the child and the family as well as documentation demonstrating non-compliance with the guidelines of the ELC and the potential risk to other children or staff or faculty. The decision to suspend or terminate a child will be based on the best interests of the well-being of others, including the child in question, the other children enrolled in the ELC as well as the staff and faculty.

A balance of effective guidance and discipline are part of good behavior management techniques. The following principles are followed at Sheldon Early Learning Center:

- Children are to be valued and respected as unique individuals at all times.
- Children have a right to know what proper behavior is and see positive examples.
- Children need consistent limits fairly administered.
- Children require time and assistance in developing autonomy and self-control.
- Children's self-esteem must be nurtured and protected by caring adults.

Based on the above stated principles, positive guidance techniques will be used at Sheldon Early Learning Center. When recurring behaviors persist, parent conferences will be held. If the ELC is unable to meet the needs of the child, the parent will be asked to make alternative arrangements for the care of the child. The ELC is willing to provide the parent with a list of resources. It is the parents' responsibility, however, to contact the appropriate agency.

All guidance and discipline will be consistent with the purpose of developing self-confidence as well as self-control. This is accomplished by providing a nurturing and accepting environment with teachers who are firm, but fair and sensitive to all the needs of each individual child. There will be no physical punishment and no discipling action regarding food, toileting or napping.

14. Meals and Snacks:

Sheldon ELC does not provide meals for children. Child nutrition is important. Please be sure that your child's meal includes healthy components such as protein, dairy, vegetables and fruit. Please limit or avoid items such

as chips and cookies. You will also need to provide a morning and afternoon snack. The attached handout from www.chooseMyPlate.gov provides information on how to create a healthy eating pattern.
We have refrigerators available to store items that require refrigeration. Microwaves are available to warm food before eating. Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees must be kept out of the reach of children.
Due to some food related allergies with some of our children, please check with your child's teacher or director before bringing a common item that can cause severe allergic reactions such as peanuts and peanut butter. Although your child may not have a sensitivity to these foods, other children may and exposure to these items can cause serious reactions or in some cases, death. All staff members receive training on how to recognize and respond to allergic reactions and precautions to take to prevent incidents**.**
We begin serving breakfast at 8:00 AM and lunch at 11:30 AM. Meals and foods prepared at home should not be shared with other students. On days food is brought into the program it must be commercially prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by a local health official.

15. Birthdays and Celebrations:

Birthdays and other celebrations are held during lunch or afternoon snack time. Parents are welcome to provide special snacks and to join the celebration. Any food brought into the center for children's consumption must be store brought or prepared by a licensed food handler. Sugary beverages are not to be served to the children. If you choose to bring a beverage, it must be 100 percent fruit juice or water. You must have approval from the director of the center before providing snacks for a celebration. Once you have approval everything will be coordinated with the classroom teacher. The Center does not allow elements such as balloons or gifts to be brought to the classroom. Please note that invitations to birthday parties held outside the school may not be given out at the center unless every child in the class is invited.

16. Immunization:

In accordance with state law, parents must provide the Center Director with a dated record showing the child has been immunized. The Health and Immunization Form must Be Completed prior to attendance. There must be a record with a stamp or signature of the physician or health professional. Under special health conditions the parent must provide a certificate of affidavit signed and dated by a physician duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States, stating that the required immunization would be injurious to the health and well-being of the child or a member of the child's family or household. If immunizations conflict with religious beliefs, parents must provide a signed affidavit to the center (See the Director for instruction). **See the posted chart in the front office of the center for the Required Immunizations by Age Group.**

17. Hearing and Vision Screening:

Annually the Sheldon ISD school nurses will perform hearing and vision screenings on all children ages 3 and older. The purpose of this process is to identify problems early and link to appropriate services.

18. Procedure to Discuss Policies or Procedures with the Director:

If you have any questions or concerns regarding ELC policies or procedures, please feel free to contact the director during business hours via phone, e-mail or in person. If necessary, a conference time can be arranged to discuss any concerns you may have.

