



# SCHOOL HANDBOOK



## Welcome!

Thank you for considering our school for the education  
and well-being of your child.

The following information is designed to assist you in determining that this is the  
correct school for your child to attend to learn, play and grow.

We appreciate your confidence in our staff and facility and you are always  
welcome to visit with teachers, staff and the management. Unlike many traditional  
“day care” facilities, **La Maternelle French Academy** is structured around the  
curriculum established by **the French Ministry of Education**, long recognized  
globally as a leader in youth education and development practices.

French is spoken exclusively making **La Maternelle French Academy** a true  
“immersion experience”. English language lessons are a part of the curriculum;  
however the language of the school is French.

Again, welcome to La Maternelle French Academy!

Sincerely,

The Staff of La Maternelle French Academy

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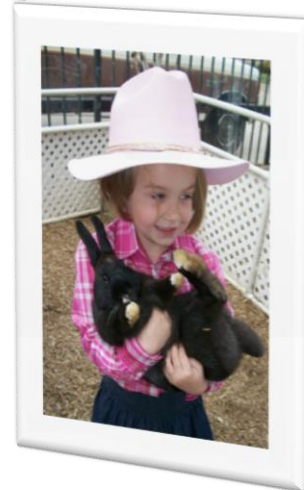
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## OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

### - Operating Hours

La Maternelle is a year-round school for children from 18 months old through Kindergarten.

We are open Monday to Friday from 7:00am to 6:30pm.

Instruction time is from 8:30am to 3:00pm.

Before care is from 7:00am to 8:30 am.

After Care is from 3:15pm to 6:30pm.

Students not enrolled in the Before Care program should arrive at the Center no earlier than 8:30 am

Parents may visit the school at any time without an appointment to observe their children. However, to avoid classroom disruptions, parents are asked to leave the class room by 8:45am if they haven't previously arranged with the teacher to spend some time with their child during instruction. Each teacher has an e-mail address to which parent comments, appointments and requests can be made directly.

### - Dismissal & Late Pick-up Information

**Dismissal time is 3:00pm.** There is a 15 minute grace period as we understand Houston traffic and conditions are difficult to predict. We recommend that every effort be made to pick up your child on time to avoid waiting lines to clock your child out and additional charges.

If you clock your child out after 3:15pm according to the School time system, you will be billed \$1.00 per minute up to the first 30 minutes you are late. A charge of \$2.00 per minute will be assessed for the next half hour or part thereof (initial billing begins at 3:00pm).

However, if you inform us three (3) days in advance that you will need additional care and will be picking up later than usual, we can prepare properly and an additional charge of \$10.00 per hour or part thereof will be invoiced accordingly. (Billing begins at 3:00pm).

For After Care students picked up after 6:30 PM, a charge of \$15.00 per 15 minute period will be invoiced beginning at 6:30 PM.

Charges related to Early Drop-off and Late Pick up fees: Any "additional charges" will be clearly outlined on your invoice with reference dates and related amounts.(All fees and costs are applicable per child, not per family. It is important to understand that the School incurs additional costs per child related to late pickups.)

### - Clock/Log In/Out of Child

Each day upon arriving, **the parent is required to clock his or her child into the school and upon departure from the school the parent is required to clock the child out.** Please do not entrust another person to do this for you. It is very important for security and safety reasons. If you forget to clock your child in or out, there will be no record of their arrival/departure, and in the event of any litigation related to such an occurrence, the record created by the log in/out system is considered binding. Additionally, should rescue workers need to enter the building for any reason, they may turn to this log in order to determine if everyone is accounted for.

- **Release of child**

Our normal procedure is to release the child **only to the designated parents or someone the parents officially designate**. If someone other than the parent is to pick the child up, please notify us in advance. A verbal notice is acceptable if it is a face-to-face notification and if the designated person is on the list of people authorized to pick up your child. If the person is not on the authorization list, we must have written permission--or an e-mail from your e-mail address (not another address) additionally the person picking up the child must present the child's unique PIN Code at the time of release. This rule will not be deviated from as it affects the safety and security of your child.

