



Parent Handbook



9002 Anderson Mill

Austin, Texas 78729



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Schola International

Welcome & Introduction

Schola International is a micro-school that incorporates the Montessori, Waldorf and Reggio Emilia philosophies, principles, and methodologies to create an innovative and unique learning environment. We believe in the intrinsic abilities and capabilities of children and strive to produce a better and kinder society in which human beings will respect each other and live-in harmony and peace. This vision will only come true if we allow children to develop their intellectual and cognitive abilities along with experiencing respect, kindness, and finding joy in serving other members of society. In Schola International our families find a safe place to let their children bloom into the beautiful human beings they are destined to become.

Our holistic approach to learning empowers children and encourages them to take charge of their own learning experience. Our students are encouraged to explore the limits of their curiosity and exploit their interests, transforming curiosity into a genuine hands-on learning experience.

We started as a learning pod and we have grown into a successful learning community where staff members and families, together, form a team committed to the nourishment and enrichment of a healthy childhood for our students, providing them the opportunity to explore multiple methods of learning. We are currently working to transform Schola International into a multilingual micro-preschool, where children are daily immersed into Spanish, English, and French environments.

We recognize the importance of bringing up emotionally healthy and resilient children, that is why we incorporate social-emotional learning in our daily curriculum ensuring our students are not only academically proficient but also emotionally healthy, kind, respectful and joyful human beings.



1. Philosophy and Mission Statement

Our Mission

To transform the lives of the children we work with, by creating a safe learning environment that feels like home and provides our students and their families with a loving family-like supportive network.

To maintain and encourage a learning environment that ensures high quality academic education as well as healthy social-emotional development in a multicultural multilingual setting.

To make sure our team has the best toolset to work with our students and provide them with every learning opportunity they need.

Our Vision

Enable our students to fully develop their innate capacities to become successful learners, confident and kind individuals, and responsible citizens by:

Providing a positive, caring, respectful and relationships-based environment

Ensuring we are always a place where your child feels safe and enthusiastically anticipates his day-to-day interactions and learning activities.

Nourishing students' curiosities and interests to prepare them for the bright future ahead of them.

Our Values

We strive to provide our students with a rich and nourishing environment in which they experiment first-hand our core values:

- JOY
- KINDNESS
- RESPECT
- COMMUNICATION
- INTEGRITY
- PARTNERSHIP AND CARE



Our School Philosophy

Everything we do is centered on each individual child. Our programs, our teachers, our parent communications, even our facility is planned with specific social, emotional, and intellectual needs of the children in mind. We recognize that these formative years are a critical time in a child's development. Based on their environment and experiences, the children will learn to trust and express themselves with confidence. We, as an extension of the family, provide an environment that is nurturing, warm, clean, safe and caring. We offer opportunities for the children to make choices that will enhance their naturally emerging skills, such as curiosity, exploration, independent thinking, and discovery through developmentally appropriate curriculum, materials, and methods. It is our goal for the children at SCHOLA INTERNATIONAL to leave knowing they are unique, capable, and creative persons who have the tools to explore their world confidently and understand their roles in it. Our teachers are skilled, educated professionals chosen for their sensitivity to the needs of children. We believe that regular, detailed communications between parents and teachers are important for consistency with home experiences. Therefore, an open and continuing dialogue with parents is encouraged and fostered.

Our Staff

At Schola, we believe a nurturing, supportive, and knowledgeable team is the cornerstone of a successful early-childhood experience. Our educators and caregivers are selected for their expertise in Early Childhood Education and their commitment to honoring each child's unique developmental journey. We maintain a warm, welcoming atmosphere where children feel valued and families feel confident and informed.

Our Goals

Our primary goal is to create a nurturing and loving environment where every child feels safe, valued, and cared for. We believe that early childhood is a critical time for growth and development, and we are committed to providing a foundation that fosters a lifelong love of learning.

Foster Emotional Well-being: We aim to cultivate a warm and loving atmosphere where children feel secure, confident, and understood. By promoting positive self-esteem and emotional resilience, we help each child develop a strong sense of self-worth.

Encourage Developmental Growth: We provide a balanced, developmentally appropriate curriculum that supports all areas of a child's growth—cognitive, physical, social, and emotional. Our goal is to nurture well-rounded individuals who are prepared for future educational success.

Promote a Love of Learning: We strive to inspire curiosity and a passion for discovery by offering engaging, hands-on learning experiences. Through play, exploration, and creativity, we help children develop a love for learning that will last a lifetime.



Support Social Skills and Cooperation: We emphasize the importance of positive social interactions, teaching children the value of kindness, empathy, and cooperation. Our goal is to help children build strong, healthy relationships with their peers and adults.

Partner with Families: We believe in working closely with families to support each child's unique needs and development. By fostering open communication and collaboration, we create a strong partnership that benefits the child's growth and well-being.

Our Objectives

Provide a Safe and Stimulating Environment: We ensure that our preschool is a safe, clean, and enriching space where children can explore, learn, and thrive.

Implement Developmentally Appropriate Practices: Our teaching strategies and activities are tailored to meet the developmental needs of each age group, allowing children to progress at their own pace.

Offer a Variety of Learning Experiences: We provide a rich array of activities that cater to different learning styles, including arts and crafts, music, outdoor play, storytelling, and more, ensuring a well-rounded educational experience.

Support Individual Growth: Recognizing that every child is unique, we provide personalized attention and support to help each child reach their full potential.

Create a Sense of Community: We aim to build a strong sense of community within our preschool, where children, families, and staff work together to create a positive and inclusive environment.

Our Curriculum Approach

At our preschool, we pride ourselves on offering a comprehensive curriculum that embraces three progressive educational approaches: Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, and Montessori. Our curriculum is thoughtfully designed to integrate the best elements of these methodologies, providing a holistic learning experience for each child.

Skills of life

All children are innate helpers, they are eager to contribute and engage in the everyday activities they witness at home. At Schola International we give them the opportunity to take part in those activities and practice their skills in an environment that fits their growing curiosity. Our Skills of Life work cycles and activities invite students to perform the same activities they see at home, during these activities the child develops concentration, independence, responsibility, sense of self fulfillment and executive skills such as: cognitive order, task organization, prioritization, flexibility; as well as fine and gross motor skills.



Our students' transit through different sets of skills of life beginning with Basic Life Skills such as pouring, cutting, and folding. Moving forward to applied exercises of self-care skills and environmental care. The final transition is towards Kindness and Courtesy where Skills of Life are seen in action in everyday social interactions; and finally, to Movement Control where through practical exercises students learn to recognize and control their body with both fine and gross motor skills.

Creative Expression

In Schola International we celebrate our students unique and shining personalities and strive to give every child the opportunity to create and express their individuality in artistic ways that will expand their creative horizon.

Through our Creative Expression Work Cycles, we encourage students to own whatever creation or activity they are engaging with; By doing this they are also learning to commit to their own work and choices, try out new ideas, discover new ways of thinking and explore problem solving in a fun encouraging environment and creative manner.

Holistic Education

In Schola International we nurture all aspects of our students' growing minds and bodies. We see each child as an individual eager to discover himself and explore and learn from the world that surrounds him. We encourage Experiential Learning, Self-Guided Learning, and community engagement by forming a strong network of committed families and teachers working together to help our children bloom into the wonderful, kind, and helpful human beings they are destined to become.

Open Air Learning

Outdoor Work Cycles are a fundamental part of Scholas daily routine. During these Work Cycles students are encouraged to engage in the outdoor world that surrounds them enabling them to grow their curiosity and discover new learning material. Connecting with nature and exploring all that nature has to offer is a continuous hand-on and full sensory experience which our students get to enjoy every day.

Language and culture

Language development is a vital foundation of our curriculum. Research shows time and again that the best time for mastering multiple languages is during early childhood. Children who are exposed to multiple languages during the early years of brain development are more likely to be proficient not only in language development and communicational skills but also in their social-emotional skillsets.



In Schola International everyday our students are exposed to three languages: Spanish, English, and French. Our three Lead Teachers are native speakers of each of these languages and their entire Work Cycle is given in their mother tongue, thus language acquisition is achieved through everyday fun and engaging learning activities that comply with our unique learning curriculum.

By nature, we are a multicultural learning environment and believe in the importance of nurturing children to embrace cultural diversity.

