

# **Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School**

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## **AHPCDS Administrative Staff**

**Alison Lanik, Director  
Frances Salazar, Assistant Director  
Liz Hernandez, Program Coordinator  
Claudia Stinson, Robinson House Supervisor**

**Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Dr. Richard O. Knott, Jr., Senior Pastor  
Phil Lewis, Lay Minister**

## **Our Mission Statement**

**The Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School (AHPCDS) exists as an evangelistic outreach serving the community on behalf of Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church. The Day School is a nonprofit ministry whose purpose is to provide children with a loving, secure environment for educational, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth. The staff & teachers of AHPCDS seek to witness to children and their families about God's love, therefore exhibiting concern for all children, families, and co-workers. We strive to demonstrate our faith and commitment to this ministry in all we do and speak**



**Dear Parents:**

**Welcome to Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School! This is an exciting time in your child's life, and I am happy you have given us the opportunity to share in it. We have an exciting year planned for your child. Our excellent staff brings fun, creative, and challenging activities into each classroom. As a Christian-based school, we strive to give your child exceptional care, and an excellent education, with a Christian foundation. Our low child/staff ratio permits us to identify each child as an individual and to better understand and meet their individual needs.**

**This handbook should answer many of your questions about our program. However, please feel free to ask for any information you do not find here. In case of policy changes, parents will be notified by email.**

**I thank you for this opportunity to share information about Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School and look forward to a wonderful year together. It is often said, Childhood is a journey, not a race. What I do know is Childhood is a small window of time to learn and develop at the pace which is right for each individual child. The staff of Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School is ready to partner with you and your child on this journey. We are ready for a year of engagement, fun and growth! It I my goal that your child learns to love school and love learning. Welcome to the AHPCDS family!**

**In His service,  
Alison Lanik  
Director, AHPCDS**



**In the beginning...** each child will react differently to the prospect of a new school year experience. We invite parents to bring their children for a tour anytime. Classroom visitation and Meet the Teacher Open House is scheduled each August before the beginning of the school year. If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to discuss this important transition with your child's teacher and/or office staff. We want to do all we can to ensure the success of your child's time at AHPCDS.

## About Us:

Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School provides care for children 8 weeks through 5 years of age, After-School Care for Alamo Heights ISD elementary-age children, and a Holiday & Summer Camp program for children 6-10 years of age. Our School Calendar runs from August through the next July. All full-time enrollment is a full-year commitment. There are no discounts for vacations or sick days.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, origin, sex, religion, or disability.

Hours/Days: AHPCDS is open from 7:30 am until 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. Curriculum classes begin promptly at 8:30 am; therefore, we request that your child is in their classroom by 8:30 am. Our policy is children **MUST** be in their class no later than 9:00 am.

Late charges of \$5.00 per minute will be assessed for children remaining at the school after 5:30 pm

## Admission:

Registration for existing families is generally in February for the following school year. In order for the registration process to be complete please return the following documents and pay the non-refundable fees (if applicable) to the school office:

- COMPLETED enrollment form (front and back)
- \$200 Registration Fee
- \$100 Supply Fee
- Special Event Fee (Varies depending on class)

Children must be re-enrolled each year.

Active Church members have first priority in registering.

Currently, enrolled students have the next priority during in-house enrollment, generally mid February for the following school year.

Siblings from currently enrolled families who are not already attending will have the next priority.

Before we open the registration process to the general public we will attempt to reach any families not yet accommodated from our waiting list.

Registration, Special Event, and Supply fees must accompany each completed application, or they will not be given due consideration. All fees are non-refundable. Days are non-transferable.

Families with multiple children shall pay full tuition for their youngest child in our full-time program, and the oldest sibling in our full-time program is given a 10% discount. There are no discounts applied to the Infant or After School Programs.

## Childs File

Please keep us updated throughout the school year with immunization records, special needs or diagnoses, current addresses, email and phone numbers, and any additional information that is pertinent to your child. The medical forms must be turned in prior to the beginning of school, complete with the doctor's signature and current shot record, AND a signed discipline and guidance form. For children ages 4 on or before September 1st, a Vision and Hearing test must also be provided. Children will not be able to attend AHPCDS without complete and current records.

