



**TRINITY**  
SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN  
**O'DEA CENTER**  
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

# Early Childhood Program Parent Handbook 2025-2026



[WWW.TRINITYSFC.ORG](http://WWW.TRINITYSFC.ORG)

\*This handbook is a living document.  
Updates during the school year will be communicated to  
parents. Revised: 7/28/25

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# **Credo for Trinity School for Children**

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**What potentialities in human beings – children, teachers and ourselves – do we want to see develop?**

- A zest for living that comes from taking in the world with all five senses alert
- Lively intellectual curiosities that turn the world into an exciting laboratory and keep one ever a learner
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- Flexibility when confronted with change and ability to relinquish patterns that no longer fit the present
- The courage to work, unafraid and efficiently, in a world of new needs, new problems and new ideas
- Gentleness combined with justice in passing judgments on other human beings
- Sensitivity, not only to the external formal rights of the “other fellow” but to him as another human being seeking a good life through his own standards
- A striving to live democratically, in and out of schools, as the best way to advance our concept of democracy

Our credo demands ethical standards as well as scientific attitudes. Our work is based on faith that human beings can improve the society they have created.

Lucy Sprague Mitchell  
Founder of Bank Street, College of Education, 1916  
Adopted by Trinity School for Children, 1999

# Mission History & Philosophy

## Mission

The maximum development of each individual student is of great importance at Trinity School for Children.

Our mission is to create a zest for lifelong learning through the developmental-interactive approach based on the Bank Street College of Education philosophy. This approach is achieved through the collaborative efforts of students, parents, faculty, and the civic environment creating a mutual respect for each other.

Trinity School for Children's emphasis is on child development and individual learning styles from the early years. We understand that the emotional life of children is inseparable from their learning, interest and motivation. We strive to create and sustain a loving and nurturing community experience for children fostering their spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth.

## History & Philosophy

The Tampa School Development Corporation was created in January 1999 by a group of parents, educators, and business people with a deep concern for the effective educational opportunities in the greater Tampa Bay area. It formed Trinity School for Children – a school that places emphasis on child development and individual learning styles.

Trinity School for Children teaches children using the Bank Street philosophy of education, which concentrates on developing the “whole child” intellectually, physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially. By offering children creative, challenging and enlightening academics, the faculty creates a school experience for each child, emphasizing their individual learning style, talents and family culture.

Lucy Sprague Mitchell conceived the Bank Street philosophy in 1916. The single most important organizing principle of the Bank Street philosophy is that, in order for children to learn in school and to become lifelong learners, they must interact with their environment (people, places and things) and interpret their experiences. Mrs. Mitchell and her colleagues were at the forefront of a revolution in education in the 1920s. Many of their ideas have since influenced educational theory and practice in both public and private sectors. These ideas encompass the emphasis on child development and individual learning styles, the importance of experimental learning and the understanding that the emotional life of children is inseparable from their learning interests and motivation.

# Executive Administration & Staff

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## **Executives**

Kristine Bennett, Director of Early Childhood  
Joseph Sansonetti, CEO  
Dr. Madeline O’Dea, Founder & President Emeritus  
Nicole Morgado, Director of Development & Strategy

## **Administrative Staff**

Chelsea Hunzinger, Staff and Curriculum Coordinator  
Kaitlin Gaudette, EC Clinic Aid  
Karla Vilchez, EC Extended Day Coordinator  
Mary Goldman, Developmental Consultant  
Michelle Perez, Director of Admissions  
Peggy Chillura, Front Desk Receptionist  
Yvette Gonzalez, EC Educational Facilitator

## **Lead Teachers**

Jenn Aragon  
Madelyn Badertscher  
Rhannon Baxendale  
Aisha Belluccia  
Lauren “Lo” Garcia  
Stephanie Hearne  
Haley Leto  
Ana Lopez  
Natieka Myles  
Jessica Rodriguez  
Alex Romero  
Jen Turner

## **Cultural Arts**

Courtney Alvord, Art, Story Time, and Music  
Percy White, Creative Movement

# Welcome Letter

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Welcome to Trinity School for Children's Early Childhood Program. We are delighted that you have chosen our school to educate your child and grow with your family.

Our mission is to create a zest for lifelong learning through a developmental-interaction approach. This approach can only be achieved through collaborative efforts of students, parents, faculty and the community creating a mutual respect for each other.

You are your child's first teacher. Your role as a parent cannot be underestimated. Active involvement in their education will allow them to reach their greatest potential. We know that you will honor and respect our years of experience as educators. We are experts on child development. In turn, we will honor and respect your role as parents. You are the expert on your child. You have valuable understandings about your child that will help us to develop the greatest potentialities in your child. The partnership between parent and teacher is critical to your child's success.

Our classrooms may look and feel different than other schools. The learning process at Trinity is what Bank Street's founder, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, described as "active, dynamic and creative. It is utterly different from parrot-like repetition – the giving back of facts just as they are found. It is using facts; not merely knowing them." We strive to develop thinkers.

As parents you must be keen observers of your children and ask questions of your teachers. We are all called to educate ourselves so that we may become part of the learning process with your child.

To our returning families – welcome back! To our new families – welcome! I look forward to embarking on this journey with you and your children.

Dr. Kristine Bennett  
Director of Early Childhood

Office: 813-874-2402 Ext: 2081  
Melioris Cives Societatis  
"Citizens Improving Society"

# About the EC Program

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## Ages and Stages

The EC Program is designed to provide developmentally oriented, culturally sensitive childcare and family support for children 6 weeks to 5 years. Our classrooms are divided by stages of development.