Academic Foundation

Being a micro school our small teacher to student ratio allows for plenty one-on-one time and permits the lead teacher to personalize Academic Learning activities to each students' abilities and work preferences. Through ongoing assessments, we make sure all students are on track with their age appropriate Academic and Developmental Milestones. Our excellent lead teachers create content and hands-on activities that allow students to enjoy their day-to-day learning experience at Schola International.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Schola International is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children and families. We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in a safe and nurturing setting.

In accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, Schola International does not discriminate based on:

- Race or color
- National origin or cultural background
- Language
- Religion or creed
- Sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation
- Age
- Disability or special needs
- Family structure or socioeconomic status

All children are accepted into our program based on space availability, age appropriateness, and completion of enrollment requirements.



Our curriculum and practices are designed to honor diversity and promote respect among children, families, and staff. We value the unique contributions each family brings to our community and strive to create an atmosphere where differences are celebrated as strengths.

2. Licensing & Legal Information

Schola International is a licensed childcare center and operates in full compliance with the standards set forth by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Licensing Division. These standards are designed to protect the health, safety, and well-being of your child while in our care.

Texas Child Care Licensing Information

Our program is regularly inspected by Child Care Licensing to ensure compliance with the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents are welcome to review these standards at any time by visiting the HHSC Child Care Licensing website or by requesting a copy from our office.

Facility License Number & Director Credentials

- Facility Name: Schola International
- Facility License Number: 1721241.
- Director of Record: Maria Alejandra Giraldo Arredondo
- Director Credentials: Over 12 years of experience in early childhood education and administration, meeting all Texas Director qualifications required under the Texas Administrative Code.

Parent's Right to Inspect Records

As required by Texas law, parents have the right to:

- Review minimum standards for childcare centers.
- Review the center's most recent licensing inspection report.
- Review the center's operational policies and enrollment forms. These documents are available in the front office upon request.

Contact Information – Child Care Licensing & Child Abuse Hotline

Parents may contact Texas Child Care Licensing at any time for information regarding our compliance or to file a complaint:

- Texas Child Care Licensing Office: 1-512-834-3195 (Austin Region Office)



- Website: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/child-care>

If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, you are required by Texas law to report it immediately to the Child Abuse Hotline:

- Phone: 1-800-252-5400
- Online Reporting: www.txabusehotline.org

At Schola International, we are committed to transparency and collaboration with families. We encourage parents to ask questions, review records, and participate in ensuring that our school maintains the highest standards of care.

3. Enrollment & Admissions

We strive to make the enrollment process as smooth and welcoming as possible. Our goal is to ensure that every child and family feels confident and prepared to join our preschool community. We are here to assist you at every step and answer any questions you may have.

Eligibility Requirements

Schola International welcomes children who meet the following requirements:

- Age: Children between 18 months and 7 years old are eligible for enrollment in our programs. Placement within classrooms is determined by age, developmental stage, and available space.
- Required Forms: Families must complete all state-required enrollment forms, including the Texas Child Care Licensing application, emergency contact forms, and parent agreements.
- Immunizations: Current and up-to-date immunization records must be provided before the child's first day of attendance, in compliance with Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) regulations. Exemptions (medical or religious) must follow state guidelines and be properly documented.
- Tuition Agreements: Parents must sign a tuition agreement outlining fees, payment schedules, and policies before enrollment is confirmed.

Enrollment Process

To begin the enrollment process, please follow these steps:

- Visit and Tour: We encourage prospective families to visit our preschool and take a tour of our facilities. This allows you to meet our staff, see our classrooms, and ask any questions.



- **Submit Application:** Complete the enrollment application form, which can be obtained from our office or downloaded from our website. Submit the form along with the non-refundable application fee.
- **Application Review:** Our enrollment team will review your application and contact you to discuss availability and any next steps.
- **Acceptance Notification:** If your application is accepted, you will receive an acceptance letter with further instructions on completing the enrollment process.

Required Documentation

Upon acceptance, you will need to provide the following documentation to finalize your child's enrollment:

- **Immunization Records:** Up-to-date immunization records as required by the Texas Department of State Health Services.
- **Health Form:** A completed health form signed by your child's pediatrician.
- **Emergency Contact Information:** A list of authorized individuals who can pick up your child, along with their contact information.
- **Parent Agreement:** Signed acknowledgment of our preschool's policies and procedures.

Transition Plans at Schola International

Transitions, whether they involve moving to a new classroom, starting preschool for the first time, or adjusting to new routines, are significant milestones in a child's early development. At Schola International, we recognize the importance of supporting children and families through these changes. Our transition plans are designed to ensure that every child feels safe, supported, and ready to embrace new experiences.

Transitioning Between Classrooms

As your child grows, they will eventually transition to a new classroom that better suits their developmental stage. We make this transition as smooth as possible by following these steps:



Advance Notice:

Parents will be notified well in advance when it is time for their child to move to a new classroom. This allows time to prepare both you and your child for the upcoming change.

Visit the New Classroom:

Before the official transition, your child will have the opportunity to visit their new classroom, meet the new teacher, and spend short periods of time with their new peers. These visits help your child become familiar with the new environment and routines.

Information Sharing:

To ensure continuity of care, your child's current teacher will share important information with the new teacher. This includes details about your child's preferences, strengths, and any areas where they may need additional support.

Gradual Transition:

The transition between classrooms will be gradual, allowing your child to adjust at their own pace. This might include starting with short visits to the new classroom and gradually increasing the time spent there until the full transition is complete.

Vinculation / Adjustment Period

At Schola International, we recognize that beginning in a new school environment is a significant transition for both children and their families. To support this transition, we provide a Vinculation/Adjustment Period designed to ensure that each child feels safe, comfortable, and connected to our community.

Purpose

- To help children gradually build trust with teachers, staff, and peers.
- To ease separation anxiety by encouraging bonding and emotional security.
- To provide families with opportunities to observe and participate in the transition process.

Duration

- The adjustment period typically lasts 1 to 2 weeks, depending on the child's age, developmental stage, and individual needs.
- During this period, attendance may begin with shortened days and increase gradually until the child is able to attend the full schedule.



Parent Participation

- Parents are encouraged to stay with their child during the first days, spending time in the classroom or common areas to provide comfort.
- The length of the parent's presence decreases gradually as the child begins to feel more secure.
- Teachers will communicate daily with families to share observations and discuss the child's progress.

Teacher Support

- Teachers implement strategies to help children adjust, such as:
 - Consistent routines and familiar rituals.
 - Personalized attention and gentle redirection.
 - Comfort objects from home (blanket, small toy, photo).
- Teachers track the child's emotional well-being and work closely with parents to address any concerns.

Flexibility

- Because every child is unique, the adjustment period may be shortened or extended as needed. Our priority is to ensure that each child transitions into Schola International with confidence, joy, and a sense of belonging.

4. Hours of Operation & Calendar

Schola International is open year-round with a few closures scheduled throughout the year. The closures include teacher trainings that support our continuous professional growth, and time-off for all to recharge batteries and spend time with our families. Our full-time staff give their best to our students daily; therefore, they are paid during all closures. Because of this, tuition is due monthly and does not change regardless of attendance or school closures.

School Hours & Daily Schedule

Schola International is open Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

- Core Academic Program: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



- Extended Care / After-School Program: 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Children follow a balanced daily routine that includes circle time, academic learning, outdoor play, enrichment activities, meals/snacks, rest time (for younger children), and social-emotional learning. Specific classroom schedules by age group are posted in each room and available upon request.

Holiday and Break Closures

Schola International observes most federal holidays and seasonal breaks. On these dates, the school will be closed:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (3rd Monday in January)
- Presidents' Day (3rd Monday in February)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (1st Monday in September)
- Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October)
- Veterans Day (November 11)
- Thanksgiving Break (Thursday and Friday of Thanksgiving week)
- Winter Break (last two weeks of December, reopening after New Year's Day)

A full annual calendar is provided to families each August and is always available on our school website. Families are encouraged to review the calendar carefully for additional information, including special events, early-release days, and school celebrations.

Severe Weather / Emergency Closures

- In the event of severe weather, Schola International will generally follow Austin ISD closure decisions.
- Parents will be notified via Brightwheel, email, and text message as soon as a decision is made.
- If hazardous conditions arise during the school day, parents will be asked to pick up their child promptly.



- Tuition will not be refunded for days closed due to severe weather or emergencies, as operational costs remain ongoing.

The safety of our children, families, and staff is our highest priority.

