



FORT WORTH MUSEUM  
SCIENCE AND HISTORY



# **Fall/Spring 2023-2024 Parent Handbook: Operational Policies and Notice Regarding COVID-19**

Dear Parents,

For over seventy years Museum School has introduced over 200,000 young children to the wonders of the world around them. The program's intimate classroom surroundings foster a love for learning... from the wondrous science specimens and historical artifacts from our large teaching collections to the early childhood master teachers who brilliantly connect children's imaginations to nature in their own backyard and times long ago. Young children are encouraged to discover and dream of one day becoming astronauts, engineers, historians, paleontologists and so much more through their encounters with real objects and real stories. Museum School prides itself on its developmentally-appropriate, experiential, engaging learning environments.

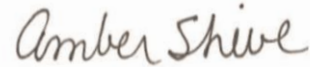
We appreciate our Museum School families tremendously. We look forward to fun-filled classes and welcoming your child to the 2023-2024 school year at Museum School!



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## Philosophy

Museum School's discovery approach enhances a child's awareness of the world. The curriculum combines natural and physical sciences, history, and anthropology with art, music, and literature.

## Goals

Children will have first-hand experiences.

Children will develop an appreciation for the natural world.

Children will begin to construct their own knowledge.

Children will gain skills in listening and language acquisition.

Children will creatively express themselves through music, art, and drama.

# OPERATIONAL POLICIES

The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History has an established blueprint for the way it conducts its daily business and treats visitors and program participants. The following are the Operational Policies for Museum School® Fall/Spring 2023-2024 Classes effective January 24, 2023. **The policies may change at any time for any reason; families will be notified of changes and updates will supersede previous versions.**

## Months, Days and Hours of Operation

Fall/Spring Museum School begins in September and ends in May each school year.

## Days and Hours of Operation

### Morning Classes

Tuesday through Friday: 9:00am - 11:30am

### Afternoon Classes

Tuesday through Friday: 12:45pm - 2:45pm

### Extended Day Classes

Tuesday through Thursday: 9:00am – 1:55pm

## General Information

### Museum School Office Hours

Monday through Friday: 8:15am - 4:00pm

### Museum School Telephone

817-255-9333

### Museum School Email

museumschool@fwmschool.org

### Museum School Address

1600 Gendy Street  
Fort Worth TX 76107

## Education / Museum School Staff

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## CHILD CARE REGULATION

A paper copy of the *Museum School Fall/Spring 2023-2024 Parent Handbook* is available upon request.

A copy of the Minimum Standards and current inspection reports are posted in the Parent Resource Room. Contact information for the local Child Care Regulation office, access to Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline and access to the Texas Health and Human Services website are posted in the Parent Resource Room. The contact information is also listed below.

In accordance with Regulations, parents may visit Museum School at any time.

Contact the Department of Family and Protective Services at 1-800-252-5400 or by visiting [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact\\_us/report\\_abuse.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact_us/report_abuse.asp) to report abuse or neglect.

### Local Regulation Office and the Website information:

Health and Human Services Commission—Child Care Regulation  
1501 Circle Drive, Suite 310  
Fort Worth, TX 76119  
Phone: 817-321-8000  
Fax: 512-276-3513  
[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/)

 Fort Worth Museum School

 Fort Worth Museum School

#museumschoolturtle

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## 1 DEFINITIONS

The terms **parent(s)**, **families**, and **guardian(s)** are interchangeable in this document and refer to any individual who has custodial care of a child or children enrolled in Museum School.

Museum School **staff** and Museum School **teachers** are interchangeable in this document and refer to any employee of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History Museum School.

The **school year** and **Fall/Spring 2023-2024** are interchangeable and refer to the same period of time.

**Coronavirus** and **COVID-19** are interchangeable and refer to the same illness.

## 2 NOTICE TO FAMILIES REGARDING COVID-19

It is the top priority of Museum School to implement increased health and safety standards for the health of the Museum School staff and children. Museum School follows CDC, Child Care Regulation, state and local health officials, and government directives and recommendations. Museum School recommends that families consult the CDC's guidelines and [Texas Health and Human Services](#). **The actions taken by the Museum School staff will not guarantee that your child will not come in contact with or be exposed to the coronavirus. Each family must assess their own risk of exposure to the coronavirus.** The Museum School does not have a medical professional on site and will not provide medical advice.

Museum School reserves the right to discontinue any class or the entire program at any time with less than 24 hour notice. Families must have the ability to pick children up from Museum School ***within 20 minutes of receiving a phone call.***

- If your child tests positive for COVID-19 and attended at least 1 day of class, all parents in the class will be notified **by email** without disclosing your child's name. The same practices will be followed for Museum School staff.
- A confirmed case of COVID-19 may result in full or partial cancellation of classes.

### 2.1 Masks

**Mask policies are subject to change at any time due to the fluid health situation.**

Proper mask wearing requires covering the nose and mouth. Museum School staff are not responsible for a child's proper use of a mask. The Museum School staff reserves the right to determine that a child's mask is detrimental to the health or safety of the child (or children in the class) and may ask the child to remove it.

Children who are experiencing allergy or cold-like symptoms may be asked to wear a mask out of caution to protect other children and staff.

### 2.2 Hand Hygiene Procedures

Museum School staff will instruct and assist children with washing their hands upon arrival.

Teachers will educate children on safe hand hygiene practices.

Children and staff will wash hands in accordance with Child Care Regulation guidelines.

Hand sanitizer will be used if soap and water are not readily available. Hand sanitizer will be kept out of children's reach and supervised when utilized.

## 2.3 Cleaning and Disinfecting

Classrooms and restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis. Surfaces and objects that are frequently touched will be cleaned and disinfected routinely.