## First-day Arrival/Departure:

Please drop your child off with their classroom teacher at the class doorway. For our infants in the Robinson House, you will drop them off and pick them up directly from the Robinson House. Please use the HiMama app to check in/out to expedite the process.

Please do not bring children to school after 9 AM unless it is for a doctor's appointment and is accompanied by a doctor's note. Only authorized persons 16 years or older listed on your child's enrollment form will be allowed to pick up.

If an unknown adult comes to pick up your child AND is on your list but unknown to the teacher, the individual will be asked for their driver's license/photo ID for identification. We do realize that sometimes emergencies arise; therefore, if someone other than those initially listed on the enrollment form will be picking up your child, please call the office that morning and email us with permission at [director@ahpcds.com](mailto:director@ahpcds.com) or [ahbcdayschool@gmail.com](mailto:ahbcdayschool@gmail.com) We will be also be asking for their identification to match your instructions. We will not be releasing your child to someone NOT on your list unless we have heard from you.

**On your child's first day of school**, we hope they would have had a chance to see the classroom, meet the teachers, and have a positive attitude towards school. Please drop off your child and visit with the teachers for a moment, confidently tell your child you love them and who will be picking them up, give them a reassuring hug & kiss, and then leave fairly promptly. If children struggle with separating it is often because they feel the parents' apprehension, or a parent might hang out too long. Generally, if a child is going to cry it only last as long as the goodbye and soon the child has moved on to activities and friends. Often separation anxiety is much harder on the parents than it is on their children.

## What to Bring

**Clothing:** Please send your child dressed for a fun and active day. A child's day may include messy activities or accidents that may call for a change of clothes. Every child needs a complete change of clothing to be left at school, in a plastic bag, with first and last name on the bag. Please remember to bring extra socks and shoes during toilet training. Please include a sweater and a short sleeve shirt due to changes in weather. This bag will be kept in the classroom until needed. When a change of clothes is necessary, the soiled clothes will be sent home in the bag. Please remember to supply another change for future use. Rubber-soled, closed-toe, and closed-heel shoes are suggested for play. Some boots, strappy sandals, and flip-flops. or "Crocs" are not safe on the playground and are discouraged. As a reminder, strings in jackets/hoods are extremely dangerous and not permitted at school, in some cases strings may be removed and returned to the parent at the end of the day

**Naptime Blankets:** (For Preschool and Toddlers, Only) Small blankets can be helpful to children at naptime. Blankets will be kept with the children's nap mats and sent home at the end of each week to be washed. Please be sure to label your child's blanket and nap mat.

Robinson House 12 months of age and younger Licensing prohibits blankets in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age. (Licensing standard 746.2415 (6) Soft or loose bedding such as blankets, sleep positioning devices, stuffed toys, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, and comforters must not be used in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age.)

**Lunch /snacks Lunch:** AHPCDS does not have the facilities to prepare lunch for the children. Please send 2 healthy snacks, and a prepared lunch and drink every day along with any needed eating utensils. Teachers do not permit children to share or exchange food items. AHPCDS requests 100% fruit juices or water for lunches and snacks. The 3- and 4-year-old classrooms do not have access to refrigerators or microwaves. Therefore, lunches should be packed with a freezer pack or items that do not require refrigeration or heating.

Infant and toddler rooms have access to refrigerators and microwaves. Be sure to mark your child's name on bottles/Sippy Cups/lunch boxes and/or containers you wish to have returned.

Please provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions. (i.e., lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat-free/gluten-free diets). For the safety of your child, we ask you to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instructions for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction.

Infants & Toddlers at Robinson House- Children at the house must also have all food items for consumption prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks, and juice bottles. Be sure to prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to assure that your child will not run out. Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a water bath prior to feeding. No bottles will be microwaved. All bottles must be taken home by the parents each night to be washed. Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Staff will mix baby cereal just prior to feeding. All unused food remaining after feeding will be discarded.