## Parent Partnership

Family members are the most important people in the lives of young children. Therefore, we work to create a family and faculty partnership that supports each child's sense of security, growth and development. The beginning nine weeks of a family's entrance into the program are devoted to establishing these relationships and to developing trust. Children can only freely explore and therefore learn when they feel safe, respected and cared for. Based on this initial experience, faculty is able to provide care that feels most consistent and comfortable for each child. In addition, family members can gain insight into issues that affect them and their children. It is our hope that from this foundation of security, a child will begin to form trusting relationships outside of their family unit and develop a positive self-image.

## Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the developmental-interaction approach, which supports our understanding of the ways in which young children learn best. Our program supports the needs, interests and developmental tasks of young children with an emphasis on the interaction between the learning child and the social, physical environment. A critical component of this approach is our focus on providing children with the opportunity to explore and learn about the diversity of their community. Thus, the overall framework of our curriculum is firmly rooted in such activities as saying hello and good-bye, building friendships, talking about who we are, what we look like, what our families look like and what we celebrate and value. We strive to create a welcoming learning environment to ensure that both children and adults feel comfortable. This is done in many ways:

- **Lead teachers** in each classroom are certified educators, highly skilled in curriculum design and child development.
- **The physical environment** is designed to be warm and inviting. Furniture that is comfortable for adults as well as for children makes the room look and feel more like home than school.
- **Group size** maximizes student learning. Teacher/student ratios are kept below child care licensing requirements. Large group activities naturally happen around singing and meal times. The children tend to gravitate together for these activities, thus gaining experiences with other children.
- **Daily routines** are an important part of our learning environment. Preparing snack, cleaning up, naptime, errands, toileting, and dressing are integral parts of our program and geared toward each child's individual developmental needs. Young children are busy exploring and need experiences putting their environment into an understandable order. Routines assist in this developmental task because they happen daily and are predictable. Routine activities are just as important as planned projects in the classroom.
- **Language**, the way we speak with children and other adults, is another important piece of our curriculum. We use language to convey thoughts, make observations, and to express our feelings. With language we show our respect for one another. Language is a powerful tool that can be easily misused or misunderstood. Because we are working with young children who are just beginning to use language, we carefully model for appropriate usage of words and communication skills.
- **Cultural Arts** are daily extension activities offered to support the development of the whole child. Children participate in Music and Movement, Creative Movement, Story Time, and Art, with educators that are specialized in these disciplines.

## Tuition

The Early Childhood Program is private and tuition driven. Please refer to your tuition agreement for more information.

# Arrival & Dismissal

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## Hours of Operation

Office Hours:	7:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
School Day Hours:	7:30 A.M. – 3:15 P.M.
Full Day Hours:	7:30 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

## Arrival

Prompt arrival sets the stage for your child to have a successful day. Parents and students will enter through the main door. They may walk their student to the classroom door. Please refrain from entering your child's classroom at drop off as this will be disruptive.

Our program provides supervision beginning at 7:30 A.M. **Only faculty/staff may enter the building prior to 7:30 A.M.** If your child's teacher is in the classroom before 7:30 A.M., it is to prepare the room for your child's day. Please wait for your teacher to open the door.

**Our School Day begins at 8:00A.M.** Please arrive prior to this time in order to allow the child to enter the classroom without being hurried into a transition period. After 8:30 A.M. a staff member will walk your child to class, this applies to students in the Toddler/Pre-K Wing. **Students will not be accepted after 10:00 am. unless a note is provided that a child was at an appointment.**

**Morning Meeting and Cultural Arts** is of the utmost importance and is a crucial part of our curriculum for all ages. **It is important that your child be present during this time.** It is disruptive to the meeting, the group, and most importantly, your child, if you arrive late. Teachers will advise you of the Morning Meeting and Cultural Arts time frame.

## Dismissal

Students enrolled for the School Day Program must be picked up prior to 3:15 P.M. Full Day Program students must be picked up before 6:00 P.M.

## Authorization for Pick-Up

People authorized to pick-up your child must be designated by you **on your child's emergency card**, located in the O'Dea Center Clinic. It is your responsibility to update the emergency card, as well as Brightwheel. Anyone picking up your child must be prepared to present photo identification.

## Late Fees

Students enrolled in the School Day Program remaining on school grounds after 3:15 P.M. will be billed \$0.30 per minute (\$18 per hour) based upon when your student is checked out. The Full Day program ends at 6:00 P.M. A late fee of \$2.00 per minute will begin at 6:01 P.M.

## Parent/Visitor Parking

Parents and visitors may park in a designated "visitor" parking space, an Early Childhood parking space, or an unmarked parking spot.

Early Childhood parking is by permit only. You must display your EC car tag. You may not park in **ANY** other reserved spot at **ANY** time.

**No one is ever to park in the fire lane in front of the building or reserved spaces. Your car may be towed at the owner's expense and/or you may be asked to appear before the school board. Failure to comply with school policy is grounds for dismissal from the school.**

**Respect our neighbors as they may tow cars that are illegally parked in their lots.**

# Attendance Policies

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## Absences

Your child's attendance is imperative. Coming to school each day builds consistency, supports your child's sense of security, and gives your child the time needed to develop relationships, explore with courage, and learn about their world.