Please inform your emergency contacts that may be called upon to pick up your child that we will require photo identification and that identification may be copied at time of pickup. We do not mean to offend anyone with this practice, this is simply a measure taken for the child's protection.

- **Closing & Vacations**

The School generally follows the HISD calendar, and a school calendar has been provided to you with the closing dates.

Although we operate according to a planned calendar, La Maternelle may be closed on any given day of the year for any reason at the discretion of the School Management. These days may include holidays, days surrounding holidays, staff development days, HISD calendar regulations, and unplanned events, including but not limited to severe weather, flooding, water or electric damages etc. Parents will be given as much advance notice as possible. Your child's monthly tuition will not be adjusted for these days. (There may be exceptions depending on the extent of the closing, the reason for the closing and if it is for an extended period of time. This will be treated on a case by case basis.)

**Tuition is not prorated for absences, vacations, emergency closures or holidays.**

## **ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

Parents are encouraged to tour the school and meet with the director to discuss our program, student need, policies, space availability and questions.

- **Admission Requirements**

Parents must submit all necessary enrollment forms completed in full. The following forms are required:

- Admission Information
- Student Assessment Information
- Enrollment Checklist Information
- Authorization Regarding Photographing Child
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- A signed Policies and guidelines statement
- Up-to-date Shots records
- A non-refundable Registration Fee of **\$125**
- A signed Wait List Policy Agreement

The enrollment application must be updated annually and a new form will be provided at the appropriate time for completion.

- **Wait List**

Classroom space is provided on a first come, first served basis. LMFA's waiting lists are specific to the age of the child waiting.

Registration fees are non-refundable in all cases. If LMFA is unable to accommodate your family within the time frame you require or if you choose to withdraw from our waiting list, LMFA will not refund your registration fee.

Admission paperwork should be completed promptly and entirely before enrollment of the child (except for all medical forms for which you have up to two weeks to fill in and be up-to-date with the shots record).

We retain the right to deny enrollment if all our spots for a particular program are filled before all paperwork is returned. We will try to accommodate children with special needs; however if after talking with the parents of such a child, we realize that we do not have the training, equipment, facilities, etc. to handle their child, we will not accept the child since our goal is to meet the needs of each child.

- **Sibling Enrollment**

LMFA will make every effort to accommodate siblings of current or former students. However, families currently enrolled at LMFA must follow the same procedures as families not previously registered in our school.

When two or more siblings are enrolled in the **full time program**, a 10% discount is applied to all but the oldest child's tuition.

- **Withdrawal**

If for some reason you decide to withdraw your child before the last day of school, we require a 30-day written notice (No e-mail). Payment is due for the period whether or not the child is brought to the Center. Any outstanding fees must be paid on or before the child's last day. Any fees (legal or collection) that are experienced by the School to bring the account forward shall be the responsibility of the parent and the parent herein agrees to this stipulation.

Children may be administratively withdrawn due to the failure of parents to meet financial arrangements including late charges, late pick up fees, or failure to follow policies and procedures as stipulated in the parent handbook.

## **TUITION INFORMATION**

- **Payment Procedure**

School fees and tuition are charged on a **monthly basis**.

Rates are subject to change at any time with a prior notice. All paid fees and tuition are **not refundable** once paid.

You may pay by check, cash, money order or company draft. La Maternelle will mail or submit invoices during the month for the following months costs. (A Returned Check Fee of \$30.00 is due upon receipt of a NSF notice from

our bank, should this occur. You will be notified by invoice of such an occurrence. Following the issuance of a second such notice, please arrange another form of payment.)

Tuition and fees are **due on or before the 3rd of each month**. If the 3rd of the month falls on a closed day or holiday, please make arrangements to mail your payment prior to the 3rd.

- **Late Fees**

Any tuition **unpaid after the 3rd of the month will incur a \$25 late fee** payment on the ensuing invoice. If tuition and fees remain unpaid on the 5th of the month, the child may be withdrawn and the parents remain responsible for the unpaid tuition and related late fees. The child will be readmitted following satisfaction of outstanding financial obligations.