## About Our School Day

**Calendar:** An AHPCDS calendar will be provided to each family at registration. Classroom calendars will be sent home monthly indicating specific activities pertinent to your child's class and school. If changes to the calendar become necessary, you will receive an email, a hard copy, and one will be posted in your child's classroom. AHPCDS school year begins in August and ends the week before AHISD begins. There is no "summer break"; therefore, there is no tuition break during the summer months. **Closures:** AHPCDS follows the Alamo Heights ISD school calendar for all emergency, weather, or pandemic school closures. Please watch or listen to the radio for Alamo Heights ISD school closures to see if AHPCDS will be closed as well. We will do everything in our power to be open during normal business hours but there might be times we need to close early or not open at all due to severe weather, civil authority closures or other conditions. Should we close early it will be your responsibility to make sure your we need to close early or not open at all due to severe weather, civil authority closures or other conditions. Should we close early it will be your responsibility to make sure your child is picked up early. Tuition is calculated on an annual basis; therefore, tuition will not be discounted for any center closure, scheduled or unscheduled.

**Chapel:** Chapel is held every morning at 9:00 am in the Sanctuary for children 1 through 5 years of age. During this time, the children experience the love and joy of the Christian faith through stories, songs, and various age-appropriate activities. The chapel is led by AHPCDS staff. It is a special time together and gives the children a solid foundation for faith development. We ask that all children arrive prior to 9:00 am to walk with and participate in our daily chapel activities with their class.

**Outdoor Play:** Outdoor Play is a regular part of the daily routine. Children should be prepared to play outside every day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. Per the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children too sick to go outside should not be at school.

**Prayer:** Prayer time is a very important and ongoing part of our day. The children attend Chapel every morning. In Chapel, they listen to the daily Bible story, sing songs, and have a prayer for their day. During snacks and lunchtime, the children give thanks for their blessings. At times children will ask a teacher to pray for someone or something special. We take the children's requests and offer them up in prayer.

The prayer the children use at snack/lunchtime & you might want to encourage them to say at your dinner table is: God our Father. (Repeat) We thank You. (Repeat) For our many Blessings. (Repeat)

Amen. (Repeat)

## Curriculum:

AHPCDS uses the Frog Street Curriculum for Infants through Preschool 4's. Frog Street curriculum is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that integrates instruction across developmental domains and is aligned to the Texas state and national standards. The cornerstones of the curriculum include integrated lessons with a defined scope and sequence of instruction, social-emotional development using conscious discipline strategies, differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners including English language learners and children with special needs, and a joyful approach to learning. Frog Street centers around 13 thematic activity guides with activity choices categorized by learning domains: Language Development, Social-Emotional Development, Cognitive Development, Physical Development, and Approaches toward Learning.

**After-School program,** We provide time for students to start their schoolwork; as well as time to have fun with outdoor play, Bible stories, healthy snacks, and games in a Christian environment. Due to the limited time and

schedule, all homework may not be completed, please remember to check your child's folder and homework daily.

**Quiet Rest time:** All children participate in Quiet Time. TDFPS requires a minimum of two hours of quiet/nap time for all children after lunch. Teachers will do everything they can to make this time restful and a pleasant experience. Children are never forced to go to sleep; however, teachers require each child to stay on their mat and remain quiet so that others in the room may rest. After one hour of quiet time, children who have not gone to sleep will be allowed to have a quiet activity on their mats. As all the children begin to wake up, other quiet transition activities will be allowed. Each child requires a mat that may be purchased through the school office for \$30 or you may purchase a mat on your own. (No sleeping bags please.) Mats are sent home every Friday. Please wash and bring them back to school the following Monday.

**Animals:** From time to time, AHPCDS may have classroom pets that meet the requirements of Texas Child Care Licensing. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a visiting pet is present. Please do not bring personal pets on campus when picking up or dropping off your child

## Teacher Parent Teamwork

Please keep us updated throughout the school year with immunization records, special needs or diagnoses, current addresses, email and phone numbers, and any additional information that is pertinent to your child. There are some illnesses we need to report to the class to allow parents to be on the lookout for symptoms. We make every effort to maintain confidentiality when reporting an illness outbreak in the class.