Cleaning materials will not be used near children and will be stored out of a child's reach.

## 2.4 COVID-19 Symptoms and Confirmed Cases

Symptoms of COVID-19 may develop within 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and may include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, headache, sore throat, muscle pain, chills, new loss of smell or taste, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms of illness.

If a child becomes ill or is not feeling well, the child will be assessed and the child's parent/guardian will be notified. The child may be provided with a mask.

<b>IF</b>	a child at Museum School is exhibiting signs of illness,	<b>THEN</b>	the parent or emergency contact will be contacted
	a child is experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19,		it is recommended that parents contact the child's medical professional and follow CDC and local health department guidelines regarding self-quarantine.
	a child tests positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours of attending class,		the Museum School office <b>must</b> be contacted immediately; all parents in the school will be notified by email without disclosing the child's name; those in close contact will be notified separately by email; it may result in cancellation of classes
	a child is ill and tests negative for COVID-19,		Please see <a href="#">Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Chapter 97</a> for readmission guidelines.
	a child tests positive for COVID-19,		<u>all three</u> of the following criteria must be met in order to return: 1. At least <b>24 hours</b> have passed since recovery (no longer running fever without the use of fever-reducing medications) 2. Improvement of respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc.) 3. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
	a child is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 and does not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19,		the child may not return to Museum School until the same three steps mentioned above have been met. In the event that the three criteria are not met, a note from a medical professional must be obtained clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis

**The COVID-19 Protocols are changing frequently. The above statements and procedures are subject to change without notice.**

## 2.5 Social Distancing

Museum School is taking precautions to limit the exposure of COVID-19. Social distancing is in direct conflict with developmentally appropriate learning through play and peer interaction in an early childhood setting. Parents must be aware that children will interact in close proximity; Museum School teachers are not responsible for the increased risk of such behavior.

## 2.6 Family Partnership

Maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment is a partnership. Each family plays a significant role in maintaining the safety and health of all children and staff participating in Museum School classes. Please consider the following practices prior to your child attending class at Museum School.

- ❖ Monitor your child's temperature each morning before leaving for class. If your child's temperature is 99.5°F or higher, please contact Museum School and keep your child home.
- ❖ If your child's eating habits have changed, they are vomiting or have diarrhea within 24 hours of attending class, regardless of the potential cause, do not send your child to class. Keep the child home and monitor them for illness.
- ❖ If there is any possibility or question that your child may be coming down with an illness of any kind, please do not send them to Museum School. Sending them to school could result in other families and staff being exposed.
- ❖ Have a conversation with a medical professional if you are concerned that your child has an increased risk for severe illness if COVID-19 is contracted. Increased risk may include cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease including asthma, diabetes, and immunocompromised systems, among others.
- ❖ Keep your child home if they have had close contact with someone exposed to or infected with COVID-19 in the past 10 days.

The Museum School staff monitors changing guidelines and protocols. All Museum School staff members are required to complete training for infection control. Although Museum School is implementing infection control strategies, sending a child is not without risk. Please contact the Museum School office with questions or concerns. [museumschool@fwmsch.org](mailto:museumschool@fwmsch.org) 817-255-9333



### 3 ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

For a child to enroll, parents must complete an online Museum School Enrollment Form. Parents are notified with an Admission letter by email. Any changes in enrollment procedures will be posted on the Museum School website and emailed to parents.

#### 3.1 Schedule of Classes

2023-2024 Schedule of Classes *All Classes Meet One Day a Week*					
AGE GROUP	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Age 3 (by 9.1.23)	n/a	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm
Age 4 (by 9.1.23)	n/a	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm
Age 5/6 (by 9.1.23)	n/a	Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm	Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm	Extended Day 9:00 am – 1:55 pm	Morning 9:00 am – 11:30 am <b>OR</b> Afternoon 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm

#### 3.2 Enrollment Requirements

In keeping with the guidelines of the Child Care Regulation division of the Texas Health and Human Services, Museum School requires the following information and forms be submitted by **August 7, 2023** or 7 days prior to the child's first day of class once the school year begins.

- **Museum School Enrollment Form** (online), including Immunization and Hearing/Vision Acknowledgement, Physician's Information, Medical Authorization, Statement of Health Acknowledgment, and Field Trip/Water Play/Photography/Class List Waiver.
- **Current Immunization Record** signed and dated by a medical professional with the medical professional's address and phone number; or a signed, dated and notarized Official Exemption Affidavit from the Texas Department of State Health Services exempting the child from Texas immunization requirements. Information about immunization requirements can be found [HERE](#). Information about Exemption Affidavit requirements can be found [HERE](#).
- **Vision and Hearing Screening Results** (if age 4 by September 1, 2023); or a signed, dated and notarized affidavit stating that the vision or hearing screening conflicts with the tenets or practices of a church or religious denomination of which the child is a member.
- **Statement of Health** signed by a health-care professional who has examined the child within the past year, indicating that the child is able to take part in the program.
- **FARE Allergy Action Plan** (if applicable)

### 4 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Please notify the Museum School Office via email or the Procure<sup>®</sup> app if you will be late or if your child will be absent. Families will be contacted if a child is absent from class two consecutive weeks to check on the child and monitor for increased illness within the school.