19. Children's Daily Drop Off and Pick-Up:

When children arrive at the Center, they must be escorted from your vehicle to their classroom. Once the child enters the classroom the teacher will sign them in for the day. **The staff at the ELC highly recommends that children arrive by 8:30 am.** This allows children to participate in curriculum activities and most of the classroom routine. Late arrivals are very disruptive to our day, and it is very hard for children to adjust after arriving late. If your child will be late for the day, please contact the center by calling or sending a message through brightwheel. **Please note children must arrive by 10:30 am, after this time they will not be allowed to stay.** During pick-up, children must always remain with their parents and are not allowed to leave the building without an adult. **Please avoid cell phone use during drop-off and pick up** so that staff can easily communicate with you during this time. If someone is picking up that has not been authorized according to the registration form, written permission from the parent or guardian and the person's driver's license information must be provided.

20. Sheldon ISD Student Parents Only:

Students may **NOT** bring their children to childcare when they are not attending school. The center is open Monday – Friday except for scheduled school closings, staff development, and school holidays as noted on the school calendar. All students' children must be picked up at the time of release from campus. In the event of after-school activities or extra classroom time needed, the childcare office must be notified before leaving your child in care.

21. Classroom Activities:

Each classroom at the Sheldon Early Learning Center has weekly thematic units that allow the teachers to structure learning activities throughout the day. Students from Infant – School age will be engaged in regular activities designed to enhance cognitive, social, fine and gross motor skills both indoors and out. **SCREEN TIME** Children will not watch more than 20 minutes of videos or game play daily. Videos and games will be educationally focused. Only on special event days will a movie be offered as a choice of activity. Children under 2 years of age will not participate in watching videos.

22. Assessments of Child's Progress:

Assessments are conducted to document the developmental progress and learning of a child and to identify the child's needs and interests. Assessments of children provide information used to improve curriculum, teaching practices, and environment. The information gained by assessments is used in planning instruction for individuals and groups of children and to identify who may need specialized services or interventions. When needed, the results are used for further developmental screening and/or referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. Other uses for assessment results are to plan program improvements to meet goals and objectives and to help facilitate communication with families. Within 45 days of the child's entry into the program, a baseline BOY screening is conducted. In January they will receive a MOY assessment and the EOY assessment will be given in May. Written reports/information will be available to parents after each assessment given. Children are accessed through informal and formal observation, including anecdotal recordings, collection of work samples, checklists, and formal assessments. Families are provided with information on an ongoing basis regarding the child's development and learning. The assessments are kept on file in the Director's office. Please feel free to schedule a conference with the teacher/director if you have any questions or concerns.

23. Open Door Policy:

We have an "open door" policy at our center and parents/guardians are welcome to come and visit at any time throughout normal business hours. We ask that you check in with the office before going to your child's classroom.

24. Parent Involvement:

Sheldon Early Learning Center is one of the first enriching experiences your child will have in a group setting. Although our program is designed to meet the needs of your child, we are committed to the whole family. We encourage parent involvement; there will be various activities planned throughout the year for your participation. In the fall, parents are urged to attend an orientation meeting to gain information and more insight into the program. Other opportunities include Grandparents Day, Thanksgiving Feast, Week of the Young Child activities, Class Parties, etc... We hope you attend as many as possible. Parents may also be asked to volunteer to assist at various times with special projects or serve on our parent advisory committee. If you have a special talent or occupation, please let your child's teacher know. Your involvement is greatly appreciated by teachers and staff. ***We also welcome your feedback and encourage you to complete our parent survey and drop it in our suggestion box. We want to make sure we are meeting the needs of our families.***

25. Parent / Teacher Conferences:

Parent/Teacher conferences are held as a means of giving parents an overview of their child's developmental process during the preceding months. These conferences enable parents and staff to work closely to meet each child's specific needs. Conferences can be held during the fall and spring semester. Parents can request a face-to-face phone or virtual conference. Feel free to request a conference any time you have a concern.

26. Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers:

The Early Learning Center is licensed through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. You may request to see a copy of the Minimum Standards for Child Care Facilities by contacting the Director or you may access it at the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services website at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/documents/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/746_Centers.pdf

27. Compliance History:

The Early Learning Center encourages parents to view our compliance history with Child Care Licensing. Our most recent inspection is posted on our Parent Communication Board or you may view this at http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp

Parents may also contact our local childcare licensing office at the following address and phone number:

P.O. Box 16017
Houston, Texas 77222-6017
(713) 940-3009
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/About_Child_Care_Licensing/

28. Gang Free Zone:

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Sheldon Early Learning Center is a GANG-FREE ZONE.