It is the parent's responsibility to report their child's absence each day their child is absent. Please **email or Brightwheel your child's teacher and email the absent email** (ecabsent@trinitysfc.com) to report your child's absence. In the case of absences due to a reportable communicable disease (ie. chicken pox, measles, mumps, lice, ring worm, etc.) the child must return with a letter from the family physician indicating that he/she is no longer contagious.

We would appreciate an immediate call to the Clinic Aide at (813) 874-2402, x2712 when a communicable disease is diagnosed. This is for the health and safety of the other children and our staff.

# Health Policies

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## Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing (CCL) Illness Policy

The Early Childhood Program is required to be in full compliance of these Rules and Regulations, per Hillsborough County Ordinance No. 13-5, 3.05-3.06(1).

**"Any child who is suspected of having a communicable disease or exhibits other signs and symptoms, which include those listed below, shall be placed in the isolation area. The condition shall be reported to the Parent and the child shall be removed from the Child Care Facility as soon as possible. Such children can return to the Child Care Facility when the signs and symptoms are no longer present or when the Child Care Facility receives written verification by the treating physician stating that the child's illness is no longer communicable."**

## Guidelines

Please observe the following guidelines for the safety and health of all the children at the school.

Symptoms requiring **exclusion from school**, per Childcare Licensing and Trinity School for Children:

- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult, rapid breathing
- Stiff neck
- Diarrhea (more than **one abnormally loose stool** within a one-hour period)
- Vomiting (more than once within a one-hour period)
- If the child presents with an ear probe temperature of 100.4, with additional symptoms, the child must be picked up. If the child has no other symptoms, we will message parents providing them the option to pick up the child, or for clinical personnel to continue to monitor. If the child's temperature remains 100.4 or greater for an additional temperature reading at least 1 hour apart, the child will be sent home.
- Conjunctivitis

# Health Policies

## Guidelines (continued)

Please observe the following guidelines for the safety and health of all the children at the school.

Symptoms requiring **exclusion from school**, per Childcare Licensing and Trinity School for Children:

- Ringworm is a fungal infection of the skin and must be covered at all times while at school—even if treated.
- Exposed skin lesions
- Head lice-A child who has head lice will not be permitted to return to the Child Care Facility until treatment has been accomplished. Treatment shall include the removal of all lice, lice eggs, and lice cases. Verification shall be the physical inspection of the child.
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Any other unusual sign or symptom of illness
- Rashes that you cannot identify or have not been diagnosed by a physician. If your child has been sent home with an unidentified rash, he/she may only return to school with a doctor's note stating he/she is not contagious.
- Impetigo of the skin. Impetigo starts as red pimples. These eventually become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area.
- Severe cold, sneezing, and nose drainage. If your child's nose is draining greenish mucus, he/she may not return to school without a doctor's note.
- With **contagious diseases**, a child must be kept home. This may include measles (red or German), chicken pox, mumps, and roseola. A doctor's note will be required to return to school.
- If your child **seems really sick**, without obvious symptoms, please keep him/her at home. In this case, a child may look and act different. He/she may be unusually pale, irritable, tired, or uninterested.

### In order to return to school, your child must:

- be fever free without a fever reducing medication for 24 hours
- be symptom free of diarrhea and/or vomiting for 24 hours
- and/or have a doctor's note releasing them for school

Because we do not have facilities to care for sick children in the Early Childhood Program, you will be called to come and take your child home if he/she becomes sick during the day. Children must be picked-up within one (1) hour of being notified. **Final decisions regarding a child being excluded from the school day are made at the discretion of the Clinic Aide.**

By helping us observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and the others at Trinity School for Children.

### Allergies and Anaphylaxis Treatment

Please schedule a meeting with the Clinic Staff if your child has any allergies to determine if a Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (FARE) needs to be completed.

Students with high sensitivity to allergens that require Epipen, Auvi-Q, Inhaler or other prescribed medications should have paperwork up to date at all times. The Clinic Staff will keep all Parents/guardians aware when medication is close to expiring. The expired medication will be returned directly to the parent.

# Health Policies

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## Allergies and Anaphylaxis Treatment (continued)

Any prescribed medication needed for life-threatening conditions must be up to date. If this medication is not kept up to date, the child will not be permitted to be in school until the prescription is brought in to the school Clinic Staff.

In case of life-threatening emergencies 911 will be called. We encourage open communication between parents, guardians, and EC staff to ensure that all necessary information about students' allergies and care plans are shared and understood. Annual forms that must be completed include the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (FARE) form (if applicable) and O'Dea center specific authorization forms.

Prescribed, certain over-the-counter, and/or homeopathic medication must be stored in the Health Clinic. The following over the counter medications may be stored and used in the classroom and must have written permission by the parent for use: diaper rash cream. All other over the counter (Tylenol, eye drops, etc.) and prescription medications must be turned in directly to the clinic with the proper forms. Before medication can be administered, a form must be completed in the Health Clinic. **Medications must be brought to the clinic in the original container with the child's name, doctor's name and will only be dispensed as directed by the doctor. Do not take these medications to the classroom.**

## High Allergen Foods in the Classroom

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the exposure of students to high allergen foods during classroom lessons, in order to protect the health and safety of students with food allergies. When the school receives written documentation of a child with food allergies, a plan will be developed in collaboration with the parent, clinic aid, teacher, and director. An alternative snack option that is safe for students with allergies will be offered to the parent with a list of ingredients and a signed waiver consent by parents/guardians for approval. Parents are welcome to provide snacks for their children as long as they follow the allergen protocols.