## 4.1 School Calendar

August 29-September 1	Meet the Teacher	January 30-February 2	Stock Show Break
September 5-8	First Week of Classes	March 12-15	Spring Break
November 21-24	Thanksgiving Break	May 7-10	Last Week of Classes
December 19-January 8	Winter Break		

## 5 TUITION

### 5.1 Payments

Class Time	Non-Refundable Registration Fee	Tuition	Total Class Fee	3 Equal Payments
<b>Morning Class</b> 9:00 am – 11:30 am One Day a Week	\$150	\$1080	\$1230	\$360
<b>Afternoon Class</b> 12:45 pm – 2:45 pm One Day a Week	\$150	\$867	\$1017	\$289
<b>Extended Day</b> 9:00 am – 1:55 pm One Day a Week	\$150	\$2169	\$2319	\$723

A child's annual tuition will be divided into 3 equal payments (as noted above). The non-refundable registration fee will be invoiced within 30 days of submitting an Enrollment Form and receiving an Admission Letter.

An invoice will be generated through Procure<sup>®</sup> for the Registration Fee and each of the 3 non-refundable equal payments. **The first tuition installment will be invoiced with a due date of July 21, 2023. The second tuition installment will be invoiced with a due date of September 8, 2023. The final installment will be invoiced with a due date of November 10, 2023.**

The child's placement will be relinquished if the registration and/or tuition fees are not paid within 2 business days of the due date listed on the invoice.

Families are able to enable auto-pay in their Procure<sup>®</sup> account. When auto-pay is enabled, for every billing cycle, the full available balance will be pulled from the account on the due date listed on the invoice. Click [HERE](#) for detailed Procure<sup>®</sup> instructions.

## 5.2 Refunds and Withdrawals

CIRCUMSTANCE	REFUND & WITHDRAWAL POLICY
A parent wishes to withdraw their child from class for the 2023-2024 school year.	Tuition is divided into 3 equal payments ( <a href="#">see Section 5.1 Payments</a> ). Each payment is non-refundable.  <b>July 21, 2023</b> The deadline to withdraw from the full school year, before the first tuition payment is due.  <b>November 10, 2023</b> The deadline to withdraw from the remainder of the school year, before the final tuition payment is due. A child who is withdrawn by November 10, 2023 may attend his/her class through the week of December 12-15, 2023.
A child is absent from classes for <b>any</b> reason.	No refunds or make-up days will be offered.
Museum School cancels class for inclement weather.	No refunds or make-up days will be offered.
Museum School cancels class for <b>any</b> reason other than inclement weather.	No refunds or make-up days will be offered.
The Museum School program does not begin as expected in September, must be delayed or canceled <b>at any time, for any reason</b> .	The Museum School program requires an investment in staff training, planning, and preparation of classroom materials and supplies. Therefore, no refunds or make-up days will be offered.

*Withdraw notification for either the July 21, 2023 or the November 10, 2023 deadlines must be sent by email to [museumschool@fwmsk.org](mailto:museumschool@fwmsk.org) by the deadline date.*

It is not possible to predict classes that may close or the length of a closure if there is a positive case of COVID-19 at Museum School; siblings in the program, carpooling families and many other factors will be taken into consideration. Child Care Regulation, Texas Health and Human Services, and/or the Tarrant County Health Department will be consulted regarding a closure. It is crucial that parents understand the Refund and Withdrawal policy entering into the school year.

## 6 SECURITY / CHILD SAFETY / DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

**Parents must complete the Authorized Pick Up information upon enrollment.** The information must include a list of parent(s)/guardian(s), emergency contacts, and all other designated drivers (carpool drivers, relatives or friends) who might assume responsibility for the child.

**Children will be released only to those people who are listed as Authorized for Pick Up.** Anyone picking up for the first time, other than the child's parents, will be asked to show a picture identification or provide a Procare<sup>®</sup> pin.

Procare<sup>®</sup> PIN numbers for all authorized individuals can be located in your child's Procare<sup>®</sup> account (see [Procare<sup>®</sup>](#)). Changes or additions to the release form should be made by clicking [HERE](#). Procare<sup>®</sup> is not set up for parents to edit authorized individuals (or other personal information) so that the office has the most current information on file for your child.

In case of non-custodial parents, a copy of the custody and visitation papers must be on file in the Museum School office.

During operational hours, the doors at the main entrance to Museum School will remain locked. If a parent should need access to the Museum School, the doorbell may be used (located on the north wall outside the Museum School entrance), or the parent may contact the Preschool Director via the Procare<sup>®</sup> app.

## 6.1 Drop-off and Arrival Procedures

Children will only be released to individuals on their Authorized Pick Up List. There will be no exceptions. Individuals picking up without a Procare<sup>®</sup> pin number must show a photo ID before the child will be released.

If deemed necessary by the Museum School administrative team, please be prepared to complete a disclosure statement in the Procare<sup>®</sup> app upon sign-in at arrival each day that your child has been symptom and fever free for the past 7 days and has not knowingly been exposed to an individual with COVID-19.

Parents/guardians/caregivers will be asked if the child has had any medication prior to coming to class so that Museum School is aware of current allergies and medication that could mask other symptoms.

The current plan\* is for teachers to meet children in the car line as they arrive and walk children to their classroom, in the same way children were greeted during the 2022-2023 school year. At dismissal time, parents/caregivers will park in the Museum School lot and walk into the school to pick children up from their classrooms at dismissal time. A map of the drop-off car line is provided in [Appendix B](#).

*\*This plan is subject to change at the discretion of the Museum School administrative team.*

## 6.2 Late Arrival/Pick-Up

It is important for children to arrive on time and be picked up promptly. In the event that the car line for drop-off has ended, please send a Procare<sup>®</sup> message. A Museum School staff member will greet families on Gendy Street at the end of the Museum School sidewalk (at the brick walkway to Will Rogers).

## 6.3 Museum School Sculptures

Museum School has been the beneficiary of several generous donations of whimsical outdoor sculptures, all of which are on display in front of the Museum School entrance. While all of these are considered art, **the Dr. Seuss sculptures are not meant to be climbed on.** Please discuss the importance of not climbing on the sculptures with your child for their safety.