**Conferences:** Parent/Teacher conferences are held for Infants up to our pre-Kinder 4's. The teachers work throughout the year putting together a portfolio of your child's development. Conferences are held twice a year - once in late fall, and again in late spring. All children are screened in the first month of their attendance. We use the ASQ, Ages, and Stages Questionnaires tool to assist staff on your child's conference. The teachers will set up conference times directly with you. Other than the portfolio review times, if you would like to visit with your child's teacher, or the Director, at length, please call the school office to schedule a conference time. It is difficult for a teacher to talk with you at length at drop-off or pick-up time because of their classroom duties and supervision of the children. We strongly encourage parents to sign up during conference times.

**Daily Reports:** All children will receive Daily Reports through the HiMama application.

The report consists of information on your child's general disposition, activities, food intake, lengths of naps, and diapering if applicable. Teachers will also notify parents of anything special that occurred during the day or any supplies their child may need. Check the classroom binders and bulletin boards for additional information pertaining to your child's classroom and school. Parents must sign the parent participation agreement before implementing the HiMama application. We use HiMama as our main source of communication between school and home.

**Parent Information:** Watch for parent information, important upcoming events, and articles through HiMana where you will receive the director's monthly newsletter daily notes and photos as well as announcements from the teachers.

**Parent Involvement:** AHPCDS has an open-door policy where parents are welcome to come in at any time during the day to observe their child without prior approval. We encourage parents to participate in field trips – for their

own enjoyment and for the safety of their children. We also have many events during the year that we try to schedule at a time convenient to our families and work schedules. Each classroom has two “Room Parents” to help with class parties, Fall Fling, and other class activities. If you would like to share an activity with the class, please partner with your child’s teacher and share

information about the day and time so that it can be included in the lesson plan. AHPCDS has the right to refuse service at any time to anyone.

**Potty Training:** Each two-year-old classroom has access to a bathroom with small, child-size potties. We begin potty training in our two-year-old rooms by the Spring of the school year only if the child exhibits readiness behaviors. Some children are ready earlier, and some might seem as if they are not interested at all. However, we have found that when several children begin to use the potty, they all want to join in. Staff will partner with parents to ensure consistency at school and at home.

**Discipline:** AHPCDS uses discipline as a learning experience and a way to self-regulate. Teachers will often point out activities/behaviors that they like to see to build self-esteem and encourage others to do the same.

AHPCDS must follow rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property. For example:

“I like the way Mary and Johnny have cleaned up their center! Way to go! Who else is doing an excellent job cleaning up?”

Redirection is another important classroom tool. Example:

“I know you would both like to play with the toy, so let us take turns. Mary, you may play first, and Johnny would you like to play with the blocks while you wait your turn?”

When positive reinforcement, guidance, redirection, and thought-provoking questions do not resolve the inappropriate behavior, the child may be asked to sit and watch for an appropriate period; they will then problem-solve with the teacher. No corporal punishment, humiliation, embarrassment, or punishment involving food, napping, or bathroom privileges is allowed in our school. If your child causes harm to themselves, others, or school property on a recurring basis, your child may be sent to the office. Parents must be involved in resolving behavior problems through communication and conferences with the teachers and Director. Enrollment may be terminated if, with reasonable efforts to stop dangerous behavior, a child continues to be a safety risk to themselves or others, including staff, or other children.

## Room Parents:

The responsibility of a room parent is very important and a well-appreciated role. Room Parents help teachers organize and plan class events. This includes classroom parties, organizing recognizing the teachers birthdays, any holiday giving and teacher appreciation week in may. It may also include purchasing party goods, setting up for parties, and field trips, and contacting other parents regarding classroom activities. Each class party has a budget we ask that any special event celebrations adhere to the budge for any reimbursable expenses. **We strongly suggest parent volunteers are mindful that a celebration is to enhance a childs understanding of the event, a book, an activity, all can enhance understanding, a fast food lunch does not**

We ask for two volunteers from each class. This is a wonderful way to become even more involved in your child’s time here at AHPCDS.