29. Breastfeeding:

You have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for your child. We will provide a comfortable place for you to breastfeed your child within the Center if you choose to do so. Resources are also available for parents with information to assist you with breastfeeding.

- US Department of Health & Human Services: Office of Women's Health: https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-resources
- La Leche League, International: https://www.llli.org/resources/

30. Emergency Procedures – Sheldon Early Learning Center Emergency Plan:

- **Emergency evacuation and relocation procedures**

  In the event of fire- all classrooms are to exit the building using the routes posted on the evacuation maps in the classrooms. All groups will meet in the parking lot at the end of the playground. The Director is responsible for carrying out the binder with all emergency contacts and medical release statements and the First Aid Kit. As each teacher directs her class out of the building and to safety, she should 1. Ensure all children are accounted for. 2, Bring the daily attendance sheet. 3, Bring an outdoor bag. 4, Keep children calm by singing songs, telling stories and using a calm tone. As the Director and classes exit the building, the Director should ensure all classes are accounted for and then contact the Emergency Team coordinator from the SECA campus or the fire department and get any instructions. Children should then be moved to **Sheldon Elementary** for safety reasons and wait for further notice. The **Safety and Security Coordinator** for the district is to be notified **@281-727-2000**. Parents will then be called for directions on picking up children.

  In the event of full evacuation, the Sheldon ISD Transportation Department will be providing transportation to an alternate location. The director will contact the **Director of transportation – Anna Harrison 281-727-2000** for coordination of transportation. Students will be transported to **C. E. King High School or San Jacinto College North Campus.**

  Children that are unable to walk or that need assistance will be transported to the designated safe area in the emergency evacuation cribs located in each of the infant rooms or on the Bye-Bye Buggy, in the event the children are already on the buggy for outdoor time.

- **A designated safe area inside the facility**

  In the event of a shelter in place all classes will combine in the 2's and 3's classrooms initially. The Director is responsible for carrying out the binder with all emergency contacts and medical release statements and the First Aid Kit. As each teacher directs her class out of their classroom and into the assigned interior classroom, she should 1. Ensure all children are accounted for. 2, Bring the daily attendance sheet. 3, Bring an outdoor bag. 4, Keep children calm by singing songs, telling stories and using a calm tone. The Director should ensure all classes are accounted for and then contact the emergency team coordinator from the SECA campus or The **Safety and Security Coordinator** for the district is to be notified @ **281-727-2000**. Once the immediate threat has passed the Director will decide if campus is to be evacuated or to shelter in place.

  Toddlers and Infants combine with 2-year-old class in Shelter in Place event. Infant II and 4-year-old class combine with 3-year-old class.

Stocking an emergency kit

Include the following items in your emergency kit—and check it regularly to make sure all supplies are ready to use.

- Emergency contact information for every child
- Authorization for emergency medical care for every child
- Complete first-aid kit including sterile gloves, gauze, sanitizing solution, bandages, thermometer, tweezers, sunscreen, and moistened towelettes
- Water
- Food and necessary utensils
- Nose and mouth protection masks, plastic sheeting, and duct tape
- Diapering supplies
- Hand washing supplies
- Flashlights with extra batteries
- Whistle

- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Trash bags and re-sealable bags
- Tape and utility knife

- Within 24 hours of the danger the director will contact Childcare Licensing though the Statewide Intake at 1-800- 252-5400. **Remember that you are required to contact us as soon as possible but no later than two days after any occurrence that renders all or part of your program unsafe or unsanitary for a child. ***
- Emergency shut-off values are located in the principal's office of SECA and the maintenance room. Sheldon ISD maintenance is responsible for shutting off gas, electricity, and water lines.

31. Child Abuse Reporting Law Requirements:

Sheldon Early Learning Center employees are **REQUIRED** by Texas State Law and Child Care Licensing to report immediately to the police and Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to **suspect** the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect or exploitation. Our staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. DFPS Child Abuse Hotline Number is 1-800-252-5400.