## 7 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Museum School is a **WELL CHILD** facility. If you suspect your child is sick or may be coming down with an illness, the child must remain home to prevent the spread of infection. Please do not administer Tylenol, Advil or any other fever reducing medication prior to sending a child to class. Medications given *for any reason* may mask symptoms related to communicable diseases.

The Museum School staff will not administer over-the-counter medication, sunscreen, insect repellent, vitamins or supplements. Please administer these substances prior to leaving home.

The Museum School staff will only administer prescription medication in a medical emergency to prevent serious bodily injury ([see Section 7.3: Epinephrine & Medical Emergencies](#)).

Parents should note any medical conditions or special situations on their child's Enrollment Form. If a child has a special medical situation or condition that is not listed on the child's Enrollment Form, the parent should contact the Museum School office **prior to the first day of class or as soon as possible with a new diagnosis** to discuss the child's condition. Museum School does not have a medical professional on staff; therefore, the administration and care of a medical condition may be outside of the scope of the Museum School staff.

Museum School staff and children are encouraged to practice healthy behaviors (for example, staying home when they are sick, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of their arm, and frequently washing hands). ([see Section 2: Hand Hygiene Procedures and Family Partnership](#)) Tissues and hand soap are available in all classrooms and hand sanitizer is used if hand washing is not possible. Frequently touched surfaces are cleaned routinely and items are sanitized in accordance with health department guidelines. ([see Section 2: Cleaning and Disinfecting](#))

### 7.1 Required Medical Forms

[see Section 3: Enrollment Information](#)

### 7.2 Vaccine-Preventable Diseases for Families

Museum School has implemented the following immunization policy for employees to be in compliance with the Texas Health and Human Services, which requires a policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases. While the safety of our employees and children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employee. The only exception to this policy is the TB test that is currently required for Museum School employees by the City of Fort Worth at the time of initial employment.

### 7.3 Epinephrine & Medical Emergencies

A FARE Allergy Action Plan must be submitted with a physician and parent signature in the event a child requires epinephrine or medication for allergic reactions.

Medication for a medical condition that may cause severe bodily harm must be authorized by the child's parent in writing with a signature and date of the request.

- Over-the-counter allergy medication must be in its original container labeled with the child's full name and will be given as stated on the label directions unless amended in writing by the child's medical professional.
- Prescription medication must be in the original container with the child's full name and dosing instructions on the label.

It is recommended that medication stay at Museum School for the duration of the school year; however, parents may choose to take it home and return it weekly.

## 7.4 Illness/Communicable Diseases

[see Section 2: Notice to Families Regarding COVID-19](#)

Please contact the Museum School office about specific illnesses. A child with a communicable disease may return with medical documentation from a physician indicating the child is no longer contagious. Museum School must be notified if a child has a communicable disease, such as fifth disease, conjunctivitis, mumps, measles, chickenpox, etc. (see [Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Chapter 97](#))

Exclusion of an ill child from attending Museum School is determined by whether or not –

- the child can participate in the activities planned for the day in his/her classroom/age group
- the child requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the care/needs of other children in the class
- keeping the child in care will pose an increased risk to other children and adults

## 7.5 Accidents & Medical Emergencies

It is important to act quickly and surely on behalf of the child. A first aid kit is kept in each classroom and the office for cuts and scrapes. Parents will be provided an Incident/Illness Report in the case of illness or injury. The form must be signed by the Museum Preschool Director or Assistant Director and the parent/guardian.

In the event medical care is required, Museum Security will be notified. If an accident requires transporting to an emergency room, 911 will be called with instructions to transfer to **Cook Children's Medical Center** located at 801 7th Ave, Fort Worth, TX 76104. Parents or the emergency contact will be notified immediately in the case that emergency care is required. An AED device is located outside of the Museum School office.

## 7.6 Lice

Parents are asked to notify the Museum School Preschool Director if their child has lice. A written notice will be provided within 48 hours to the parents of all children in a group when there is an outbreak of lice.

## 7.7 Abuse and Neglect

The Museum School employees are dedicated to preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children. In the event of suspected abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the Museum School employee to contact the [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services \(DFPS\)](#) child abuse hotline at 800-252-5400.

Per the DFPS requirements, Museum School employees are required to complete annual training focused on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including:

- 1) Factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse and neglect;
- 2) Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect;
- 3) Methods for increasing awareness of prevention techniques; and
- 4) Community organizations that have assistance and intervention programs.

A parent/guardian of a child who is the victim of abuse or neglect should call the child abuse hotline at 800-252-5400 or visit the Texas Abuse Hotline [website](#).

# 8 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Fire, severe weather and lock-down procedures will be reviewed with staff monthly. Fire and severe weather drills will be performed in compliance with Child Care Regulation guidelines.

Evacuation plans are posted in the classrooms and in the Museum School front hall. Each classroom has a walkie-talkie for emergency communication.

## 8.1 Fire

The Museum School Office will notify teachers when the “*Evacuate*” plan will be implemented. Teachers will calmly evacuate all children in accordance with the classroom’s evacuation route.

## 8.2 Severe Weather

The Museum School Office will notify teachers when the “*Shelter*” plan will be implemented. Teachers will calmly assemble all children in their designated shelter location.

## 8.3 Inclement Weather

If the Fort Worth Independent School District delays or cancels classes for the entire day, Museum School will cancel all classes. No refunds will be made or make-up days offered.

The Procure<sup>®</sup> app will be utilized to inform families of class schedule changes due to inclement weather.