Classroom teachers will place an allergen STOP sign in the classroom to notify all of allergies. The sign shall be displayed and kept up to date at all times. The STOP signs will be provided by the Clinic staff. The Clinic will provide the teacher a signed copy of the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (FARE) form and/or any allergy related forms.

Adherence to this policy is essential to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Clinic Staff and updated as necessary. Parents/Guardians who decide to bring in snacks/food that your child enjoys will need to follow this policy.

Parents must gain permission from the classroom teacher prior to bringing in snacks or treats for the class and you agree to refrain from bringing food with known allergens. You understand that bringing foods with known allergens may be harmful to the children with allergies in the class. The teacher and/or clinic staff will communicate any known allergens to parents.

Parents who violate this policy will be required to meet the Early Childhood Program Director. Failure to comply may result in dismissal.

## Immunizations

Florida law requires specific, up-to-date documents to be on file for your child to attend school. A physical examination (Form DH 3040) and an up-to-date immunization records (DH 680 or DH 681) are required. Parents/guardians are responsible for compliance with this law. Students may not attend school past the expiration date.

Children may be enrolled that have not been vaccinated due to religious exemptions.

# Health Policies

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## Medication

All prescribed, over-the-counter, and/or homeopathic medication **MUST** be stored in the Health Clinic. Do not send medication in the backpack (this includes diaper rash cream or fever reducing medication). Prescribed, over-the-counter, and/or homeopathic medication or supplements **CANNOT** be brought to the classroom in any way, including but not limited to: bottles, sippy cups, backpacks, and/or lunchboxes.

Medication must be turned in directly to the Clinic. Before medication can be administered, a form must be completed in the Health Clinic, with a copy to be given to the teacher. Medications must be brought to the clinic in the original container and will only be dispensed as directed by the prescription label.

## First Aid

School officials are only permitted to wash an injury with soap and water and apply a non-medicated bandage. If we feel your child's injury requires more attention, you will be notified immediately.

## Emergency Numbers

It is imperative that Trinity School for Children have a current telephone number, on file in the school office, where parents may be reached at any time during school hours. The school must be immediately notified as changes occur. It is the parents' responsibility to keep the emergency contact information up-to-date. Brightwheel updates do not replace the need for you to update your child's emergency card.

## Medical Excuses from Creative Movement

Creative Movement is an important part of our school curriculum as it promotes not only the students' physical development, but also with their mental, emotional, and social development. Excuses from participation in Creative Movement for medical reasons will be granted upon a physician's request or at the discretion of Administration. Be sure the physician lists the types of activities the student can, or cannot, take part in and how long the medical condition will last.

## Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma

### Belief Statement

We, Trinity School for Children, believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care, and educating families.

### Background

SBS/AHT is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. According to the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families, providers that care for infants must have a written policy and procedure to identify and prevent shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma. All TSFC Lead child care personnel are required to complete the safe sleep/shaken baby syndrome training.

## Non-Trinity Service Providers

If your child needs to be seen by a service provider at Trinity EC, we are willing to accommodate the service provider if we have ample space and if the following procedure is followed. A service provider is any individual or organization that provides services to the child. It may be speech therapy, an observation or evaluation, occupational therapy, etc.

# Health Policies

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## Non-Trinity Service Providers (continued)

**Service providers are not permitted to provide services to the child at Trinity EC without approval by Administration. This is to ensure the safety of the child. Written authorization by the parent giving permission is required.**

Here is a review of the procedure:

- Request in writing for your child to be seen by the service provider to: [chelsea.hunzinger@trinitysfc.com](mailto:chelsea.hunzinger@trinitysfc.com)
- A survey link to gather information about the service provider and to document the parent's written permission will be sent for the parent to complete.
- The service provider will be contacted to provide their background and screening as well as their credentials.
- The Service Provider may not see the child without the completion of these steps and administrative approval.
- The Service Provider should wear their employee name badge while on campus.

**Please note: If a service provider cancels, it is the responsibility of the parent and the service provider to communicate to reschedule. If the student is absent, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the service provider.**

## Parent & Visitor Expectations

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We expect all parents/guardians on our campus to act in a respectful, appropriate manner. By choosing to send your child(ren) to Trinity School for Children you are agreeing to abide by our policies, attend Parent-Teacher conferences, attend community meetings, turn in paperwork in a timely manner, complete your parent hours by the deadline, and thoughtfully participate in your child's education as defined by the administration.

The parent partnership is a powerful one and can only succeed if you are actively engaged in your child's education. Our philosophy demands your respectful participation. We retain the right to dismiss families that fail to follow all policies contained within this handbook, including the documents you returned and signed for the first day of school.

### Visitor Badges

For the protection of the students, all visitors including parents to Trinity School for Children must register at the reception desk and wear a visitor's nametag to remain on school grounds for volunteer purposes. Any visitor on campus during school hours is required to stop at the reception desk and check in.

### Court Order

A copy of all Court Orders involving parents, guardians or visitors must be submitted to the Admissions Office.

# Parent & Visitor Expectations

## Non-Parent & Family Participation

Classroom Volunteers are expected to:

- wear school appropriate clothing
- help the classroom teachers
- talk, work, and interact with all of the students
- take students with discipline concerns to a teacher
- avoid cellphone use
- use school appropriate language

## Parent/Teacher Communication

Telephone messages will be forwarded to the classroom only in cases of emergency. Messages can be left on voice mail at the teacher's extension number.