5. Attendance Policies

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- Drop-Off: Children may be dropped off beginning at 7:30 a.m. Families are invited to arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. so children can fully participate in morning circle and academic activities. Consistent arrival helps children establish routine and eases their adjustment into the classroom community.
- Children must be picked up according to the dismissal times you have selected: 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., or extended care until 5:30 p.m. All children must be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.
Staff will only release children to parents/guardians or other individuals listed on the authorized pick-up form. For safety, a valid photo ID may be requested at any time.
- Safety First: Parents must sign children in and out daily using Brightwheel, as required by Texas Child Care Licensing.

Authorized Release of Children

- Only those listed on the Authorized Release Form will be allowed to pick up a child.
- Parents must update this list in writing whenever changes occur.
- For the child's safety, no exceptions will be made. Staff will not release a child to anyone who appears impaired or unable to safely transport the child. In such cases, the director will contact the parent/guardian and, if necessary, alternative authorized contacts.

Late Pick-Up Policy

- The program closes promptly at 5:00 p.m. A late fee of \$1 per minute, per child will be charged for pick-ups after closing.
- Repeated late pick-ups may result in a conference with administration and, if unresolved, may lead to termination of services.
- We ask parents to plan ahead and allow extra time for traffic, weather, and other delays.



Absences & Notification

- Parents must notify the school by 9:00 a.m. if a child will be absent due to illness, family emergency, or other reasons. Notification should be made through Brightwheel, phone call, or email.
- For extended absences (vacation, medical, etc.), parents should provide advance written notice.
- Tuition is not prorated or refunded for absences, as staffing and operational costs remain constant.

6. Tuition & Financial Policies

At Schola International, tuition ensures the high quality of care, education, and enrichment programs your child receives. Our policies are designed to provide clarity for families while maintaining fairness and consistency.

Tuition & Fees

- Due Dates: Tuition is due in advance on the first business day of each month (or the first scheduled day of attendance for weekly plans).
- Accepted Methods: Payments may be made through Brightwheel (preferred), ACH bank transfer, credit/debit card, or check. Cash payments are not accepted for security purposes.
- Non-Refundable: Tuition secures your child's placement in the program and is non-refundable regardless of attendance.

Registration and Supply Fees

- Registration Fee: A one-time, non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of enrollment to secure a child's space.
- Annual Supply Fee: An annual supply fee is charged each August to cover classroom materials, curriculum resources, and enrichment supplies.
- These fees are separate from tuition and are non-refundable.

Late Payments & Returned Checks

- Late Payments: A \$25 late fee will be applied for payments not received by the fifth day after the due date. Continued late payment may result in suspension of services until the balance is resolved.



- Returned Checks: A fee of \$35 will be charged for each returned check. After two returned checks, families will be required to pay by credit card or ACH transfer only.

Withdrawal & Refunds

- Parent Withdrawal: Families must provide a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice prior to withdrawal. Tuition and fees remain due during this notice period, whether the child attends.
- School-Initiated Termination: In cases of non-payment, unsafe behavior, or violation of handbook policies, Schola International reserves the right to terminate enrollment. Outstanding balances must be paid in full.
- Refunds: Registration, supply fees, and tuition are non-refundable. Refunds or credits are not issued for absences, holidays, emergency closures, or illness.
- Extended Absences: Families wishing to hold a space during an extended absence may be offered a “holding fee” option (subject to director approval).

Payment Policy

You are responsible for the full monthly tuition even when your child does not attend Schola because of vacation, illness, or any other reason including forced closure due to public emergencies. This also applies to school closures for holidays and staff development (see our annual calendar). Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of each month if payment is not received by the 3rd an additional daily fee of \$30 will be charged until monthly tuition is paid in full.

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7. Health, Safety

The health, safety, and well-being of our children, families, and staff are our highest priorities. Schola International strictly follows the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards to ensure a safe and nurturing environment.

Daily Health Check Procedures

To help keep all children healthy and safe, staff conduct brief, non-invasive health checks every day at arrival and remain alert for symptoms throughout the day.

When Checks Occur:

Arrival: A quick visual and conversational screening at drop-off.



During the day: Additional checks if a child shows new symptoms, after naps, or following an incident.

What Staff Observe

- General appearance & behavior: alertness, energy level, unusual fussiness/lethargy.
- Breathing & cough: labored breathing, persistent or unusual cough.
- Skin & temperature indicators: flushed/pale skin, rashes, sores, signs of fever.
- Eyes/nose/throat: discharge, redness, sore throat, excessive drooling (not teething-related).
- Gastrointestinal signs: vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal discomfort.
- Injuries: new or unexplained bruises, cuts, swelling, or complaints of pain.

Staff may take a temperature or request more information if symptoms suggest fever or illness.

Arrival Decisions

Children must be well enough to participate fully in typical activities (indoor/outdoor) and not require one-to-one care beyond what is age-appropriate.

If a child appears ill or injured at drop-off, the child will not be admitted and the family will be referred to our Illness & Exclusion Policy for next steps.

If Symptoms Develop at School

- Separate & support: The child rests in a comfortable, supervised area.
- Notify family: We call the parent/guardian for prompt pick-up whenever exclusion criteria are met.
- Document & clean: We document symptoms and sanitize impacted areas per health guidelines.

Documentation & Communication

Staff record relevant observations in the family app and, when applicable, complete an Incident/Illness Report.

For any pre-existing injury noted at arrival, we document the location, description, and parent explanation.

Return to Care

Follow the Illness & Exclusion Policy (e.g., symptom-free for the required period without fever-reducing medication, or with a healthcare provider's clearance when indicated).



For communicable diseases, additional requirements may apply per public health guidance.

Hygiene & Safety Practices

- Hand hygiene before/after each check and whenever bodily fluids are involved.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces and materials.

Illness & Exclusion Policy

Children must remain home if they display any of the following (per Texas Minimum Standards):

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher within the past 24 hours.
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- Contagious illnesses such as strep throat, chickenpox, COVID-19, flu, hand-foot-mouth, or conjunctivitis.
- Symptoms that prevent participation in daily activities (excessive coughing, lethargy, unexplained rash).

Children may return when they are symptom-free for 24 hours without medication or with a doctor's note clearing them to return.

Parents will be contacted immediately if a child becomes ill during the day. Children must be picked up within one hour of notification.

Examples of Communicable Conditions & Return Requirements

- Head Lice: May return after the first treatment and no live lice or nits are present. If live lice/nits are observed, the child will be separated from the group and must be picked up immediately.
- Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease (HFMD): May return when fever has resolved, and the child can participate in normal activities (lesions may still be present). Doctor's note required stating the child is cleared to return and is no longer contagious.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough): May return 5 days after starting an appropriate antibiotic. Doctor's note required clearing the child to return.

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious condition: Inform the school right away so we can take appropriate precautions. We will notify potentially affected families without identifying the child.

Medication Administration Procedures

- Only prescription medications in the original container, labeled with the child's name, date, and dosage, will be administered.



- Parents must complete and sign a Medication Authorization Form for each medication.
- Non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications may only be administered with written parental consent and according to label instructions.
- Staff are trained to follow HHSC guidelines for safe storage and documentation of medication.

Immunization Requirements & Exemptions

- Current and up-to-date immunization records are required for each child, in compliance with Texas Department of State Health Services.
- Medical or religious exemptions must be documented using official Texas exemption forms.
- Children without current records or exemptions will not be permitted to attend until documentation is provided.

8.Operation Policies

Injury, Accident, and Incident Reporting

The safety and well-being of every child at Schola International is our top priority. We have established comprehensive procedures to effectively manage any injuries or emergencies that may occur during the school day. Please review the following guidelines to understand how we handle such situations.

For any injury that occurs at the preschool, an incident report will be completed by the staff member who witnessed or responded to the incident. This report will detail the nature of the injury, the first aid provided, and any further actions taken.

Parents will receive a copy of the incident report, and a copy will be kept on file at the preschool.

- All staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and will provide immediate care if a child is injured.



- Parents will be notified promptly of any accident or injury.
- An Incident Report will be completed and sent through the app. and provided to parents the same day.
- Serious injuries will be reported to Texas Child Care Licensing as required by law.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Schola International maintains a written Emergency Preparedness Plan, available for parent review, which covers:

- Fire Drills: Conducted monthly.
- Severe Weather Drills: Conducted quarterly.
- Lockdown Drills: Conducted twice per year.
- Evacuation routes designated safe areas, and procedures for parent notification are posted in every classroom.
- In an actual emergency, parents will be contacted through App, phone, and email. Children will only be released to individuals listed on the authorized pick-up list.