Some examples of abuse or neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a car seat, seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues. If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html.

32. Well Checks:

Sheldon Early Learning Center staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual, they are required to point this out to the parents at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects.

33. Accessing the Building at Drop Off and Pick Up:

The entrance to the Center remains locked during business hours. Please ring the doorbell and a center staff member will let you in. Guests, visitors and parents who are visiting the classroom must be mindful of the classroom environment and respectful of the teachers and children when visiting, dropping off or picking up children.

Parents are encouraged to bring their children by 8:30 a.m. so they will benefit from the daily activities planned in the classrooms.

34. Weather Related Closings:

On days when Sheldon ISD is closed due to bad weather, the Center will also be closed. Please tune in to the following stations for school closing information: Television: NCB, CBS, ABC and Fox. Radio: FM 95.7, FM 100.3, FM 99.1, FM 92.9, FM 106.5, FM 93.3 and AM 740.

Please also check the Sheldon ISD website http://sheldonisd.com and the IRIS alert system.

35. Children with Special Needs:

The professional staff works closely with the Special Education Department in identifying and providing services and resources for children with special needs as they are able to fit into our program and function in the classroom. We will make modifications to meet needs but cannot lower our ratios or provide one on one care for children.

36. Custody:

Children will be released only to parents as specified on the enrollment record or as specified in a custody order. We cannot deny parent pickup rights unless there is a certified court order on file which would prohibit pickup for a particular day or if a restraining order has been provided for the child's file.

37. Necessities:

Parents must provide the following daily:

Bottles/Formula – All bottles must have lids and each part labeled with a child's name.	**Baby Food – labeled with child's name**
Substitute Menu Items	**Blanket for nap time. *Infants excluded**
Diapers and wipes – Must be individually labeled with child's name.	**Change of Clothing – Labeled with child's name. If extra clothes are used, you must provide a new set the next day.**
Jacket – when necessary for outside activities and labeled with child's name.	**Pacifier – (if needed) with holder that is labeled with child's name.**

- **All required items must be labeled with the child's name: (**clothing, pacifier, food, bottles, bottle caps, blankets, toys, diapers, wipes, spoons, bowls, mat cover, etc.). **Please note that no glass bottles are permitted in the facility because of a problem with breakage.**
- Please dress your child in clothing that is comfortable, seasonable and manageable. Children must also have appropriate outdoor clothing for outings and for fire drills when signaled. No pajamas. A complete change of clothing must be provided to keep at school, no matter what age your child is. If we must use the change of clothing, parents are required to send another set the following day. Remember, children grow very quickly!
- **Outdoor play is a daily part of our program required by Texas Child Care Licensing.** Classes will participate daily in outdoor activities based on the age group of the children and the weather. A short amount of time as tolerated by infants' birth through 12 months of age; and a minimum of 60 total minutes daily for infants 13 months through 17 months of age. Indoor and outdoor active and quiet play, which includes moderate to vigorous play will be a minimum of 60 minutes for toddlers; and a minimum of 90 minutes for pre-kindergarten age children. In extreme heat or cold, outdoor play will be excluded and held in a safe indoor playroom environment. In cooler temperatures, teachers will dress children in coats, hats and gloves that are provided by the parents, and time outside will be shortened. In hot weather, water will be taken to the playground, and time will be limited as well. Parents are welcome to send send sunscreen and mosquito repellent in lotion or wipe form, but must complete the authorization form. Please request the form in the front office.

38. Dress Code:

Children should be dressed in a manner that allows them to sit on the floor, play in the sand pile, paint or participate in messy activities. Please dress your child appropriately and in comfortable clothes. Slick soled shoes, cowboy boots, Crocs, backless shoes/slides and flip flops are not safe for school wear and will not be allowed.

39. Nap Time:

Infants sleep According to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs until they can roll over on their own. Nap time is structured to be a pleasant experience for every child. Children are encouraged to rest their bodies during a day of active learning.

- The lights are dimmed, and relaxing music is played.
- Infants have baby beds and older children are assigned cots that are separated by at least 3 feet when possible.
- Teachers position themselves where each child can be always supervised by sight and sound.
- Once the children are asleep, a teacher will stay positioned where all children can be seen from their location.
- Children at no time should be forced to sleep.
- In all areas a soft light is on to ensure that the teacher can see all the children.