Effective, consistent and proactive parent/teacher communication is imperative for the success and well-being of your children. Trinity SFC staff and parents/guardians should strive to maintain clear and consistent lines of communication to ensure the school and parents/guardians remain updated regarding progress throughout the school year.

**Face to face communication** at drop off or pick up is encouraged. When more time is needed to discuss questions, concerns, or information about your child, please schedule a conference or phone call during school hours.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences** are held at scheduled times during the school year and are available upon request. Please refer to the "Student Progress and Development" section of the Parent Handbook for more detailed information about Bridge Building Conferences.

**Please note:** The staffs' personal devices will not be used to communicate with families via text or telephone.

**Brightwheel** is a communication platform that allows you to view short bits of information. Check it daily to read updates or reminders from your child's teacher and to view photos and videos of the children learning, working, and exploring. Additionally, for infants, Brightwheel is used to inform you of feedings, diapering, and napping. These updates will be posted throughout the day as time allows remembering, the classroom teachers are focused on caring for your child. **Questions on Brightwheel will be answered during school hours or the following school day.**

**Trinity Emails** are sent regularly to provide more detailed, lengthy information. Please email your child's teacher or Trinity Staff anytime and allow at least 48 hours to respond. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the school has your correct email. Please notify Nicole Morgado at [nicole.morgado@trinitysfc.com](mailto:nicole.morgado@trinitysfc.com), if you are not receiving regular school email communication.

**Student blue folders** will be sent home weekly with important school documents as well as your child's artwork. Please remove all important school documents or artwork and return the folder the next school day.

# Parent Hours

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Parent involvement is of utmost importance at Trinity School for Children. When our charter was originally written, the component of parent involvement was a key prong to our mission.

Children learn most effectively when their parents are an integral part of the learning process. If learning is important to you, it will be important to your child.

## Requirements

Trinity's Early Childhood Program requires (5) five service hours per family each year. Families with extenuating circumstances must request an exemption by submitting their situation, via email, to the Director of Early Childhood. **Exemptions must be requested each school year, as they do not roll over.**

## Parent Responsibility

Trinity's School Board policy states that compliance with the parent partnership is imperative. Failure to meet the parent hour requirements jeopardizes your child's opportunity to continue their education at Trinity School for Children. At the end of the school year, an evaluation will be made of each family's participation.

All families are responsible for ensuring their service hours are submitted for approval through the Track It Forward website. Any questions regarding log in and passwords should be directed to [parenthours@trinitysfc.com](mailto:parenthours@trinitysfc.com).

There are several approvers designated to review your service hours and answer any questions you may have regarding the hours you submitted. For example, the PPA Parent Hour Coordinators approve hours entered related to PPA events, your child's teacher will approve hours related to classroom service, etc. These designated approvers can answer questions families may have regarding the service hours related to their category. **It is every family's responsibility to enter their hours and verify that approval has been received.**

Throughout the school year, numerous opportunities are available in and out of the classroom to fulfill the service hour requirements. Trinity believes service hours are an opportunity to get involved with your child's education, rather than an obligation. When possible, service hours should be fulfilled in several capacities, rather than only in one category

## Service Hour Year

The service hour year for the 2025-2026 school year is July 26, 2025 through July 24, 2026. The minimum service hours must be **completed and entered** into the Parent Hour website for approval **no later than July 24, 2026**. Hours earned after July 24, 2026, will count towards hours for the 2025-2026 school year.

## Benefits of Parent Hours

After families earn their required hours, they often stop entering hours' even if they continue to earn hours. Parents should continue to enter all earned hours as these hours are shown when the school is applying for grants. It helps to show we are a strong community and our families support the school.

## Parent Hour Guidelines

Although any and all parent/family involvement and participation is greatly appreciated, the following guidelines will be used to determine those activities that earn parent hours. Once earned, parent hours are not transferable, but family and friends may earn parent hours on your family's behalf. The family receiving the hours must enter the hours with the name of the person who worked the hours and a description of what they did.

# Parent Hours

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## Items Eligible for Parent Hours

### Class Parties and Events

Volunteering time for a school-generated party earns parent service hours. (Examples: Time spent making cupcakes for a class party; time volunteering in the classroom assisting with the party; time spent gathering and organizing materials).

### Field Studies (Chaperoning)

Chaperoning a field study earns parent service hours. It is the discretion of the teacher to determine the necessary number of chaperones. You do not earn additional hours for each additional child you drive. The number of hours earned is based on the length of the field study not the number of children in the car.

### Volunteering

Time spent volunteering in a classroom, the media center, and/or at the Book Fair, during the school work day is eligible for parent hours. Some classroom examples may include: nap mat cleaning, laundry, and printing photos.

The time spent fulfilling Homeroom Parent duties are eligible for parent hours.

### Special Events (Winter Show, etc.)

Volunteering your time at school events earns parent service hours.

### Chairing a Fundraiser

Chairing a PPA fundraiser and successfully completing it, as determined by the PPA, earns 25 parent hours. Additional hours will be approved if more than 25 hours are spent on the fundraiser.

### Fundraisers

Attending school fundraiser meetings in which you volunteer in some capacity earns parent service hours. Please refer to the information sent home with each fundraiser for additional parent hour opportunities.

### Meetings

Participating in School Board, PPA Board, and Homeroom Parent meetings is eligible for parent hours for the time in attendance. Families do not receive additional hours for sending additional family members. Families must stay for the entire meeting to earn parent hours.