## Celebrations, Holidays & Class Parties

**Birthday Celebrations:** Birthdays are very special and may be celebrated by sending a special store-bought afternoon snack for the entire class on or near your child's actual birthday. Please decide with your child's teacher for scheduling and to prevent any allergy issues.

**Holidays:** A school calendar is provided indicating holidays and extraordinary events. Occasionally we must make changes due to unforeseen occurrences. Changes will be shared via email and through Hi Mama.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services prohibits the personal use of cell phones in classrooms. Please help us stay in compliance with this standard. Teachers are not permitted to use their cell phones on school premises, but you may always reach them through the school office. Please do not call or text teachers' cell phones during school hours, please call the front office.

### **Absences Illness-Injury:**

If your child is going to be absent, please let us know by sending a message on the HiMama app. There is no deduction in tuition for absences. If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the school. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis.

**Health/Illness:** When a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be brought to the school office until a parent/authorized person arrives. We want to separate children who are not feeling well to hopefully prevent the spread of illness. Parents should arrange for someone to pick up their child as soon as possible (within 30 minutes). This is for the health and comfort of your child and the protection of others. We request Parents pick up an ill child within 30 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 30 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for an alternate pick-up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occurs 3 or more times in a 24-hour period. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

Children excluded from the program due to fever may not return to the program until they are fever-free, without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or more. (100 degrees Fahrenheit for Infants)

**Infants:**

Due to the early age of our infants, our teachers will call parents if our infants have a temperature of 100 degrees or more and/or are accompanied by behavior changes including lack of appetite, diarrhea, rash, or other signs that the child may be exhibiting that indicate illness. If infants also exhibit any symptoms of severe or

illness, communicable disease, or are unable to participate comfortably in all activities teachers will also call parents.

#### Toddlers through After School Program

Teachers may give a courtesy call to share information if your child has a low-grade temperature but does exhibit behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness, such as lack of appetite. Below are the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) standards that prevent a child from staying at school or coming to school:

- Temperature of 100 degrees
- Symptoms of severe illness (such as lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting within the past 24 hours, rash w/fever, mouth sores with drooling, etc.)
- Communicable disease (strep, flu, lice, pink eye, impetigo)
- Unable to participate comfortably in all activities including outdoor activities.

If your child exhibits any of the above symptoms, a teacher or staff member will call, and you will need to pick up your child as soon as possible. Your child must be free of fever without medication and all communicable diseases 24 hours before returning to school. We ask for your cooperation in adhering to this request for the well-being of your child and your child's classmates. Please do not jeopardize the other children and our staff by sending your child to school if he/she is sick. (Please see Communicable Diseases Policy for additional information)

**Communicable Diseases:** If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. AHPCDS will take all measures to protect your child's confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, the reason for your child's absence from school. (See also Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Policy)

AHPCDS follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association and the National Resource Center for Health in Child Care and Early Education. A copy of this manual is on file with the Director and is available upon request or review.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. AHPCDS reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the Director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

**Illness Report:** An Illness/Ouch report will be filled out in case of an illness, minor accident, or injury. Incident reports will also include both injuries to a child or from your child. These reports will also include any behavior observed that needs your attention. You are asked to sign an acknowledgment of this report and will

be given a copy. In the event of a head or groin injury, parents are called immediately. If your child needs medical attention, we will immediately call 911 and then you. Every AHPCDS staff member is certified in CPR and First Aid. If an ouch report is filled out at school and you decide to seek medical attention after picking up the child, please let us know. School events that require medical attention must be reported to the State Licensing for review.

**Medication:** Prescription and non-prescription medicines must be in their original container with the child's name, date, directions, and physician's name. Over-the-counter medicine or vitamins will not be administered without written authorization from the child's doctor stating the frequency, amount, and medication name. Please sign the medication in on the Medication Form. All medicine should be given to your child's teacher. Medication or vitamins are prohibited in the bottle or Sippy cup. Please let staff know if you gave your child medicine in the morning so they are informed. Please let the staff member know if refrigeration is required. Medication is never to be left in a child's diaper bag, backpack, or lunch box. Our procedure is a state health requirement and a requirement of TDFPS.