Each family is required to pay the monthly fee whether or not the child is in attendance.

Please make all checks and payments to the following:

**La Maternelle French Academy/CTS LLC**

**Please write your child's name and class name in the memo section of your tuition check**

- **Absences**

**Tuition is not prorated for absences, vacations, emergency closures or holidays.** If your child will be absent for an extended period of time, you may withdraw your child and not be liable for regular tuition payments. If you intend to re-enroll your child after the absence, a **registration fee must be paid** to place their name on the waiting list. If an age appropriate space is available on the date you require, your child may resume attending class immediately. If a space is **not available, you will have to wait until one opens.**

Tuition may be prorated at the beginning of enrollment or withdrawing in ½ month increments only.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

- **Illness**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services has **very strict regulations** regarding care of ill children.

We are unable to properly care for a child who has

- fever (temperature of 100.4 or higher)
- conjunctivitis (pink eye) or "cold in the eye"
- flu
- unusual rash
- severe cough
- rapid breathing or labored breathing
- severe cold
- vomiting
- yellowish skin or eyes



- diarrhea
- head lice
- contagious illness of any sort which results in child being too ill to participate in daily activities

- **Sick Policy**

In addition, if the child has thrown up or had diarrhea within the past 24 hours, for the safety of them and the other children, please **keep the child at home**. If your child vomited the night before and seems fine the next day, they are more than likely still contagious to the others. You are advised to wait a minimum of 24 hours before returning the child to school. Children are often very affectionate with each other, sharing toys and play objects and it is extremely difficult to prevent a sick child from infecting others, including staff personnel.

**We will not accept the child for care if any of the above symptoms are present or have been present within the last 24 hours.** If the child shows any of the symptoms while in care, we will remove him/her from the group and notify the parent or authorized adult to please pick up the child. Parents have up to one hour from time of notification to pick up the child.

The child may return when free of fever:

1. Without fever reducing medication (Tylenol, etc.) and/or, 24 hours after the child is no longer vomiting
2. 24-48 hours (depending on the illness) after the first dose of an antibiotic.

If a child receives an antibiotic for an ear infection he may return to day care immediately if he has been free of other symptoms mentioned for at least 24 hours.

- **Medication**

If your child is on medication and it needs to be administered while he or she is at the School, **the medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name**, doctor's name, name of medication, dosage, and when to be taken.

You will also be **required to sign a form** directing us to administer the medication to your child in accordance with the written instruction on the original label. Medication will be administered per doctor direction and a written record will be kept in the child's file.

- **Injuries & Accident**

Accidents and injuries happen everywhere, including at school. LMFA staff members are trained in first aid and CPR and are able to handle minor as well as some more serious injuries.

Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the School will receive proper first aid care. Treatment will be logged and we will tell you how and when the injury occurred.

We are also required to log any injuries we observe on your child which have occurred outside of our care.

**Please keep in mind, children frequently bump, scrape and fall down with no outcry or report from the child.** If you notice an injury, are concerned about the severity and were not informed of the event, please contact the Director immediately so we may attempt to determine what happened.

If a medical emergency arises, we will attempt to contact a parent first, unless doing so endangers the child's life. In that case we will take necessary steps to ensure the child's safety FIRST. (Calling 911, doctor, poison control, etc.). If it is determined necessary, we will take your child to West Houston Medical Center or closest licensed medical facility first, and then notify the parents as soon as possible. If the parent cannot be reached, we will provide the signed medical authorization form to medical personnel.

- **Fire Drill**

In the event of a fire at the School, we would evacuate the School immediately and gather at the SOUTH end of the parking lot as far from the area of activity as possible. This evacuation "drill" is to be practiced at a minimum once monthly so the children and staff are very familiar with the process. Frequent practice also serves to familiarize the children with the process so that in the event of an authentic evacuation, the excitement of the moment will have less impact on the reactions of the child.

**Fire extinguisher and alarms are checked and their status recorded monthly.**

- **Severe Weather**

If severe weather arises and/or a hurricane alert is issued, everyone will proceed to the hallway, where the children will crouch and cover their heads. Staff will secure the "Nap Mats" and use them as protection over the children.