## Items Not Eligible for Parent Hours

### Parties

Time related to celebrating a child's birthday are not eligible for parent hours. Time spent at the classroom party in a non-volunteer capacity does not earn parent hours.

### Lunch

Eating lunch with your child does not earn parent hours.

### Sporting Event Attendance

The time for attendance at a sporting event is not eligible for parent hours.

# Parent Hours

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## Items Not Eligible for Parent Hours

### Sporting Event Attendance

The time for attendance at a sporting event is not eligible for parent hours.

### Special Events (Winter Show, etc.)

Time spent at the event in a non-volunteer capacity does not earn parent hours.

### Meetings

Attendance at Open House, Parent/Teacher conference or Meet & Greet (meetings specific to your child) is **not** eligible for parent hours.

### TSC Students

TSC students cannot earn parent hours, but hours may qualify towards the Family Service Project.

### Logging Parent Hours

The time spent entering parent hours does not earn parent hours.

### Purchases

Any purchases made from school, for the school, or school related events may not be rewarded parent hours.

### Voluntary Donations

Any material or monetary donations made to the school may not be rewarded parent hours.

### Classroom Supplies

Throughout the year, teachers may request additional supplies for classroom activities and events.

# Field Studies

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Field Studies, both on campus and off, are an integral part of our philosophy and curriculum for all age groups. They are an important extension of our classrooms. In the case of an off-campus field study, all EC students must be chaperoned by their parent or family member.

### Permission Slips

Written permission from the parent is required for every child. Field Study Permission Slip deadlines will be strictly enforced. Failure to return completed permission slips on time may result in your child not attending the field study. Verbal permission is not acceptable. Only students in each particular class can attend classroom field studies.

**Non-Trinity, non-classroom children are not permitted to attend field studies, no exceptions. Only adults who have been approved on the Field Study Permission Form may attend the Field Study.**

# Field Studies

## Chaperones

Parents are expected to assist with supervision and transportation.

- You are not to be on your cell phone or socializing with other chaperones.
- Chaperones must wear appropriately fitted clothing. Clothing depicting nudity, adult language, and/or illegal activities for minors is prohibited.
- It is important that we model the behavior we expect of our children.
- The field studies have been carefully planned by your child's teacher. Comments regarding a field study you have been on should be discussed with your child's teacher in a respectful manner and appropriate setting.
- Head counts will be taken upon arrival at the location and prior to departure.
- Brightwheel is to be used during the Field Study for emergency purposes.
- Parent hours are earned in accordance with the "Parent Hour Guidelines."
- A valid driver's license and Proof of Insurance is required and due with the permission slip.

**Field study procedures and policies are non-negotiable. They are put into place to provide for the safety of the participants and compliance with our school's insurance policies. All children must be in compliance with the Florida car seat law (visit [www.dmv.org](http://www.dmv.org) for details).**

## Outings

Outings on our campus occur often, weather permitting. The destination is not always the emphasis of the outing. The journey itself can offer an abundance of interesting and exciting experiences for young children.

Outings are best if they are unhurried and the children have time to explore at their own speed. Due to their closer proximity to the earth, children often see things from a different angle than adults, see things adults don't see or completely miss things that attract adult attention. Often our primary goal is to go outside and discover the world.

## Uniform Policy

Trinity School for Children is a uniform school. Students must be in proper uniform to attend. Please check with your child's teacher to confirm uniform requirements for your child. **Parents of students not in proper uniform will be contacted to correct the situation.** It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their student(s) are in proper uniform. Continuous infractions may result in disciplinary action.

# Uniform Policy

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## Infant Wing

- Please dress your children in clothing that is appropriate for all types of play activities and weather. Comfortable clothing is best.
- Shoes: All children will wear Velcro or tie-less closed toed and closed back athletic shoes.
  - Shoes that have lights, sounds, or wheels are not permitted.
  - Boots and/or dress shoes are not permitted.
- Socks are required.
- Sandals and “cros” are not permitted.

## Toddler/Pre-K Wing

The following items must be purchased through the school’s uniform provider: polo shirts, polo dress, outerwear, Creative Movement uniforms, and Spirit shirts. Students must wear their uniform on a daily basis and may wear their Creative Movement uniforms or Spirit shirts on Creative Movement days only.

- Shoes: All children will wear Velcro or tie-less closed toed and closed back athletic shoes.
  - Shoes that have lights, sounds, or wheels are not permitted.
  - Boots and/or dress shoes are not permitted.
  - Children entering Kindergarten for the following school year may wear flat laced, athletic shoes.
- Socks are required.
- Sandals and “cros” are not permitted.
- Toddler/Pre-K Wing-Students may wear a wristwatch and age-appropriate conservative jewelry.
- Infant Wing-Students may not wear bracelets or necklaces as they are a choking hazard. Stud earrings are allowed.
- All students are expected to have clean and neatly groomed hair.
- Winter uniforms cannot be worn during warm weather. **This is a health issue.**
- Field Study attire will differ depending on the requirements of the study and will be included with each study’s permission slip.

## Winter Uniform

- Tights and leggings are permitted. Solid white, solid light blue or solid dark blue tights/leggings are preferred.
- Long sleeve shirts in a solid color may be worn under the short sleeve polos or Creative Movement shirts.
- EC students are permitted to wear TSC sweatpants and sweatshirts on any day for their winter uniform during cold weather.
- Only Trinity logo outerwear is permitted in the classrooms. Non-Trinity jackets, coats and/or sweatshirts may be worn outside.