**Immunization Schedule:** All immunizations must be current for your child to enroll and attend AHPCDS. Failure to keep children current on immunizations may lead to disenrollment. Parents especially our Robinson House families are required to provide the school office with updated shot records after every doctor's visit. Parents are required to keep the school office furnished with updated shot records.

**Vaccine-Preventable Diseases:** While the safety of our employees and the child in our care is paramount, we have elected to highly recommend immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases but make it optional to each employee.

**Biting/Behavior Incidents:** AHPCDS recognizes that biting is developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 ½-year-old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bitten or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations that provoke or elicit this behavior, so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom.

Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Children older than 3 years of age, may occasionally be involved in a biting or behavior incident. For children in this age group, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with the staff to help their children control this behavior.

Uncooperative parents may have their child's services terminated.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting/behavior incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of AHPCDS cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting/behavior incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

## Behavior/Aggressive Behavior:

If your child displays continuous aggressive behavior to themselves, another child, or staff or they have ongoing behavior issues, the parent will be called to pick up their child immediately. Aggression includes fighting, biting, licking, or uncontrollable behaviors that will cause a safety risk. If the behavior continues, your child will be suspended or terminated from our program.

Grievances: Concerns will always be addressed. We ask that your first conference with your child's teacher. If you do not find a resolution, please set up a time that is convenient for you to meet with the Director. If you do not feel that the matter has been resolved or properly handled, please talk with a member of the Day School Committee. We respectfully request that you do not discuss issues or concerns about children or teachers in the classroom or hallways. We want to respect all children, parents, and staff, and maintain confidentiality. We expect mutual respect and open communication between everyone. If blatant disrespect is displayed to our staff or administration, you will be withdrawn from our program. Please do not hesitate to discuss any matter at a conference. We are always looking for ways to improve our program and strive to maintain the lofty standards of AHPCDS and appreciate and welcome parent input.

Licensing: AHPCDS is a childcare facility licensed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS). We are licensed to provide care for 176 children. AHPCDS prides itself on maintaining a high rating with TDFPS over the years. Parents have the right to view the Minimum Standard Rules for Child Care Centers, licensing reports, fire inspections, health inspections, and all other official documents which ensure the safety and care of their child. All licenses and inspections can be found posted on the bulletin board of the school office and in the Robinson House. Minimum Standards may be obtained in the school office or by going online at [www.txchildcaresearch.org](http://www.txchildcaresearch.org). The child Abuse Hot Line is 1-800-52-ABUSE. Texas Department of Family and Protective Service Intake Line is (210) 337-3399.

## Emergency Procedures:

Inside each classroom door you will find the evacuation plan for the room. We have safety drills once a month to assist the child and staff in evacuating their classrooms quickly and calmly. Fire extinguishers are checked monthly, as are smoke detectors and flashlights which are in each classroom. A first aid kit is kept in the school office. In case of an emergency evacuation, we will relocate the children to Christ Lutheran Church of Alamo Heights located at 6720 Broadway (across from the Alamo Heights High School). The phone number is (210) 822-3394. In addition to fire drills, we also practice:

- “Duck and cover” drills - this emergency drill is for protection from high winds – as in tornadoes or hurricanes.
- Blocked exit drills – this emergency drill is during a regular fire drill. An exit is blocked on purpose and the staff/children must calmly and quickly find another exit route.
- Stranger Danger – in case of an unfamiliar or threatening person in our building, the staff moves into a lock downtime. Teachers/children remain in classrooms, doors are closed and locked, blinds are closed, and children are kept away from window areas.

**Gang-Free Zone:** Under the Texas Penal Code, 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 a harsher penalty. AHPCDS is a Gang-Free Zone.

### **Court Orders Affecting Enrolled Children:**

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) AHPCDS must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for a more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with the AHPCDS administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. AHPCDS cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, AHPCDS suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed. Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, AHPCDS is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of AHPCDS cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. AHPCDS will report any violations of these orders to the court.

**Custody Situations:** AHPCDS prefers NOT to get involved with custody disputes. AHPCDS will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order related to the custody of your child(ren) you MUST provide us with a certified original copy of the most recent order. PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS. As such it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents' information. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. If a custody dispute takes place on our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, AHPCDS has the right to terminate care.