Emergency and first aid procedures

The school has an emergency/evacuation plan for response to fire and/or natural disasters. This plan includes procedures for evacuations for fire and sheltering/severe. weather, which includes an alternate location.

- A copy of the plan is posted in each classroom in the school.
- Director Office. Information on dates and times of drills are posted, this plan is available for review at any time through your director. The Director will go over these procedures with volunteers.
- First aid kits and fire extinguishers are in the school. Staff are the personnel who can administer first aid to the children. Should a child become injured, report it immediately to the classroom teacher.



Medical Emergencies

If a child experiences a medical emergency, such as difficulty breathing, severe allergic reaction, or loss of consciousness, our staff will immediately call 911 for emergency medical assistance.

Parents will be contacted right away and informed of the situation. If necessary, the child will be transported to the nearest hospital, and a staff member will remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives.

Emergency Contacts

It is essential that parents provide up-to-date emergency contact information, including phone numbers for parents, guardians, and any authorized individuals who can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Please notify us immediately if your contact information changes so that we can update our records.

Emergency Notification

In the event of any emergency, we will notify parents as quickly as possible through phone calls, text messages, or emails. It is important that parents respond promptly and follow any instructions provided by the preschool staff.

Fire and Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire or any situation requiring evacuation, our staff is trained to follow our emergency evacuation plan. Children will be safely and quickly evacuated to a designated safe area.



Severe Weather and Lockdown Procedures

In the case of severe weather (such as tornadoes) or other threats (such as intruders), we have specific procedures in place to protect the children. These include moving to a safe area within the building and securing the premises.

If the weather becomes severe, we will take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of children in our care.

The Director makes all final decisions regarding school closings.

When extreme cold temperatures and dangerous wind chill conditions exist, parents or guardians are responsible for making sure their child is properly dressed in warm clothing and to cover all exposed skin surfaces.

Parents or guardians are responsible of making the final decision as to whether their child should attend care.

Schola International does not have bad weather make up days.

Nap Time/Quite Time

Nap Time: For children who need a nap, we provide a designated nap time during the day. Parents are required to provide a nap mat for their child. Nap mats will be sent home every Friday for washing and should be returned clean on Monday.

Quiet Time: For children who do not nap, we offer a quiet time with calming activities such as reading, storytelling, and other quiet play. This allows children to rest and recharge while enjoying a peaceful environment.

Procedures for Handling and Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

- All staff are mandatory reporters under Texas law.
- Any suspicion or knowledge of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation must be reported immediately to:
 - Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

- Online Reporting: www.txabusehotline.org
- Staff receive annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect.
- Parents will be provided resources for prevention and awareness upon request.

Staff Training in CPR/First Aid and Texas Annual Requirements

- All staff maintain current CPR and First Aid certifications, including infant and child CPR.
- Staff complete the required 24 hours of annual training mandated by HHSC, including topics in child development, health and safety, emergency procedures, and prevention of abuse and neglect.
- At least one staff member with CPR/First Aid certification is always present, on-site and during field trips.

9. Nutrition & Food Service

At Schola International, we believe nutrition is an essential part of a child's health, growth, and learning. While our program does not provide meals or snacks, we partner with families to ensure that every child has the nourishment they need each day in compliance with Texas Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards.

Lunch Policies and Regulations

Throughout the day our students have two scheduled lunch times: a light morning snack and a lunch meal, both must be brought from home in a soft lunch box in containers that are easy to open and close. All items contained in the lunch box, including the box itself must be labeled in a visible place with the student's full name. Please refrain from any food that might represent a choke hazard, if the Lead Teacher determines that a certain food might be a choke hazard, she will remove it from the child's lunch box, and it will be returned to the parent or guardian upon pickup.

The morning snack must be one whole fruit or vegetable and one starchy dry food. In accordance with our core beliefs and learning philosophies this snack although brought from home is prepared by the students and the teacher in their classroom. Each student will peel, cut, and serve their fruit along with their starchy food. Some suggestions for the morning light snack are listed below:



- Banana and granola
- Tangerine and crackers
- Blueberries and plain pasta
- Avocado and multigrain slices of bread
- Strawberries and homemade pancakes

At noon, our students have their lunch meal, this meal must be more substantial than the morning snack and include one food of each food group. Since each child's feeding habits are different, we only ask that families restrain from sending prepacked snacks and no added sugar or food colorants. Please pack all food in containers that can easily be open and closed and include a hard-shell reusable ice pack if needed.

Some examples of lunch meals are listed below:

- Rice, cherry tomatoes, cottage cheese, chicken tenders.
- Cheese slices, pita bread, grapes, salmon.
- Pasta with meat, corn, and blueberries
- Crackers, avocado, hard-boiled egg, assorted nuts.

During both lunch schedules students are joined by their teachers and provided all necessary dishware, do not send cutlery or additional juice or milk.

Candies and or chips are not recommended.

When students stay after 3:00 p.m. they need an afternoon snack, too.

Meals & Snacks – Parent Provided

- Families are responsible for sending a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack daily.
- All meals and snacks must meet USDA MyPlate nutrition guidelines and be appropriate for the child's age and developmental stage.
- Per Texas regulations, food must be sent in labeled containers with the child's full name and date.
- Teachers will supervise mealtimes to encourage healthy eating habits and ensure safety.



Restrictions, Allergies & Special Diets

- Parents must notify the school in writing of any food allergies or special dietary needs and provide a signed Allergy Action Plan from the child's physician if applicable.
- Allergy information will be posted in classrooms and shared with all staff.
- Foods that pose choking hazards (whole grapes, hard candies, popcorn, etc.) are not allowed for young children as outlined by Texas HHSC.

Diagnosed Allergies & Allergy Action Plans

Family responsibility: Disclose all diagnosed allergies on the enrollment forms and notify us immediately of any changes.

Provider plan required: Submit a written Allergy Action Plan from your child's pediatrician.

Availability of the plan:

- Kept in the child's file,
- Posted in the main classroom, and
- Posted in any additional areas where exposure could occur.

Medications:

Parents must supply all required medications (e.g., epinephrine, antihistamines) in original, labeled containers—unexpired and in sufficient quantity.

Attendance:

If the plan or required medication(s) are missing or expired, attendance is not permitted until both are provided.

Birthday Parties and Celebrations

Our community loves to celebrate together, for this reason we encourage all families let us know whenever something has happened in your child's life that you would like us to celebrate as a



school family. We also put together a special birthday celebration ritual for each of our students it's important for us that you are present for his celebration. Please contact us at: info@scholainternational.com to schedule a day and time for your child's birthday celebration.

- Homemade food is not permitted, per Texas child care regulations.
- Be store-bought, factory-sealed, and labeled with ingredients.
- Holiday celebrations at Schola International reflect our multicultural and inclusive philosophy. Families may share cultural traditions, and the school ensures all children are included regardless of dietary needs.

Step-by-Step Process

Request a date/time Email info@scholainternational.com or text 210-556-4716 7–10 days in advance with your preferred date/time.

Director confirmation & distribution You'll receive a confirmation.

The Director will then share your invitation with classroom families (please don't distribute invitations yourself).

- Decorations (optional):

Drop off 1 day before the celebration (by 3:00 p.m.) at the school, clearly labeled with your child's name/class.

Keep it simple: a small banner, tablecloth, and 2–3 small décor items.

- Arrival on celebration day
- Please arrive at 11:30 a.m. to sign in and help us prepare your child's special moment.
- Typical celebration time is 20–30 minutes within the class schedule.
- Photos must follow our media consent & digital safety policies.
- Food & treats (optional, low sugar only)

If you plan to provide food, note it on your invitation.

- Choose healthy/low-sugar options (e.g., fresh fruit, veggie sticks & hummus, cheese, whole-grain crackers, mini sandwiches, water/plain milk).



- Please do not send cupcakes, cake, candy, soda, sugary drinks, or highly sweetened items.

Check with the Director about class allergens; when in doubt, avoid nuts.

- Non-food celebration ideas (preferred)
- “Birthday Book” donation to the class library (inscribed with your child’s name).
- Stickers, pencils, small notebooks, or a class activity (storytime, simple craft).