# 9 COMMUNICATION

## 9.1 Parent Communication

Communication between parents and Museum School, teachers and staff, is extremely important. Teachers will use the Procure<sup>®</sup> platform to send weekly updates on the learning that is taking place in class. In addition, the Museum School newsletter – Turtle Talk – is published and distributed twice during the school year. The newsletter serves to inform parents of what has taken place in the classrooms, upcoming Museum School and Fort Worth Museum of Science and History events plus other beneficial information.

Changes in policy and procedures, notification of special events, holidays or other pertinent information will be sent to the primary email address on file from the Museum School office ([museumschool@fwmsch.org](mailto:museumschool@fwmsch.org)).

Museum School will utilize the Procure<sup>®</sup> app for quickly informing families of an urgent message.

**Families are encouraged to add the Museum School phone numbers (817-255-9333/817-255-9337) and [museumschool@fwmsch.org](mailto:museumschool@fwmsch.org) to their contacts in order to easily recognize a call or email from Museum School.**

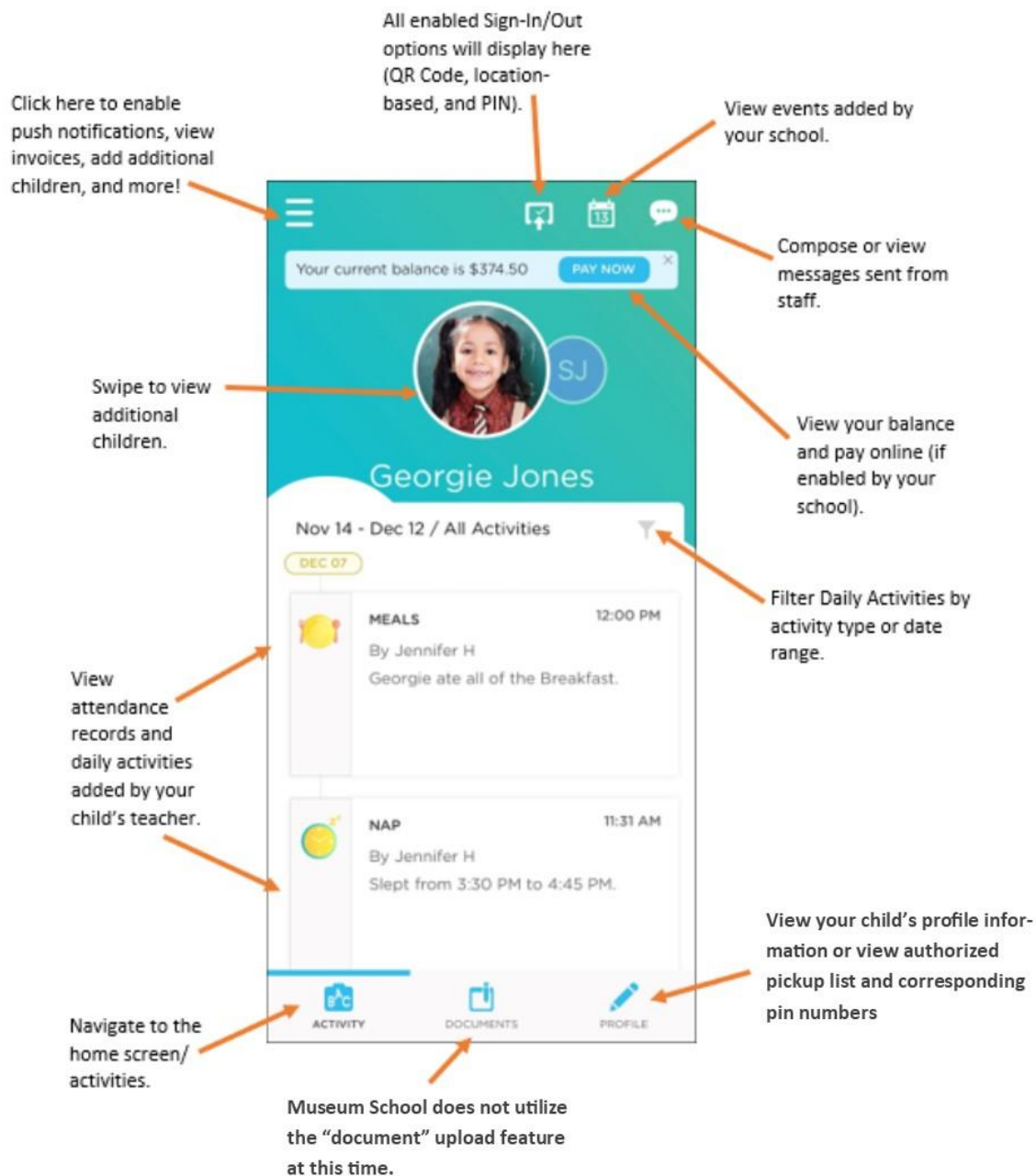
If a parent/guardian has a question or concern they may:

- 1) Contact the teachers and administration through their child’s Procure<sup>®</sup> account. **This is the quickest method for reaching the Museum School administration. The phones are not monitored during arrival and dismissal.**
- 2) Contact the Museum School office at 817-255-9333 or [museumschool@fwmsch.org](mailto:museumschool@fwmsch.org)
- 3) Contact the Museum Preschool Director at [soliver@fwmsch.org](mailto:soliver@fwmsch.org) or 817-255-9337.

## 9.2 Procare®

Parents/guardians will receive an invitation from Procare® upon enrollment and are strongly encouraged to download the app for ease of drop off/pick up procedures and efficient communication. (see Procare® App Screen Guide below)

Changes or additions to the release form should be made by clicking [HERE](#). Procare® is not set up for parents to edit authorized individuals (or other personal information) so that the office has the most current information on file for your child.