Living on the Gulf Coast, the potential for major disruption from hurricane is high. We know that each storm will bring its own unique circumstances that will require creative thought, teamwork, and most of all flexibility. LMFA is committed to working with our families and staff as we re-interpret our Emergency Closure policies and procedures season after season.

## **CLASSROOM INFORMATION & DAILY LIFE**

- **Discipline**

It is important that we understand your discipline standards. We will use discipline that is individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and that is directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. We will try to re-direct their actions to a more appropriate behavior.

Choices will be given. If all effort fails, we will use a time-out from activities until the child feels able to control himself and rejoin the group.

The following types of discipline **will never be used**:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment,
- Punishment associated with food, naps,
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child,
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument even with the parents' authorization,
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth,
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child,
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language,
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed.

- **Dress Code**

No uniform is required by the School. However, backless and open-toed shoes are not permitted due to safety reasons. No caps or hats are allowed indoors. Please send your child to School in appropriate outer wear in periods of cold, rainy or inclement weather

Little accidents happen. **Children should be sent with a set of clothes on their first day** to leave at the school in case they need to change clothes. Please label the clothes and put them in a zip lock bag labeled with your child's name.

- **Meals & Snacks**

Because mealtime is equally important as educational time to young growing and active children, we provide only the highest quality all natural foods and snacks to your children.

Snacks will be served with only certified **organic milk and fresh fruits**. The monthly snack menu will be posted in the kitchen.

If your child requires a special diet, please advise us so we can develop together an alternate meal/snacks menu meeting their needs. We will make every effort to accommodate this special need, however if we were unable to do so, we would then ask the parents to provide the child's snacks.

La Maternelle does not provide lunch. It is **the parent's responsibility to provide a balanced meal for their child daily**. Candies, sweets (not even vitamins gummy type) and sodas are not allowed in the school.

- **Naps**

Rest time is between 12:30pm and 1:30pm and Naptime is from 12:30 to 2:15p. (**Rest time is mandatory**).

Children who do not sleep or who wake up early will be guided in finding a quiet time activity to engage in.

If at any time your child is not sleeping well at night, or does not seem ready to go to bed when you determine appropriate and you feel it is because they are sleeping too long at the School, please do not hesitate to discuss it with the School Administrator.

- **Toys**

**No toys from home are allowed at School unless specified by the teacher.** We understand that children are very proud to bring something special from home, however this can often result in issues that develop in their hesitation to share that special toy with the other children. There are plenty of materials and learning activities designed to keep your child busy during at the School. Additionally, it can be disruptive in class when a child refuses to put away that special toy away while the teacher is discussing and explaining a topic with them. Please remember to have your child leave their personal toy(s) at home or in the car when arriving at school otherwise it will be taken away and stored until departure.

- **Visits**

Parents are encouraged and welcome to make unscheduled visits to the school during normal operating hours. In order to minimize disturbance in the classes, we request that **such visits be limited to 30 minutes**.

- **Potty Training**

If upon entering La Maternelle's Petite Section and Moyenne Section the child is not able to recognize the sensations associated with needing to use the restroom, ability to verbally express the need to go to the restroom, the ability to control the need until he or she is on the toilet, the ability to clean oneself, the ability of undressing and dressing without any help, **La Maternelle reserves the right to deny admittance until the child exhibits mastery of these functions to the satisfaction of the School's faculty.**

**La Maternelle reserves the right to send a student home when a bowel movement accident has occurred. Should the incident occur more than once in a week, the student will have to stay home until he or she exhibits mastery of this function to the satisfaction of La Maternelle faculty.**

The Center reserves the right to send a student home, should more than two urine accidents occur in a week. If accidents recur, the child will need to stay home until he or she exhibits mastery of this function to the satisfaction of La Maternelle faculty. Should a related medical condition exist, the school director must be provided with documentation from a medical doctor. There will be no refund or deductions for missed days.