### **Parent Code of Conduct:**

Please understand that young children are present. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. Please refrain from swearing or cursing on our property. Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated per the Texas Department of Family Protective Services. AHPCDS has the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian.

## Child Abuse:

All AHPCDS teachers are trained to recognize common signs of child abuse. **Under the law, we are mandatory reporters which means we MUST report any suspicion of abuse or neglect.** The abuse hotline is 1-800-52-ABUSE.

AHPCDS staff are REQUIRED by Texas State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or 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.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation except on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks, or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues. Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect: Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of AHPCDS are considered mandated reporters, under the law. The employees of AHPCDS are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at AHPCDS take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, and season.
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (i.e., car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child  Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time  Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child.
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

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](http://www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html) The statewide Abuse and Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400 if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect. If a child is questioned as part of the investigation his/her parents will be notified after the visit.

**Special Events:** Part-time children may attend special events for the event/party only, Regular attendance days can not be exchanged for special event days. Each classroom will have a room parent who will coordinate with the teacher for special event days. We **STRONGLY** encourage special events to be activities to enhance the child's understanding of the special event. A fast food lunch does nothing to teach children about the holiday or event.

**Supply Fee:** The annual supply fee covers the supplies in the one-year-old through the preschool classes for the school year. This fee also includes one tote bag and one t-shirt per child. Parents must indicate their child's t-shirt size at the time of registration. The supply fee does not include diapers or wipes. Our after-school families do not have a school supply list. This fee is non-refundable.

**Termination of Enrollment:** A family may be asked to leave the program for any of the following reasons:

- Determination that the program cannot meet the needs of the child or family.
- Lack of cooperation between parent, staff, and/or administration.
- Inability of parents/guardians to adhere to AHPCDS policies or procedures.
- Inability or unwillingness to adhere to payment plans.
- Continuous aggressive behavior displayed by child that poses a safety concern to themselves, other children, and our staff.

**Toys/Stuffed Animals:** It is very hard for a child to share his/her own toy. We ask that you leave all toys and stuffed animals at home or in the car. Exceptions are made for:

- Show-and-Tell.
- Items that pertain to the theme of the week
- Nap accessory

AHPCDS will not be responsible for damages or loss to toys brought from home.

**Tuition:** The Day School Committee of AHPC reviews and sets the tuition for the Day School yearly. Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month and late **after the 5<sup>th</sup>**. Invoices will be issued on the first of each month. Families can access the status of their account through HiMama. You will be assessed a \$5 per day late fee **after the 5<sup>th</sup>**. You are responsible for fees every month, even if your child is absent. If the tuition payment is one month late, the school office will send a written notification to both parents. If a payment or acceptable arrangement are not made with the school office in writing within seven days from the notice, the child shall be subject to withdrawal from the Day School. We do not pro-rate tuition fees. If a check is returned, a \$50 fee will be charged to your account. After two returned checks, you must pay tuition by money order or on HiMama. All fees are non-refundable. There is no deduction in tuition for vacation or sick days. Tuition will not be discounted for any center closure, scheduled or unscheduled.

**Late Pick-up Fees:** Picking up your child on time is extremely important. You must pick your child up by 5:30 pm. If you pick your child up after 5:30 pm, they will be in the office and a \$5 per minute late fee charge will be assessed to your account.

Multiple late charges are indicative that alternative hours of care are needed, and you may be asked to relocate to another center without any type of monetary refund.