Clean-up & leftovers We’ll help tidy the space. Leftover items will be sent home with the family.

10. Curriculum & Daily Learning

Our curriculum is thoughtfully designed to meet the developmental needs of each age group, ensuring that every child receives an age-appropriate and enriching educational experience. We follow an annual curriculum map that provides a structured framework for learning throughout the year.

Curriculum Approach:(Montessori, Reggio, Waldorf, STEAM integration)

Age-Appropriate Curriculum: Our curriculum map is tailored to different age groups, ensuring that each child is engaged in activities that are suitable for their developmental stage

Annual Curriculum Map: We follow a comprehensive annual curriculum map that outlines the key themes, learning objectives, and activities for each month. This map helps guide our lesson planning and ensures a consistent and cohesive learning experience for all children.

Curriculum Integration: We create our curriculum into our lesson plans, aligning with our curriculum map to provide a well-rounded and balanced approach to early childhood education. This integration supports literacy, math, science, and social-emotional learning in a fun and engaging way

Weekly Lesson Planning & Integration: Alignment: Weekly plans align to the annual map and include whole-group, small-group, and individual activities


Balanced experiences: Each week blends teacher-guided lessons with child-led exploration, hands-on centers, outdoor learning, and reflection.

Daily Physical Activity

At Schola International, our daily routines are thoughtfully designed to balance structure with flexibility, giving children time for learning, creativity, exploration, rest, and play. Consistent routines create comfort and predictability, while teachers adapt the schedule as needed to meet the developmental needs of each child.

Daily Schedule (Sample)

- 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Arrival & Free Exploration (individual play, soft start)
- 8:30 – 9:00 a.m. Creative Expression (painting, clay, dramatic play)
- 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Snack (parent-provided)
- 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. Outdoor Play & Gross Motor Development
- 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. Indoor Gross Motor Play (parachute, climbing, music & movement)
- 10:30 – 11:00 a.m. STEAM Discovery (building blocks, sensory science)
- 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Montessori Cycle (practical life, sensorial, early math & literacy work)
- 11:30 – 12:00 p.m. Lunch (parent-provided)
- 12:00 – 12:40 p.m. Language & Culture (songs, rhymes, stories in Spanish, French, and English)
- 12:40 – 2:40 p.m. Rest/Nap Time
- 2:40 – 3:00 p.m. Wake-Up & Quiet Play
- 3:00 – 3:30 p.m. Snack (parent-provided)
- 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Reggio Emilia Exploration (art, nature, sensory projects, collaborative experiments)
- 4:30 – 5:00 p.m. Outdoor Play & Exploration
- 5:00 – 5:30 p.m. Extended Care (small group play, stories, enrichment)

 Note for Families This schedule is a sample daily rhythm and may vary slightly by classroom and age group. For more details, families can visit our school website to view



- The specific daily schedule for each classroom (Thales de mileto, Socrates, Pitagoras, Platon y Aristoteles).
- The weekly enrichment schedule (music, languages, soccer, Montessori cycle, Reggio Emilia projects, cultural celebrations).

Enrichment Programs (Music, Soccer, Languages, Art)

Music and Movement (Mi casa es tu Casa)

We believe that music and movement are essential for the growth and development of every child from birth. Music supports cognitive development, language skills, social-emotional growth, and physical coordination. For this reason, we are proud to have a licensed program to teach "Mi Casa es Tu Casa" every week at our school.

Why "Mi Casa es Tu Casa"?

Holistic Development: "Mi Casa es Tu Casa" is a comprehensive music and movement program designed specifically for young children. It integrates songs, rhythms, and activities that promote physical movement, coordination, and emotional expression.

Language and Cultural Learning: This program not only enhances children's love for music but also introduces them to new languages and cultures, enriching their learning experience.

Engaging Activities: Each session is carefully planned to include a variety of engaging songs and activities that align with our regular class objectives. Children participate in singing, dancing, playing instruments, and movement games that are both fun and educational.

French

We believe that learning a second or third language is extremely important for young children. Introducing new languages at an early age fosters cognitive development, cultural awareness, and communication skills. To provide our children with the best opportunities for multilingual development, we are excited to introduce a French language class as part of our curriculum.

French Language Learning from the Beginning:

Early Language Exposure: Our French class is designed for beginners, ensuring that all children, regardless of their prior exposure to the language, can participate and enjoy the learning process.

Engaging Activities: The class includes songs, games, storytelling, and interactive activities that make learning French fun and engaging. These activities help children naturally absorb the language while developing a love for learning.



Experienced French Teacher: Our program is led by a dedicated and experienced French teacher who brings a passion for teaching and a deep understanding of early childhood language acquisition. The teacher uses a variety of methods to introduce French in a way that is accessible and enjoyable for young learners.

Soccer class with (Soccer starts)

In partnered with Soccer Stars to include a soccer class in our curriculum! Soccer is a fantastic way to help children develop their gross motor skills while having fun and staying active.

Gross Motor Skills Development: Soccer involves running, kicking, and balancing, which are excellent activities for developing gross motor skills in young children. These skills are essential for their overall physical development and coordination.

Physical Fitness: Engaging in soccer helps children improve their physical fitness, stamina, and strength. It's a fun way to keep them active and promote a healthy lifestyle from an early age.

Teamwork and Social Skills: Soccer teaches important social skills, such as teamwork, cooperation, and communication. Playing in a team helps children learn to work together, share, and respect others.

Confidence Building: Participating in sports like soccer can boost children's self-esteem and confidence as they learn new skills and achieve their goals on the field.

Library

Our school library is a special place where children learn to appreciate books and literature. We believe in fostering a love for reading from an early age, and our library plays a crucial role in this mission.

Fostering a Love for Reading: The library provides a warm and inviting space where children can explore a wide variety of books, sparking their curiosity and imagination.

Story Time and Literacy Development: Each class visits the library at least once a week for story time and literacy activities. During these visits, children enjoy listening to engaging stories, participating in interactive read-alouds, and discussing their favorite books.

Building Early Literacy Skills: Our library sessions are designed to help children develop essential literacy skills, such as listening comprehension, vocabulary, and a sense of narrative. These foundational skills are crucial for their future academic success.

11. Behavior Guidance & Discipline Policy

At Schola International we trust working with children's stimulating behavior as an integral aspect of our job. The word discipline has, as its root meaning, "education" or "training." This meaning, rather than punishment, is the foundation for our approach to guiding children's behavior.

We accept that young children will sometimes show their emotions or try to achieve their goals in unproductive or undeveloped ways. That is simply part of being very young. Much of children's most valuable learning, especially in a group setting, occurs during behavioral problem solving. The approaches we use vary by age group, but have the following elements in common

Positive Guidance Approach (Conscious Discipline & Positive Discipline)

All caregivers are required to use "positive discipline" with each child. Positive discipline is an ongoing process of helping children to develop self-control for self-management while protecting and maintaining the integrity of the child.

When implementing "positive" discipline, all caregivers are required to do the following:

- The caregiver must communicate to children using positive statements
- The caregiver will encourage children, with adult guidance and support, to use their own words and solutions to resolve their own interpersonal conflicts.
- The caregiver will communicate with children by getting down to their eye level, and talking to them in a calm, quiet manner about what behavior is expected.
- If the behavior problems persist, the caregiver will initiate one or both of the following steps

Guidance Through Connection

At Schola International, we believe discipline is not about punishment, but about teaching, guiding, and supporting children as they learn to manage their emotions and behavior. When challenges arise, our caregivers use Connection Time as an opportunity to help children feel safe, express their feelings, and practice problem-solving skills.

Connection Time

- Connection Time means that a caregiver spends one-on-one time with the child in a calm and nurturing manner.
- The caregiver may gently guide the child to a quieter or different area of the classroom to reduce stimulation.
- During this time, the child is encouraged to:



- Express their feelings.
- Regain calm through breathing, comfort, or rest.
- Redirect their energy into another positive activity.

Prohibited Discipline Practices

At Schola International, we believe in positive guidance, conscious discipline, and respectful redirection to support children's social and emotional growth. In accordance with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards, the following discipline practices are strictly prohibited and will never be used by staff under any circumstances:

- Corporal punishment of any kind, including spanking, slapping, pinching, shaking, or hitting.
- Humiliation, shaming, or threats, including verbal abuse, sarcasm, or harsh criticism.
- Depriving children of food, rest, or bathroom use as a form of punishment.
- Seclusion or isolation in a locked or closed room, closet, or any area where the child is not supervised.
- Physical restraint, except when it is necessary to protect the child or others from immediate harm.
- Assigning physically painful, frightening, or harmful tasks as a consequence.
- Interfering with a child's daily needs, such as comfort items, assistance with toileting, or developmental supports.
- Discrimination or unequal treatment based on race, language, culture, ability, gender, or family background.