## Picture Day Uniform Attire

- Individual – Clothing of individual choice within limits. **Shirts must have sleeves. Dresses, skirts, shorts and skorts are permissible.**
- Whole Group – Trinity polo or Trinity polo dress.

## Field Study Attire

- Field study attire is the light blue Tiny Tornado shirt.

## Spirit Day Uniform Attire

- Spirit Day Attire is the designated class color based on classroom groupings and will be communicated by the classroom teacher.

**Please be sure to label all clothing with your child’s first and last name.**

## THE SEVEN TRINITY TRUTHS

- 01** **Respect/Reflect:**  
Who am I?  
What do I think/feel and why?  
Are my actions helpful or hurtful?
- 02** **Attachment/Belonging:**  
Do I have strong and genuine relationships with others?  
Am I connected to an individual or a group?  
Do I have supportive and nurturing interactions?
- 03** **Intrinsic Motivation:**  
Do I do the right thing because it is the right thing to do?  
Do I make wise choices, even when no one is looking?  
Am I motivated from the inside-out?
- 04** **Self-Regulation:**  
What are my responsibilities?  
How do my actions affect others?  
Can I respectfully manage my emotions?
- 05** **Adaptability:**  
Do I have the ability to transition from situation to situation?  
Can I modify my behavior to different environments?  
Am I flexible when confronted with change?
- 06** **Collaborate:**  
Am I considerate of others?  
How well do I manage conflict?  
Do I value the perspectives of others?
- 07** **Contribution:**  
How do I make a difference in the world?  
In what ways do I show initiative?  
Do I utilize my gifts/talents for others?  
Am I invested in my work?

### Students are expected to:

- Be a respectful community member
- Be honest
- Keep feet, hands, and objects to themselves
- Follow directions
- Be in proper clothing or uniform (as stated in the uniform policy) at all times
- Treat school property, as well as other's property, with respect
- Be responsible

# Policy for Student Success

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The very young child is unique in their development process. Each child develops at their own pace. They require a safe space within which to experiment and interact with others. The activities that we provide promote community building social skills. When conflict arises between children, it is resolved with **redirection, observation and role-modeling appropriate behavior**. They are given the opportunity to solve conflict with the teacher's help in the beginning while learning the skills needed for independent conflict resolution. Proper student behavior is essential to our school community.

We take a positive and proactive approach to support all children in developing the skills they need to interact appropriately with their peers, build lasting friendships, and express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions with confidence and clarity. We are implementing a program-wide approach, the Pyramid Model, to ensure that all teachers and staff use effective and culturally responsive teaching practices that help every child learn how to manage emotions and relate well to others, provide more individualized interventions to children who need additional instruction or behavioral support, and include family input to ensure that interventions are appropriate and relevant within their culture and values.

In our program, we have established the following program-wide expectations for all children and adults:

## **Be Safe -- Be Kind -- Be Helpful**

All staff members teach all children about these expectations and link classroom rules to these core values. These expectations can also be taught at home and link to the rules that you might also have for your child at home and in the community. We find that when we are all on the same page with our expectations, children are more able to understand and meet those expectations.

Our staff members use only positive methods of child guidance including natural and logical consequences, redirection, anticipation and reduction of potential problems, and the encouragement of cooperative behavior. Staff members are prohibited from using corporal punishment or humiliating, threatening, frightening, or using shame-based disciplinary techniques. All staff members receive training in developmentally appropriate and child guidance procedures and practical strategies to support the equity of responses across all children, and are monitored on the implementation of those practices.

If children have behavioral challenges that are a concern, we will contact the family so we can work together to develop and implement a plan for teaching the child how to connect with others, handle their feelings effectively, and reduce the behavior challenges. We also encourage families to ask us their questions about appropriate child guidance techniques and seek our assistance if they have concerns about any of these areas of their child's development.

If children engage in behavior that is harmful to themselves or others, staff might remove the child from the activity or room until the child is calm and able to return to the classroom. If the behavior incident is dangerous or might be physically harmful, we will conference with the family immediately with the goal of developing an effective approach to support the child. For some children, an evaluation, consultation with professionals outside the program, or additional services might be needed to ensure the child can be successfully supported in the program.

Students are expected to follow all policies contained within this handbook, including the documents you returned and signed for the first day of school. **Consistent or prolonged disruptive behavior or disregard for student rules may cause your child's placement to be rescinded from Trinity School for Children. The final decision will rest with the administration.**

# Policy for Student Success

## Behavior Policy

We are required by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to have a signed copy of the Parent Handbook Agreement indicating parents agree to the policies and procedures of the school for every child on file. The maximum development of each individual student is of great concern at Trinity School for Children. To ensure all children have a safe environment in which to learn and grow, the following behavior policy will be adhered to in the Early Childhood Program.

1. The first step to preventing behavioral challenges in the classroom begins with the classroom teacher and associates. They will provide your child with the foundation needed to be successful in the classroom. This is provided through instructions, rules, and procedures.
2. The second step in helping the child be successful in the classroom is parent-teacher communication. If the child is facing challenges in the classroom due to social, emotional, and behavior issues, the teacher will reach out to the parents. Together they will discuss the challenges and create a plan to help the child.
3. If steps one and two are not successful, the teacher will contact the Program Wide Positive Behavior Support (PWPBS) team for intervention strategies and to determine a need for specific behavior plan. If a behavior plan is needed, the parent will be informed and a consent form will need to be signed.
4. If the above steps are not successful, the Early Childhood (EC) Director, will schedule a conference with the parents, teacher, and the behavioral coach. The previous steps will be reviewed and a new plan may be created.
5. Children experiencing an extremely challenging day where interventions are not being successful, may be sent home for everyone's safety.
6. If the above steps do not improve the challenging behaviors or the situation escalates, this may cause your child's placement in the Early Childhood Program to be rescinded.