Blankets

According to Texas Licensing, blankets are identified as unsafe for infants and must not be used in the childcare center for children younger than 12 months of age.

40. A Special Note About Biting:

As upsetting as it can be for children and adults, biting is a normal stage of development that is common among young children. Most young children bite and/or bitten by another child at least once when they are in group care settings. Often, whether their child was the child who bit or the child who was bitten, parents experience strong emotional reactions to biting. Again, please be assured that biting is developmentally normal in children who are experiencing discomfort due to teething, do not have the verbal skills to communicate their frustrations, and are unable to exhibit self-control that would limit their reactions in frustrating situations.

When biting happens, our first response is to act immediately to provide appropriate care for the child who was bitten. We also respond to the child who has bitten with strategies designed to help him/her learn more appropriate behavior. Our focus is not on punishment, but on developing effective behaviors that address the reasons for biting. Notification of a biting incident is given in written form to both the family of the child who was bitten and the child who bit. We work together with families to keep them informed and to develop strategies to address the situation. The following steps will be followed after an incident.

1st bite – Verbal/written notification to parents

2nd bite – Teacher Conference with parent

3rd bite- Written notification to parents with strategies and next steps

4th bite- In-person meeting with parent and the Director to review and adjust strategies if needed (if the parent is a teen, their parent will be included.)

5th bite – In-person meeting to discuss next steps or proper placement/referral if strategies are not being implemented. District contact will be included in this meeting.

6th bite- Possible expulsion- A written appeal may be made if the parent feels it is necessary to the Director and the district contact.

For further information on our approach to biting, we recommend the excellent article entitled “Play Right-Don’t Bite!” which is available online at https://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/biting/.

41. Car Seat Policy:

Parents/ Guardians will not be allowed to leave the premises unless the child has an appropriate safety restraint. **Texas Transportation Code: 545.414** Injuries suffered while riding in cars are the number one preventable cause of death in young children. Here are the guidelines to follow to keep a child safe in the car.

The rear seat is the best seat for children 12 years or younger.

- All children must use an age-appropriate car seat or booster seat.
- Never hold a child in your arms or lap while traveling in the car.
- Children should ride in a car seat made for their size and age.
- Their car seat should be buckled tightly in the car and not move more than one inch when pulled.

42. Accident Insurance:

The district (Sheldon ISD) is not responsible for costs associated with a student's injuries and cannot assume liability for any other costs associated with an injury.

AHERA Asbestos Notice:

Parents, Students and Staff,

In accordance with 40 CFR Part 763 of The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), the Sheldon Independent School District hereby notifies all interested parties of the availability of the District Asbestos Management Plan.

The Plan and a copy of site inspections and assessments are available for review during normal office hours in all school offices and the Central Administration office. To view the Plan, please contact the principal, assistant principal or school secretary at any of the schools or the Compliance and Safety Officer at Central Administration. The Sheldon Independent School District is committed to providing a safe environment for students, parents, teachers and other staff.

Some construction material used in your building may contain asbestos. Please rest assured that the Sheldon Independent School District has taken all the required precautions to make sure that the asbestos is not harmful to building occupants. As required, a six-month periodic visual inspection is conducted to ensure that these areas have not been disturbed and are maintained in good condition. The results of these inspections are available in each school office and the Central Administration office.

The Asbestos Management Plan will be maintained continually, and this notification of the Plan availability will be issued each year.

43. Cameras in the Classroom

The ELC classrooms have video cameras installed for safety and security purposes. The ELC administration will follow the state guidelines pertaining to cameras in the classroom which states:

Regular or continual monitoring of video recordings shall be prohibited. Video recordings shall not be used for teacher evaluation or monitoring or for any purpose other than the promotion of student safety.

If a safety concern arises, the ELC director will obtain a copy of the video clip of the incident in question from a technology administrator to address the issue.