## 10 GENERAL MUSEUM SCHOOL INFORMATION

### 10.1 Museum School Staff and Class Ratios

All staff have education, experience or degrees in early childhood, elementary and special education. Museum School class sizes range from 12 to 14 children. Classes have a 1:6 or 1:7 teacher to student ratio. Each class has two lead teachers.

### 10.2 Curriculum

Each week, Museum School class topics and activities for all ages change or build on each other, taking children on an exciting journey of investigation and discovery. ([see Appendix A: Curriculum Schedule](#))

**Three Year Old** - Three-year-old children become familiar with individual animals – what they look like, what they eat and the kind of homes they prefer. They soon learn the differences between mammals, reptiles, birds, insects and other animals. Children who are age three have the option to enroll in an extended-day class which integrates activities that complement and connect with the Museum School natural science and history curriculum.

#### Characteristics of a child in a three year old extended day class:

\*A student who is able to remain in a group setting without parental assistance for an extended period of time.

\*An independent child who is able to eat in a group setting, seated at a table.

\*An inquisitive learner who finds joy in building, investigating, creating, and engaging in sensory activities.

**Four Year Old** - Four-year-old children discover how individual animals with similar characteristics are grouped into families. Their curriculum includes additional topics such as earth science, Native American cultures and early Texas settlers. Children who are age four have the option to enroll in an extended-day class which integrates engineering concepts through STEAM activities that complement and connect with the Museum School natural science and history curriculum.

**Five and Six Year Old** - The five- and six-year-old class introduces the concept of habitats and the interdependence of all living things. Caves, deserts, forests, prairies and space are just a few of the exciting topics that reinforce the idea that there are many types of environments, all with their own unique features. Please note that children may attend this class for two consecutive years at age 5 and 6. However, the curriculum remains the same; children will benefit from repetition and will continue to learn new details the second year. Children who are age five and six have the option to enroll in an extended-day class which integrates engineering concepts through STEAM activities that complement and connect with the Museum School natural science and history curriculum.

### 10.3 Student Behavior

*Museum School reserves the right to deny participation in classes and activities to children who exhibit persistent behaviors which prohibit classmates from engaging in an optimal learning environment or endanger themselves or the welfare or education of others.* The [Discipline and Guidance Policy of Fort Worth Museum School](#) is located on page 16 of this document. In signing the Enrollment Form, parents are confirming receipt and understanding of the Discipline and Guidance policy.

## 10.4 Toilet Independence

The children's bathrooms are located in the classrooms. The toilets are child-size and have automatic flushers.

All children must be consistently toilet-trained and toilet-independent to be eligible for enrollment. The classrooms are not licensed or equipped for diaper changing; therefore, **pull-ups and diapers are not permitted**. Museum School classes are designed for children who can remain in a group setting without parental assistance, are toilet trained, and able to use the restroom without assistance. Parents will be called to pick up children in the event of a restroom accident.

### **Toilet independence characteristics to consider:**

\*Clothing should allow children to pull clothes on and off independently. Buttons, belts, snaps and other fasteners can make the process difficult and lead to an accident.

\*Children will wipe and take care of personal business independently at school. For the safety of your child and the teachers, children must be able to take care of personal hygiene.

\*Washing hands is an important part of the process, and children should be able to lather fronts, backs and in-between fingers to wash well.

## 10.5 Assessments

Due to the nature of Museum School as a developmentally appropriate, play-based science and history enrichment program, classroom teachers do not conduct social, academic or developmental assessments during the school year.

## 10.6 Clothing, Toys and Accessories

Children should be dressed appropriately for play with regard to a preschool environment (ex: washable play clothes). In order to fully engage in classroom activities, baseball hats, dress up and novelty clothing are discouraged. **Closed toe shoes are preferred**. Clothing should be easy for children to fasten and unfasten independently. Bloomers or shorts are recommended under dresses at all times.

The engaging Museum School classrooms feature a multitude of learning and play materials. Children are asked to leave personal items at home so that they do not become a distraction or get lost at school.

Pacifiers pose a health and safety risk at school and are not permitted.

## 10.7 Water Play

Water play tables may be utilized in the Museum School classrooms. Children are required to wash their hands prior to and after supervised water table play. Parents are asked to sign a waiver prior to their child attending class.

## 10.8 Snacks and Drinking Water

Due to the short nature of the Museum School classes, Museum School will not routinely provide snacks for morning or afternoon classes. However, parents will be notified when a special snack, relevant to the weekly topic, is being served. Parents will provide a reusable water thermos/bottle.

Children should bring a 6-8 ounce **reusable thermos/bottle of clear, unflavored water** to class each day, clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. Water bottles should be child size and easily accessible for the child to open independently.

**Children who will stay in an Extended Day class for lunch must bring their water bottle separate from their lunchbox**. Extended Day classes will have a designated snack time. Parents are asked to provide a snack in their child's lunchbox in a clearly marked "snack" (**disposable**) baggie/sack/container.

## 10.9 Lunch

Lunch will be provided by each child's parent/guardian for those children participating in the Extended Day classes.

- **All lunches must be free of peanuts or tree nuts.**
- Choking hazards, such as whole grapes, whole cherry tomatoes, popcorn, sliced hot dogs, and regular/jumbo marshmallows, are prohibited.
- Glass containers are not permitted.
- There is no refrigeration or heating of meals in a microwave; it is recommended that a cold pack be used in lunchboxes for foods that need to be kept cool.
- Children are encouraged to open containers independently. However, teachers will assist and/or cut the top off of a package as needed.
- As parents/guardians are providing the child's lunchtime meal from home, Museum School is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting the child's daily nutritional needs. Parents are encouraged to follow the USDA guidelines for providing milk and/or a dairy product.
- Lunch foods are limited to lunch time and should be an appropriate serving size for one sitting. Food that is not consumed will be disposed of and not returned home.