**Vision & Hearing Screening:**

The Department of State Health Services requires vision and hearing screening within 120 days of admission for all children who are 4-years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>. AHPCDS requires written verification from your pediatrician or other medical professionals with the following data reported:

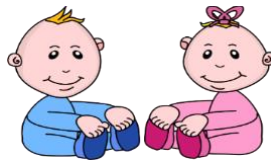
- Child's name
- Type of Screening
- Date
- Screener
- Screening results

**Visitors:** We are not allowing any visitors on our campus at this time.

**Water Play:** During the warm summer months, AHPCDS provides an area for the children to play in the sprinklers and splash in the water. During sprinkler/splashing activities child/staff ratios will be adjusted as required by the minimum standards. Permission for your children to participate in these activities is on your enrollment form. However, your child's water day will be indicated on the monthly class calendar. You will be given a reminder to bring a plastic grocery bag, swimsuits, towels, and water shoes for their special day. Flip-flops are not safe for children to wear for water play. Please have your children wear water shoes or a second pair of sneakers.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Two weeks' written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks. Parents who wish to change their child's days of enrollment at AHPCDS must submit a request to do so two weeks in advance of your proposed change. Changes are subject to availability.





**Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church Day School  
Robinson House Lambs  
Infant Program**

In June of 2007, we were fortunate to be able to establish the Robinson House, named in honor of Iris and Robby Robinson. The Robinsons have been long-time members of our Alamo Heights Presbyterian Church and are active in the children's ministry. With the establishment of the Robinson House, the school could offer infant care for an additional 10 children, bringing our infant program to 18 families.

The house provides a homelike surrounding for our little ones. The love and care of the staff are second to none. With low ratios, our caregivers can spend one on one time with each child-holding, singing, reading, playing, rocking, and nurturing the development of each. AHPCDS will provide a comfortable place with a seat for mothers to breastfeed their children if they choose to do so. Parents may also provide breast milk for their child to be served while in our care. Bottles and sippy cups must be labeled with first name and initial of the last name on all items per child care licensing standards.

We encourage our infant's parents to communicate daily with our caregivers regarding their child's schedule and individual needs. Upon arrival, parents are asked to make note of the last feeding and any pertinent information that will impact their child's day. We post each child's feeding schedule in the kitchen and ask that parents update it once a month or more as needed if there are any changes. A daily activity sheet though the HiMama app is sent

by the caregivers to enable you to share in your child's day, as well as to be informed of their activities, nourishment intake, diaper changes, sleep, etc. Daily reports and other communication can be found in the HiMama communication application or if requested in written format.

Loving, nurturing, and verbal communication is a major part of your infant's security. Bottles will never be propped. Mobile infants are fed in high chairs. Once they are walking, we provide a small table and chair for their lunchtime. This helps them to become more independent and to make a smooth transition into the toddler environment. Floor activities and other physical play promote the physical, social, and cognitive development of your child. Because infants are finding their motor skills, most objects will go directly to their mouths. We sanitize all toys and play areas daily. The entire room is cleaned and sanitized every day before leaving.

Crib padding, blankets, and stuffed toys are not allowed at AHPCDS because of current research on SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and Child Care Licensing Standards. All bottles and caps must be marked with your child's name. All food should be covered and marked with your child's name. Bottles and food will be stored in the refrigerator upon your arrival. A cubby is provided for your child's belongings.

If you are breastfeeding your child, we ask that you offer them a bottle at least twice a day before they begin their adventure with us. They will not readily accept the bottle, but please keep trying. We want to make sure we can give them all the nourishment needed during their day with us.

**(For Infants 12 months of age and Younger Only) Licensing prohibits blankets in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age. (Licensing standard 746.2415 (6) Soft or loose bedding such as blankets, sleep positioning devices, stuffed toys, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, and comforters must not be used in cribs for children younger than 12 months of age.)**

Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their child monthly, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when, and how much. Medication including vitamins may never be put in the child's thermos, sippy cup, or bottle per childcare licensing standards. Please complete a medication authorization form for all medication dispensations.

**Items to be provided and labeled by parents:**

Pre-made bottles.

Food (Prepared and ready for child to eat)

Bowl (with suction)

Diapers

Wipes

Several changes of clothes

Bottled Water (If your child is drinking water)

Pacifiers (If used)

AHPCDS provides launderers crib sheets twice a week or as needed.

Due to licensing regulations, medications may NOT be dispensed in bottles, including vitamins. Please do not ask our staff to add anything to the bottles it is prohibited by childcare licensing.

The phone number to the Robinson House is (210) 832-0244. Please feel free to call and check on your child any time during the day through our HiMama app