All staff are trained annually in positive discipline methods approved by Texas HHSC. Parents can be confident that discipline at Schola International is always focused on teaching, guidance, and emotional safety, never on punishment.

Schola International caregivers are trained to recognize each child as an individual whose personal privacy, choice of activities, and cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds are respected. Our curriculum and adult's interaction are responsive to individual differences in ability and interests.

Our goal is to design interactions and activities to develop children's positive feelings toward learning. Our caregivers will provide your child with many opportunities to develop social skills,



such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking with others to solve interpersonal conflicts. We strive to help each child develop and maintain the following.

- Being responsible for yourself
- Respecting the rights of others
- Respecting the property of others
- Being in the appropriate place at the appropriate time
- Using appropriate language

Use your “inside voice” when speaking to the children. Remember, it is not always.

WHAT you say but HOW you say it. Your tone of voice should reflect respect for the children and concern for their well-being. “No” and “Don’t” are not Schola words. Use positive statements to obtain the behavior you are seeking. For example, instead of “Don’t run,” try “Use your walking.

feet” Instead of “Don’t throw rocks,” try “Let us leave the rocks on the ground”. You are a role model for the children. Using “Please” and “Thank You” as much as possible will teach them to use these positive words, too.

Conflict Resolution & Family Support

In Schola International we understand that children are learning how to interact with the world and with each other, they are constantly developing their skill sets and practicing them in their day-to-day interactions. For this reason, we provide them with a safe environment in which Conflict Resolution and Self-Control strategies are practiced every day in a positive and calm manner.

In the event of a conflict that leads a student to an emotional upset and/or hurtful reaction, the Teacher will help the child navigate the emotion and once he is calm, the teacher will help him practice the skill needed to successfully resolve the conflict.

At school’s info app note describing the event in an objective way will be given to the parents of the children involved, this note will describe the situation and the resolution provided along with strategies or skills to practice at home. Please review this note in a calm positive environment and help your child practice the strategies and skills suggested.



This note is confidential, and it is intended to create consistency between the school and parents on helping children develop their conflict resolution skills. Alignment between school and family is extremely important for the children's success in developing a healthy skillset. These notes are not a negative report on the students record but rather a way to keep parents informed and engaged with their child's social-emotional development.

12. Parent Communication & Involvement

Procedures for Parents to Discuss Concerns with the Director

We encourage open communication between parents and the director. If you have any concerns or questions, please:

- Schedule a meeting with the director by calling or emailing the office.
- Discuss your concerns in a calm and respectful manner.
- The director will work with you to find a resolution and will follow up as necessary.

Parent Communication System (Apps, newsletters, meetings)

- Each student's learning experience is unique and will be tracked and communicated as follows:
- Daily Activities & messages are registered and sent through APP.
- A monthly work portfolio will be sent home at the end of month. Please note that not all work portfolios will contain the same materials; Since learning is an individual process the final work product of each month might differ from child to child.

Parental Responsibilities

- Provide Accurate Information: Ensure that all emergency contact information is current and accurate.
- Communicate Special Needs: Inform the preschool of any medical conditions, allergies, or special needs your child may have, and provide necessary medications or instructions.
- Respond Promptly: In case of an emergency, please respond to calls or messages from the preschool as quickly as possible.



Parent Code of Conduct

Standards of Conduct: All Parents/Guardians and Volunteers will:

- Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
- Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and staff members.
- Not allow a child to be left alone or unsupervised while under their care.
- Use positive methods of child guidance and not engage in corporal punishment, emotional, or physical abuse, or humiliation; not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs: do not bind or tie a child to restrict movement or tape a child's mouth; use physical activity or outdoor time as a punishment or reward.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon the program's reputation and upon the children and families the program serves.
- Compliance with Code of Conduct is the responsibility of teachers, parents/guardians, volunteers, or anyone else involved with the program. To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible learning environment, the school expects parents/guardians to follow this Parent Code of Conduct.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable. The following are some examples of violations of rules of conduct.

- Threats to staff, parents, or children.
- Physical or verbal punishment of a child
- Swearing or cursing
- Smoking
- Quarreling, verbal fighting, loud shouting, and display of anger
- Bringing drugs, alcohol or weapons to program sites or events
- Physical violence
- Inappropriate or excessive displays of physical affection between adults



- Inappropriate dress, including for example, low-cut tops, bare midriff or clothes with words or pictures inappropriate for young children.

Procedures to Visit the Center Without Securing Prior Approval

Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time during operating hours without prior approval.

What Our Open Door Policy Means

- **Welcome Anytime:** Parents and guardians are welcome to visit our preschool at any time during our operating hours, without the need for prior notice or appointment. Whether you want to observe your child in the classroom, participate in activities, or simply check in, our doors are always open to you.
- **Transparency:** We believe in transparency in all aspects of our preschool operations. By maintaining an open-door policy, we demonstrate our commitment to providing a safe, nurturing, and high-quality learning environment. You can feel confident knowing that you are always welcome to see firsthand what your child is experiencing throughout the day.
- **Communication:** Our open-door policy also extends to communication. We encourage parents to speak with teachers or the director at any time if they have questions, concerns, or feedback. We are here to listen and work together to ensure the best experience for your child.

Guidelines for Visits

While we have an open-door policy, we do ask that parents and guardians follow a few simple guidelines to ensure that visits are beneficial for both the children and the classroom environment:

- **Respect Classroom Routines:** When visiting, please be mindful of the classroom schedule and activities in progress. This helps maintain a stable and uninterrupted learning environment for all children.
- **Check-In Procedure:** Upon arrival, please check in at the front desk. This ensures that our staff is aware of all visitors in the building and helps us maintain a safe environment.
- **Limited Disruption:** While we welcome your presence, we ask that visits be conducted in a way that minimizes disruption to the children's activities. This allows your child and others to stay focused and engaged in their learning.



Parental Involvement in Transitions

We believe that parents play a crucial role in supporting their child through transitions. We encourage you to:

- **Communicate:** Share any concerns or observations with us so we can address them together.
- **Participate:** Be involved in transition activities and discussions to help your child feel more secure.
- **Support:** Reinforce the positive aspects of the transition at home and provide reassurance and encouragement.

End-of-Day Communication

We value open communication with parents and will provide brief updates on your child's day during pick-up. For more in-depth conversations, please schedule a time to speak with the teacher or director.

13. Digital Media & Screen Time

Limited Screen Use Policy

At Schola International, we believe that children learn best through hands-on exploration, play, creativity, and social interaction. Screen time is not a routine part of our program and will only be used in limited, purposeful ways that support our curriculum and align with the Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards.

When Screens May Be Used

- **Educational Content Only:** Short, age-appropriate videos or interactive tools directly connected to the classroom theme or lesson.
- **Weather Contingency:** On rare occasions when outdoor play is not possible due to severe weather, an educational video or interactive learning activity may be used as a supplement.

Limitations



- Age-Appropriate: Content is carefully selected and previewed by staff to ensure it is suitable, educational, and culturally inclusive.
- Time Limits: Screen time will not exceed 15–20 minutes per session, no more than twice per week for children age 2 and older. Children under 2 years of age will not be exposed to screens, in alignment with pediatric and licensing guidelines.
- Active Engagement: All screen use is interactive and teacher-led. Staff will pause, discuss, and encourage participation to reinforce learning.

What We Do Not Use Screens For

- No TV shows, cartoons, or non-educational entertainment.
- No passive screen viewing.
- No use of personal devices such as tablets, phones, or handheld games brought from home.

Digital Safety Policies

To protect children’s privacy and meet Texas Child Care Regulation (CCR) and applicable laws, our program sets the following rules for all digital technology used on site or during program activities. Parents have the right to access information about their child and our policies. Legal Information Institute

Devices & Access Control

Program-issued devices only. Only school-issued tablets, or cameras may be used to photograph or record children. Personal devices (staff or visitors) may not be used in classrooms, playgrounds, restrooms, or any child-care area.