## COMMUNICATION

- **Newsletter and Email**

A monthly newsletter is sent electronically every month by email. Please make sure to read it thoroughly. Email is also one of the most effective, timely, and expedient ways in which we communicate to our families. It is our intent to send information regarding illness, closures, and policy changes as well as reminders for celebrations, and holidays. Please read and respond to these emails as official communications from your child's school.

- **Facebook**

La Maternelle has a Facebook page which is updated regularly with pictures and information regarding the school. We encourage currently enrolled parents to interact and share information on a variety of topics. To join our Facebook page please go to:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/La-Maternelle-FrenchAcademy/153554784659246>

- **Parent Conference**

Parent Teacher Conferences are a vital component to a child's success in school and happens twice during the school year (December and May). La Maternelle is committed to keeping parents informed about their child on an ongoing basis. As educators, we believe developmental assessment is an essential part of good early childhood curriculum.

In addition, a teacher, Director or the Owner may feel the need to schedule a parent conference. These conferences may be used to discuss your child's social and emotional development, behaviors, their academic progress, and even your behavior and interaction with staff. Parent conferences are always conducted to find solutions to any difficulties being experienced.

- **Mail Box**

Parents are encouraged to check their child's "mail box" for homework, announcements or other information concerning the School, activities and general childcare issues.

Notices will be placed in the child's mail box in the reception area and parents may use this as a conduit to leave notes and other information for other children's parents, such as party invitations, notes, etc.

It is the parents' responsibility to inform us of any (but not limited to) change of address, phone number, person authorized to pick up child, doctor's name and phone number, medication, communicable disease or family problems that might affect your child's behavior.

- **Survey**

We are committed to provide you a quality childcare facility in which your child can learn and develop. We care about how well we are doing and welcome your input as a team member. We conduct a parent survey each year (May) to solicit your input and provide you to rate the success of our efforts. However, please feel free to come and discuss your concerns and provide suggestions at any time during the year.

You will be asked to rate La Maternelle French Academy in the following categories:

- Facilities
- Registration
- Communication
- Staff
- Curriculum

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

- **Field Trips and Special Events**

Field trips may be scheduled for the older children and you will be advised well in advance and requested to issue written permission to participate. Depending on the field trip, there may be additional costs related to the activity and all parents will be advised in advance of the costs on the permission release. Any costs authorized by parents will be invoiced on the monthly invoice, advance payments are not required.

However, from time to time we may bring entertainment to the School such as clowns, magicians, musicians and more. You will be advised in advance of these activities also in the event you wish to attend and enjoy the activity with your child.

Additionally, if there are extraordinary costs related to the activity, you will be advised of the costs.

- **Water Activities**

Children of all ages participate in water activities at La Maternelle. Our water activities include water tables, sprinkler play, and wading pools. During the summer months, **water shoes are required for all children** to use during water play.

- **Birthday Parties**

We strongly encourage school celebrations for your child's birthday. We have found the most popular event is a simple party with a special snack and party favors at the afternoon snacks.

- **La Maternelle Celebrations**

La Maternelle will schedule celebrations throughout the year to celebrate specific events including but not limited to:

- Halloween Party
- Christmas Party
- Mardi Gras Parade
- Francophone Event
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Mother's Day
- Graduation
- 

**Parents are frequently asked to contribute time or food items to supplement these events and are welcome to attend.** When you arrive for a celebration and are acknowledged by the teacher, you are then responsible for the well-being and supervision of your child.

- **Babysitting**

**Staff of La Maternelle French Academy may not provide childcare or babysitting services to families enrolled at La Maternelle.** We encourage families in need of childcare to utilize resources outside of the La Maternelle network of teachers.

## **IN CLOSING.....**

No attempt has been made to address every subject relating to the policies and procedures of La Maternelle French Academy. Situations not covered in this handbook will be considered on their individual merit. Changes in our policies and procedures will be made as need dictates and may be without notice. This handbook will be revised as needed and the most current version is available upon request.

**Thank you again for choosing La Maternelle French Academy for the education of your child(ren).**

**LA MATERNELLE FRENCH ACADEMY**

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