## 10.10 Birthdays

A child's birthday will be recognized on the day he or she attends that is closest to their birth date with a special birthday wish in the classroom. Favors of any kind are not permitted to be shared with other children in the class.

## 10.11 Animals

Health regulations require that no live animals – other than Museum animals, official guide/hearing/service dogs or registered animal therapy teams – may be in the Museum School building or classroom at any time. Museum School staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming in contact with a Museum animal and items used by that animal. Museum animals are required to have a statement of health from a local veterinarian.

## 10.12 Halloween

Due to the nature of Museum School, Halloween costumes are not suitable.

## 10.13 Field Trips/Excursions

In order to support the Museum School Philosophy and Goals, Museum School classes will periodically walk into the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History exhibits to enhance the preschool curriculum. Teachers will walk their class into the Museum. As Museum School is a part of the Fort Worth Science and History Museum, transportation is not required. Parents/guardians are required to sign the Field Trip waiver in the beginning of school year paperwork.

The Museum School Owl Classes participate in an educational end-of-year field trip to the Botanic Gardens. Transportation is provided by each individual child's parent/guardian; a separate Field Trip Permission form is distributed and signed prior to the trip in the spring. As this is a special occasion for one parent to attend and learn with their child, parents are asked to find child care for siblings.

## 10.14 Partnership with TCU College of Education

For many years, the TCU College of Education and Museum School have collaborated in offering a field experience for TCU students. Students taking the Introduction to Early Childhood course at TCU attend Museum School one morning a week for approximately six weeks each fall and spring semester to gain experience teaching in an early childhood setting. This is an excellent opportunity for future teachers, Museum School, and for the children in our program. There is no better way to learn the principles of child development and developmentally appropriate practices than to be in a classroom where it is so competently demonstrated.

## 11 FIREARMS AND OTHER WEAPONS

Law enforcement officials and security officers commissioned by the Texas Private Security Board who are trained and certified to carry a firearm may have firearms or ammunition on Museum premises while on duty. For all other persons, firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows, and other weapons are prohibited on Museum premises. (§746.3707 Texas Administrative Code)

## 12 GANG-FREE ZONE

As required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, it is the responsibility of the Museum School under the Texas Penal Code to notify parents that any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

## 13 PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

Throughout the school year, Museum School staff (*designated as **we/our***) may take photographs and videos of your child, both in the classroom and at Museum School-sponsored events. We may use these photographs and videos, for example, at special events, in promotional publications, and on the Museum School and Fort Worth Museum of Science and History (FWMSH) websites and/or social media platforms. Therefore, as part of the admission process, we provide the option for parents/guardians (*designated as **I*** in the statements below) to enter into the following agreements as designated on the Enrollment Form.

**Promotional/Social Media/ Publications:** I agree that Museum School and its agents may take photographs or video of my child both in the classroom and at any Museum School-sponsored activity, and that Museum School may use these photographs for any legal purpose related to the internal or external promotional and informational activities of Museum School and the FWMSH, including publishing these photographs on any internal or external Museum School or FWMSH website or social media platform and in printed Museum School and FWMSH publications. Museum School and its agents will never identify a child by name in a publication, on a website or social media platform.

**Procare**<sup>®</sup>: I agree that Museum School and its agents may take photographs or video of my child in the Procare<sup>®</sup> app so that I can see my child participate in daily classroom activities. I understand that my child may be photographed engaged in activities with other children and those photos may be shared with other families in the classroom through the Procare<sup>®</sup> app. These photos are taken through the app and are not stored on any one individual's camera roll.

**School Photos:** I agree that my child may participate in class and individual photos. I understand that the photos will be available for purchase on a password protected website, available to all families whose child is in attendance on the day of my child's class. I understand that no purchase is required.

*Parents/guardians have the option to Agree or Disagree to have their child's photo taken for **Promotional/Social Media/ Publications, Procare**<sup>®</sup>, and **school photos** on the Enrollment Form.*

## 14 CLASS LISTS

Parents/guardians have the option to allow their child(ren)'s first and last name(s) and primary email address to be distributed to families in their child(ren)'s class(es) for play date opportunities, birthday invitations, etc. Parents/guardians will indicate their wishes on the Enrollment Form.

## 15 MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

Museum School families may contact [membership@fwmsch.org](mailto:membership@fwmsch.org) to receive a 10% discount on a Fort Worth Museum of Science and History membership.

## 16 DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

Discipline is individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding and is directed at teaching self-control. Positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction will be employed.

Teachers utilize praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior and will remind children of behavior expectations by using clear, positive statements.

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child and no child shall ever receive corporal punishment or punishment associated with food. If a child does not respond to redirection or guidance, a brief, supervised separation may be used. It is the goal of all Museum School staff members for children to have a positive social, emotional and educational experience. The Preschool Director and teachers will partner with families to meet the needs of each child. However; Museum School reserves the right to deny participation in classes and activities to children who exhibit persistent behaviors which endanger themselves or the welfare or education of others. *Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Sub chapters L, Discipline and Guidance*

***Parents/guardians recognize receipt of this Discipline and Guidance Policy on the Enrollment Form.***

## 17 ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND WAIVER

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. As a result, federal, state and local governments and federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing and have put guidelines in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Museum School has preventative measures in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History and the Museum School cannot guarantee that your child(ren) and/or your family will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, attending Museum School could increase the risk of you and/or your child(ren) contracting COVID-19.