Generally, the recordings are confidential by law, meaning that the general public, parents, and school staff are prohibited from viewing or having access to the recordings. However, if an "incident" is reported and if after investigating the SISD Admin and ELC Director find that an "incident" occurred, the recording may be made available for viewing to:

- the parent/guardian,
- District and campus staff, including the school nurse, an administrator trained in de-escalation and restraint techniques, or a human resources staff member designated by the school board, for the purpose

of investigating abuse or neglect of a student by a staff member or physical abuse or sexual abuse by a student, and

- regulatory agencies such as the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Texas Education Agency or the State Board for Educator Certification.

If a recording does not document an "incident", no one, other than the SISD Admin, can view the recording.

44. Accommodations

Our program's policy and process in supporting families and children who may need additional accommodations to include home language, differing abilities and cultural backgrounds. Parents have the right to be informed of all procedural safeguards and rights of appeal in a language easily understood by the public and in the parent's primary language. Please notify the Director if you or your child requires accommodation, and we will ensure that we do our part to meet your needs. Below are ways that our program will partner with families:

- We will provide space to accommodate sessions if specific therapies are needed during the day while the child is in our care.
- Participation in all comprehensive care meetings if needed.
- Complete supporting documentation from an authorized medical professional for any accommodation related to the child's physical or developmental needs.
- Provide materials and resources in parent's/child's primary language.
- Provide opportunities for cultural inclusiveness by hosting cultural events during the year.

45. Parent Involvement/Feedback

We value feedback at our program. Each parent will receive an annual survey at the end of each school year to offer any suggestions for our program. The information collected from the survey will be used to improve our program if applicable.

46. Emergency Information/Updating Contact Information

In an emergency, the center will immediately try to contact the parent and other emergency numbers. Please ensure that all contact information is up to date. You can update your contact information at any time by sending an email to danagoosby@sheldonisd.com. The director will immediately input the change in the system and notify you for confirmation of receipt.

47. Screen Time Policies

Electronic media is only used for educational purposes. Children are allotted no more than one hour of screen time per day. All screen time is based on meeting educational goals, age appropriate, and ad free. Screen time is not used during mealtimes. Screen time for children under two years of age is restricted. Additional resources on screen time can be found in our parent resource area located in the front office.

48. Jewelry and Hair Accessories

Jewelry is NOT allowed at childcare for safety reasons. Necklaces, bracelets, and rings can pose choking hazards or may be lost or broken. The center is not responsible for missing or damaged items. Please refrain from sending your child with beads in his/her hair. If the beads become loose and fall out of the hair, they become a choking hazard. By following these guidelines, we ensure a safe, fun, and structured learning environment for all our little explorers. Thank you for your cooperation.

Pest Control Notice:

As part of our commitment to provide your child with a safe, pest-free learning environment, the Sheldon Independent School District (SISD) may periodically apply pesticides to help manage insects, weeds or pathogens. Pesticide applications are part of our integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, which relies largely on non-chemical forms of pest control. Pesticide applications on SISD property are made only by trained and licensed technicians. Should you have questions about this District's pest management program or wish to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, you may contact the IPM coordinator at Central Administration.

Sheldon Early Learning Center has the right to alter or amend the policies and procedures, provided a 15-day written notice is given prior to implementation. All such alterations or amendments shall be incorporated in their entirety into this manual and any related contract/arrangements between the ELC and parents.

Contact Information

Sheldon Early Learning Center
17010 Beaumont Highway
Houston, TX 77049
Phone: 281-456-6880 Fax: 281-456-6877

Early Learning Center Director
Misty Warner
281-456-6881
Email: mistywarner@sheldonisd.com

If the Director is not available
Please Contact

Assistant Director
Phone: 281-456-6880
Email:

District Level Contact
Director of Early Childhood
Dr. Denise Mustin
281-727-2000
Email: denisemustin@sheldonisd.com

Sheldon ISD EARLY LEARNING CENTER

CHILD/PARENT HANDBOOK
2026-2027

Sign and return this page to the Early Learning Center.

Child/ren Name/s:

(Please Print)

I have received a copy of the SISD EARLY LEARNING CENTER Operational Policies and Parent Handbook for the current school year. I have been given notice and understand the rules, responsibilities, and consequences outlined in this handbook, and that the handbook is updated annually. If there is a policy change, I will be notified in writing within 15 days prior to implementation.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Revised 07/2026