Account security. Program devices use unique staff logins, passcodes, and auto-lock; two-factor authentication is required where available.

Data segregation. No child images or videos may be downloaded to personal accounts, apps, or storage. Photos/videos that include children are confidential records and must be protected from disclosure except as permitted by law/policy. Texas Health and Human Services

Photo/Video Capture Protocols (Non-CCTV)

Educational purpose only. Images/videos are taken solely to document learning, daily activities, or program events—never for personal use or staff social media.



Designated apps. Staff use only approved, school-managed apps to capture and share with families.

Prohibited locations. No recording in bathrooms, changing/diapering areas, or any space where a person has a reasonable expectation of privacy (Texas Penal Code §21.15).

Audio limits. We do not make audio recordings of children or families unless required for a specific program purpose and permitted by law. (Texas is a one-party consent state for audio, but recording others without consent may violate §16.02.)

Parental Consent for Digital Content

Written consent required. We obtain parent/guardian consent at enrollment (and annually thereafter) for: classroom documentation shared privately with the child's family; internal staff training use; and any external use (website, brochures).

Opt-out respected. Children without media consent are tagged in our system; staff must avoid capturing or must mask identity (e.g., crop/blur).

Online services. If any online service collects children's personal information (e.g., name, photo, voice) we provide notice and obtain verifiable parental consent consistent with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA).

Parent rights. Parents may review their child's records and request corrections/deletions consistent with CCR record rules and our retention schedule.

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) Guidelines

Purpose. CCTV is for safety, security, and incident review; it never replaces active supervision or required ratios.

Placement. Cameras are installed only in common program areas (e.g., classrooms, hallways, playgrounds). No cameras in bathrooms, diapering/changing areas, or any location with an expectation of privacy (Texas Penal Code §21.15).

Audio. CCTV is configured as video-only unless otherwise permitted by law and authorized by the director; secret audio recording is prohibited (Penal Code §16.02).

Notice. We post signage at entrances and affected rooms indicating video monitoring.

Access & review. Access to footage is limited to the director (or designee) for safety, compliance, or law-enforcement purposes; requests by parents are handled per our records policy and applicable law



Retention. Footage is retained up to 30 days and then overwritten unless preserved for an incident, investigation, or legal request.

Digital Media in the Classroom (Children's Screen Use)

If screens are used as part of curriculum, we follow CCR limits: no screen time under age 2; for older children, screen activities may supplement—not replace—learning and are limited in duration per §746.2207.

Water Activities

Supervised water activities will take place throughout the school year. All potential bodies of water will always be emptied when unused or unsupervised; and all students will always be supervised while conducting water activities. If a student's clothing gets wet during these activities a dry change of clothes will be provided and the wet set will be sent home in a Ziplock bag upon pickup. Please make sure to always keep your child's supply box replenished with items that are the correct size for your child.

Scope. "Water activities" include water tables/sensory bins, sprinkler/splash play, wading/splashing pools, swimming pools, and off-site aquatic activities. All standing water is emptied immediately after use and equipment is stored out of children's reach. Wading pools are drained at least daily, sanitized, and stored so they cannot hold water. Sprinklers are never used on hard, slippery surfaces and are stored when not in use. Legal Information Institute+1

14. Personal Belongings & Dress Code

At Schola International, we want every child to feel safe, comfortable, and ready to learn through play and exploration. To support this, we ask families to follow our guidelines for personal belongings and dress.

Upon enrollment each student will be provided two Schola International short sleeve polo shirts (If needed, more can be purchased at the cost of \$15 per shirt). These are used on the first Friday of each month. "Schola Sparks", as well as when desired.

Comfort and Mobility

Children should wear comfortable clothing that allows for easy movement and active play. Please choose outfits that your child can move freely in, whether they are running, climbing, or sitting on the floor.

Avoid clothing with tight waistbands, stiff fabrics, or items that may restrict movement.



Weather-Appropriate Attire

Warm Weather: In warmer months, lightweight, breathable fabrics such as cotton are recommended. Please ensure that your child wears a hat or cap for sun protection during outdoor play, and apply sunscreen before arrival.

Cool Weather: During cooler months, dress your child in layers that can be easily added or removed as needed. Please include a warm jacket, hat, and gloves for outdoor play.

Rainy Days: On rainy days, please send your child with a waterproof raincoat and appropriate footwear, such as rain boots.

Footwear

For safety and comfort, children should wear closed-toe shoes with non-slip soles, such as sneakers or athletic shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, or shoes with heels are not recommended, as they can pose a tripping hazard during active play.

Please ensure that your child's shoes are easy for them to put on and take off independently.

Independence

Choose clothing that your child can manage on their own, especially for bathroom breaks. Elastic waistbands, Velcro fastenings, and easy-to-use zippers can help your child develop independence and self-care skills.

Avoid clothing with complicated buttons, belts, or suspenders that may be difficult for your child to manage on their own.

Extra Clothing

Please provide an extra set of clothing (including underwear and socks) to be kept at the preschool in case of spills, accidents, or messy activities. Ensure that all items are labeled with your child's name and are stored in a labeled bag.

Labeling

To prevent lost or mixed-up items, please label all clothing, jackets, shoes, and accessories with your child's name. This includes extra clothing stored at the preschool.

Special Considerations

Art and Messy Play: Many of our activities involve art, sensory play, or other messy materials. While we provide smocks or aprons for particularly messy activities, we recommend that children wear clothing that can get dirty without concern.



Seasonal Changes: As the seasons change, please update your child's extra clothing set to match the current weather. For example, replace summer items with warmer layers as we transition into fall and winter.

Cultural and Religious Attire: We respect and welcome cultural and religious attire at our preschool. If your child wears specific clothing or head coverings for cultural or religious reasons, please let us know if there are any special care or handling instructions.

What Not to Wear

To ensure safety and comfort, we ask that children do not wear:

Jewelry, such as necklaces, bracelets, or earrings that dangle, which could get caught or cause injury during play.

Clothing with drawstrings or cords that could pose a choking hazard.

Shoes with wheels (Heelys) or any footwear that could cause slips or falls.

Parental Responsibility

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child arrives at preschool in appropriate clothing each day. We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines, which help us create a safe, comfortable, and engaging environment for all children.

What to Bring

- **Extra Clothing:** At least one complete change of clothes (including socks and underwear), labeled with your child's name. Seasonal items (jackets, hats, rain gear) should also be provided as needed.
- **Nap Items:** A small blanket and comfort item (such as a stuffed toy), if your child naps at school. All nap items must be labeled and taken home weekly for washing.
- **Lunch & Snacks:** Families are responsible for providing daily lunch and snacks (see Nutrition & Food Service section). Please label all food containers.
- **Water Bottle:** A refillable water bottle labeled with your child's name.

Prohibited Items

To keep our environment safe, peaceful, and focused on learning, the following items may not be brought to school:

- Toys from home (except for special show-and-tell days or with teacher approval).



- Electronics, including phones, tablets, or handheld games.
- Money, candy, gum, or small objects that may be choking hazards.
- Weapons, toy weapons, or items that promote aggressive play.

Dress Code for Play & Outdoor Activities

Our program emphasizes active play, outdoor learning, and creative expression every day. Please dress your child in:

- Comfortable, washable clothing suitable for play, art, and exploration. Clothing may get messy with paint, dirt, or water.
- Closed-toe shoes with rubber soles (sneakers are best). Sandals, flip-flops, or open-toe shoes are not permitted for safety reasons.
- Weather-appropriate layers (coats, hats, gloves, or rain jackets) to ensure children can play outside in all safe conditions.
- Clothing that allows independence with toileting and self-care.

We recommend labeling all clothing and personal items with your child's name to prevent mix-ups.

15. Supply List

The following items are required and will be stored in your child's personal box at Schola International. Please be sure to label all items* with your child's full name in a visible place. When an item has been needed and used in school, i.e. if your child used one set of clothing packed in the supply set, be sure to restock as soon as possible. Our staff will periodically check each child supply box and a note will be sent home if there is any item that needs to be restocked.

- Two full changes of clothes: t-shirts, pants, socks, underwear, and sweater if in winter.
- Reusable water bottle that does not have a hard straw in it, and the child can use it independently.
- Sunscreen and child safe insect repellent
- Two large packets of baby wipes per month (average of 200 wipes per month)



- Preferred diapers if needed, pull ups are not recommended. (Only potty training)
- For students who are enrolled full time: a soft blanket & pillow**.