By signing this Assumption of the Risk and Waiver of Liability Relating to Coronavirus/COVID-19 ("Waiver"), I, for myself, and on behalf of my child(ren), acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that by my child(ren) attending Museum School, I, my child(ren) and/or those individuals on my Child Release/Emergency Contact list may be exposed to and infected by COVID-19, and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death. I understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at Museum School may result from the actions, omissions, negligence, or gross negligence of me, my child(ren) and others, including, but not limited to, Fort Worth Museum of Science and History and Museum School employees and Museum School participants and their families.

I, FOR MYSELF, AND ON BEHALF OF MY CHILD(REN), VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO ASSUME ALL OF THE FOREGOING RISKS AND ACCEPT SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY INJURY TO ME AND MY CHILD(REN) (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PERSONAL INJURY, DISABILITY, AND DEATH), ILLNESS, DAMAGE, LOSS, CLAIM, LIABILITY, OR EXPENSE, OF ANY KIND, THAT I OR MY CHILD(REN) MAY EXPERIENCE OR INCUR IN CONNECTION WITH MY CHILD(REN)'S ATTENDANCE AT MUSEUM SCHOOL ("CLAIMS"), HOWEVER CAUSED AND WHETHER CAUSED IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY THE NEGLIGENCE OR GROSS NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES (AS HEREAFTER DEFINED). I, FOR MYSELF, AND ON BEHALF OF MY CHILD(REN), HEREBY RELEASE, COVENANT NOT TO SUE, DISCHARGE, AND HOLD HARMLESS THE MUSEUM SCHOOL, ITS DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AND REPRESENTATIVES ("RELEASED PARTIES"), FROM THE CLAIMS, INCLUDING ALL LIABILITIES, CLAIMS, ACTIONS, DAMAGES, CAUSES OF ACTION, COSTS OR EXPENSES OF ANY KIND ARISING OUT OF OR RELATING THERETO, HOWEVER CAUSED AND WHETHER CAUSED IN WHOLE IN PART BY THE NEGLIGENCE OR GROSS NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES, AND WHETHER A COVID-19 INFECTION OCCURS BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER PARTICIPATION IN ANY MUSEUM SCHOOL PROGRAM.

By my signature, I agree, acknowledge and consent that this Waiver is fully enforceable, and is binding upon me and my and my child(ren)'s legal representatives, heirs, administrators, guardians, executors, successors and assigns. This Waiver is irrevocable and is binding immediately upon execution and cannot be modified, amended or limited unless agreed upon in writing by me and the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History. In the event any provision or part of this Waiver is found to be invalid or unenforceable, only that particular provision or part so found, and not the entire Agreement, will be inoperative. By executing this Waiver, I acknowledge that I have read the foregoing and fully understand the terms and consequences of the Waiver.

***Parents/guardians recognize receipt of this Acknowledgment and Waiver on the Enrollment Form.***

## APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM SCHEDULE

The following curriculum topics are subject to change.

### Museum School 2023-2024 Curriculum Topics

Date	3 year olds	4 year olds	5 & 6 year olds
	Rabbits & Raccoons	Frogs & Turtles	Owls
August 29-September 1	Meet the Teacher		
September 5-8	First Week of Class: Welcome to Museum School		
September 12-15	Rabbit	Body	Oceanography
September 19-22	Skunk	Brain	Oceanography
September 26-29	Opossum (SL)	Small Rodents	Prairie
October 3-6	Fish	Large Rodents (SL)	Prairie (SL)
October 10-13	Bat	Ringtails (SL)	Anthropology: Native Americans
October 17-20	Spider	Bears	Native American (Planetarium)
October 24-27	Snake (SL)	Weasels	Speleology: Cave
October 31-November 3	Squirrel	Arachnids (SL)	Cave
November 7-10	Turkey	Plains Native Americans	Urban (SL)
November 14-17	Native Americans	Southwest Native Americans	Urban
November 21-24	-----Thanksgiving Break-----		
November 28-December 1	Armadillo	Decomposers	Forest: Chain Reactions
December 5-8	Deer	Dog Family (SL)	Forest (SL)
December 12-15	Tree	Cat Family	Lone Star Dinosaur
December 19-January 5	-----Winter Break-----		
January 9-12	Coyote	Prehistoric Animals	Meteorology: Weather
January 16-19	Prairie Dog (SL)	Ungulates	Anthropology: Vaqueros & Cowboys
January 23-26	Farm	Cowboys	Geology: Mountains
January 30-February 2	-----Stock Show Break-----		
February 6-9	Dinosaur	Small Reptiles (SL)	Astronomy: Space
February 13-16	Lizard	Large Reptiles (SL)	Astronomy: Space
February 20-23	Earth, Moon, Rock & Sun	Backyard Birds	Planetarium
February 27-March 1	Planetarium	Birds of Prey	Ecology
March 5-8	Alligator	Earth Science	Ecology
March 12-15	-----Spring Break-----		
March 19-22	Raccoon (SL)	Planetarium	Desert (SL)
March 26-29	Fox	Amphibians (SL)	Desert
April 2-5	Bee	Plants	Biology: Pond (SL)
April 9-12	Bird	Insects	Pond (SL)
April 16-19	Ladybug	Texas Settlers	Wildflowers
April 23-26	Owl	Crustaceans	Pollinators
April 30-May 3	Turtle (SL)	Fish/Shark	Favorite Habitats
May 7-10	Frog	Sea Mammals	Botanical Gardens

SL=Science Lecture

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# APPENDIX B: DROP-OFF CAR LINE MAP