*We cannot be responsible for anything that is not labeled. Any items that are not labeled will be placed in the lost and found but may accidentally be placed in a different child's box.

** These items will be sent home every Friday for cleaning and washing and expected to be returned to school on Monday drop off.

Schola doesn't require that children be Potty Trained, but staff will help in the process if solicited. Comfortable and easy managed clothes are recommended for this purpose.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Application

Parents and guardians must apply sunscreen on their child's face, arms, and neck prior to arrival. Bug repellent will be applied before any outdoor activities, and sunscreen might be reapplied throughout the day as needed. Please restock your child's sunscreen and insect repellent at least every 6 months.

16. Staff Qualifications & Training

The teachers and staff at Schola International are carefully selected for their experience, dedication, and passion for early childhood education. In addition to meeting the qualifications set forth by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Licensing Division, our team participates in ongoing training to ensure your child receives the highest quality care and education.

Our Staff

At Schola, we believe a nurturing, supportive, and knowledgeable team is the cornerstone of a successful early-childhood experience. Our educators and caregivers are selected for their expertise in Early Childhood Education and their commitment to honoring each child's unique developmental journey. We maintain a warm, welcoming atmosphere where children feel valued and families feel confident and informed.



Qualifications & Hiring

- Minimum Standards compliance. All personnel roles meet or exceed HHSC Child Care Regulation (CCR) Minimum Standards for child-care centers (26 TAC, Chapter 746). Texas Health and Human Services
- Pre-employment affidavit. We obtain the pre-employment affidavit required by Human Resources Code §42.0563 in line with HHSC's adopted rule (effective Aug. 14, 2024). Texas Health and Human Services
- Training & Professional Development
- Pre-service and annual training. Staff complete the pre-service and ongoing annual training specified by Chapter 746, covering supervision, guidance/discipline, emergency procedures, and developmentally appropriate practice. Instructor-led and director-led training are provided/recorded in line with the Aug. 2024 rule clarifications. Texas Health and Human Services
- Pediatric safety certifications. Caregivers maintain current pediatric CPR and First Aid certifications and any role-specific trainings required by CCR. Texas Health and Human Services
- Health, Safety & Supervision
- Active supervision & ratios. We uphold continuous, active supervision and staff-to-child ratios required by Chapter 746 at all times, including transitions and outdoor play. Texas Health and Human Services

Background Checks & Fingerprinting

- All staff members must successfully complete a comprehensive background check through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).
- This includes fingerprinting, criminal history checks, and FBI background checks, as required by law.
- Staff may not begin working with children until all background checks have cleared.
- Background checks are updated regularly to ensure continued compliance.

Required Annual Training Hours

- Each staff member completes a minimum of 24 hours of professional development training every year, in accordance with HHSC Minimum Standards.



- Training topics include:
 - Child growth and development.
 - Age-appropriate curriculum and classroom practices.
 - Positive guidance and discipline techniques.
 - Health, safety, and sanitation.
 - Recognition and prevention of child abuse and neglect.
 - Emergency preparedness and safety drills.
- All staff maintain current CPR and First Aid certifications, including infant and child CPR.
- At least one CPR/First Aid certified caregiver is present at all times, both on-site and during field trips.

At Schola International, we are committed to continuous learning and professional growth for our staff. Families can be assured that our team is well-prepared, highly trained, and dedicated to the safety, well-being, and success of every child.

17. Termination of Services

At Schola International, our goal is to build strong, positive partnerships with families and to provide every child with a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment. However, situations may arise that require termination of enrollment.

School-Initiated Termination

The school reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment under the following circumstances:

- Non-Payment of Tuition or Fees: Failure to pay tuition or other required fees within the agreed timeframe.
- Unsafe or Disruptive Behavior: If a child's behavior consistently endangers themselves, other children, or staff, and intervention strategies have not been successful.
- Policy Violations: Continued disregard for the policies outlined in this Parent Handbook, including attendance, health and safety requirements, or communication expectations.
- Incomplete or Invalid Documentation: Failure to provide required forms, immunization records, or updated emergency contacts as required by Texas Child Care Licensing.



In cases of school-initiated termination, families will receive written notice. If the situation involves safety concerns, termination may be effective immediately.

Parent Withdrawal Notice Requirements

- Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child from the program must provide a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice to administration.
- Tuition and fees remain due during the notice period, whether or not the child attends.
- All outstanding balances must be paid in full prior to the child's last day of attendance.

18. Policies, Review & Updates

At Schola International, we are committed to transparency and ongoing compliance with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards. To ensure families are fully informed, all operational policies are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

How Parents Will Be Notified of Policy Changes

- Any updates or revisions to this Parent Handbook will be shared with families in writing.
- Notifications may be sent via Brightwheel, email, or printed letters distributed in your child's folder.
- Families will receive a copy of the revised policy or an addendum outlining the changes.
- Parents may be asked to sign an acknowledgment form confirming that they have received and reviewed the updated information.

Annual Review of Policies by Director

- In accordance with Texas HHSC requirements, the Director will conduct an annual review of all school policies and procedures to ensure compliance with state regulations and best practices in early childhood education.



- During this review, adjustments may be made to reflect:
 - Updated state licensing rules and laws.
 - Current health and safety guidelines.
 - Improvements to school practices that better serve children and families.
- Families will be promptly notified of any changes following this annual review.

At Schola International, our goal is to keep parents fully informed and involved, while ensuring that our policies continue to meet the highest standards of safety, quality, and child-centered care.

Biting policy

At Schola International the safety and well-being of all children are our top priorities. We understand that biting can be a common behavior among young children, especially those who are teething or developing communication skills. This policy outlines how we manage biting incidents to ensure a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

Understanding Biting:

Biting is a common behavior in young children and can be a result of teething, frustration, exploration, or a lack of verbal communication skills.

While it is normal behavior, it is not acceptable, and our goal is to minimize and prevent it through appropriate interventions.

Staff Response to Biting:

If a biting incident occurs, the bitten child will be comforted and checked for any injury. Appropriate first aid will be applied if needed.

The biting child will be calmly and firmly told that biting is not acceptable and will be redirected to a different activity.

Staff will document the incident, noting the context and any possible triggers, and will notify the parents of both children involved on the same day.

Parent Communication:

- Parents of the bitten child will be informed about the incident, the care given, and any observed patterns or triggers.



- Parents of the child who bit will be notified privately and given strategies to help prevent future incidents. We will work together with parents to develop a consistent plan for managing the behavior.
- Preventive Measures:
- We will closely observe children who have bitten to identify potential triggers and provide additional supervision and support.
- Activities will be planned to help children develop better communication skills and learn appropriate ways to express their feelings and needs.

Repeated Biting:

- If a child bites more than once, a meeting with the parents will be arranged to discuss the incidents and develop a behavior plan.
- The plan may include specific strategies, such as increased supervision, behavior modification techniques, and communication skills development.

Support and Education:

- We provide education for all children on appropriate social interactions and emphasize empathy, sharing, and expressing feelings with words.
- Staff will receive training on managing biting incidents and effective intervention techniques.

Confidentiality:

The identities of the children involved in biting incidents will remain confidential. We will not disclose names or personal details to other parents.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

In Schola International we prioritize the safety of our students and teachers above anything else. In the event of a recurrent harmful behavior that puts the safety of other students or staff members at risk, a Parent- Teacher meeting will be scheduled. In that meeting we will prepare a collaborative action plan along with regular follow-ups to help the student successfully develop the skills he is lacking. However, if there is not a noticeable improvement, a meeting will be called to discuss the issue providing confidentiality regarding the identity of the students involved. A decision regarding the situation will be made always maintaining the wellbeing of our entire community as the main priority.



19. Acknowledgment Form

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

I/We, the undersigned parent(s)/guardian(s), acknowledge that I/We have received a copy of the Schola International Parent Handbook.

I/We understand that:

- The handbook contains important policies, procedures, and expectations that guide the operations of the school.
- It is my/our responsibility to read and become familiar with the contents of the handbook.
- If I/we have questions about any policies, I/we may contact the Director for clarification.
- Schola International reserves the right to revise, add, or update policies at any time in accordance with Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards.
- I/We will be notified of any policy changes in writing, and I/we agree to abide by the updated policies once communicated.

By signing below, I/We confirm that I/We have received, reviewed, and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the Schola International Parent Handbook.