## Biting

Biting is a common behavior for young toddlers as they begin to explore their independence. At this stage of development, they are learning to assert themselves, but their ability to regulate emotions and communicate effectively is still very limited. When they experience strong feelings like frustration, excitement, or a need for attention, they might resort to biting as a way to express themselves or gain control over a situation. This behavior, while developmentally typical, can be concerning for caregivers and educators.

Teachers in our early childhood classes understand that biting is a phase that many children go through and they address it proactively within our curriculum. Developing self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making is woven into daily activities with a focus on helping toddlers recognize and name their feelings, use simple words to express needs, and practice gentle touches with others.

Educators consistently model and reinforce positive behavior, support children in using words or gestures to express themselves, and work closely with families to ensure consistency between home and school environments.

# Policy for Student Success

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Our policy for handling a biting incident is the following: The first time your child bites another child, a staff member will notify the parent and write an incident report to be signed at pick up that day. If your child has been bitten, the teacher or clinic staff will notify the parent and write an accident report to be signed at pick up that day. For multiple occurrences, additional communication will take place to discuss what strategies are being used to prevent biting and to teach and reinforce positive behaviors. Children who bite frequently in one day may be sent home for everyone's safety. Only after we feel we have made every effort to make the program work for the child who bites do we consider rescinding the child's placement.

## Child Discipline

A. The Trinity School for Children Program has adopted a discipline policy consistent with Section 402.305(12), F.S., which including standards prohibiting children from being subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited. Child discipline practices shall be age-appropriate and constructive.

## Parent Conduct

Parent involvement is of utmost importance at Trinity School for Children. Children learn most effectively when their parents are an integral part of the learning process. If learning is important to you, it will be important to your child. Please remember it is a privilege to be on our campus, and we have a zero-tolerance policy for abusive language, harassment, weapons, drugs, tobacco, or alcohol. Any of the above behaviors will not be tolerated and may cause your child's placement to be rescinded.

## Zero Tolerance for Harassment, Weapons, Drugs, Tobacco, and Alcohol

- Harassment (sexual harassment, sexual advances, or other forms of religious, racial, physical or emotional harassment, and bullying) by any pupil, visitor, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel, which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Firearms, knives, or any other object that may be used with intent to harm any pupil, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or visitor is absolutely prohibited.
- Trinity School for Children is a drug and alcohol-free zone and a smoke and tobacco-free environment. Smoking or tobacco, including e-cigarette use of any kind is strictly prohibited anywhere on school grounds, or at school events including those held off campus. Illegal drugs on campus are absolutely prohibited.
- Spectators are expected to uphold high standards of good sportsmanship and appropriate audience behavior at all Trinity events.

**ANY BEHAVIOR AS DESCRIBED ABOVE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND MAY CAUSE YOUR CHILD'S PLACEMENT TO BE RESCINDED.**

# Student Life

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## Holidays

It is our philosophy that every family has its own individual way to celebrate holidays. Please discuss with your child's teacher any concerns that you may have regarding holidays in advance. Honoring family requests regarding the celebration of holidays is only possible when teachers are given the time to prepare appropriately.

## Birthdays

Birthdays may be celebrated on each child's date of birth whenever possible. It is the **parent's responsibility** to communicate with the classroom teacher at least a week before distribution of any birthday items.

In order to maintain compliance with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), food birthday treats are not able to be brought in. Non-food, age-appropriate toys/goodie bags may be brought in and will be sent home to open.

Invitations to off-campus celebrations will only be distributed if there is an invitation for each child in the class.

## Snack

We will provide a morning and afternoon snack to children in the 1/2's and older at a specified time according to the classroom's daily schedule. This time period allows for children to work on life skills such as pouring, spreading, and cutting. For children who are eating at the time of pick up, the teacher will pack up the child's food, allow the child to finish, or discard the remaining food before the parent/guardian receives the child. If your child has specific dietary requirements, please meet with our EC Staff.

All meals and snacks are provided by the family for children in the Newborn through the 1's classes for health and safety reasons.

## Lunch

Nutritious foods are vital to the health of your child. Therefore, candy and soda are not permitted. Make sure lunches are clearly labeled with your child's name. Lunches that need to be kept cold must have an ice pack. Thermoses for hot food are helpful as we are not able to heat foods. **No lunches will be heated or refrigerated for students in Infant Room 3 and older.** Feel free to be creative and send food that your child enjoys eating. **Please check with your child's teacher to find out if there are allergy restrictions for their classroom.**

For your convenience, you may purchase lunches through our provider, Tampa Lunch Company, [tampalunch.com](http://tampalunch.com). When a lunch is forgotten, an emergency lunch will be provided and billed to the parent.

## Food Safety

Per Child Care Licensing, foods that are associated with young children's choking incidents must not be served to children under 4 years of age, such as, but not limited to, whole/round hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, cheese cubes/sticks and any food that is of similar shape and size of the trachea/windpipe. Food for infants (up to 12 months) must be cut into pieces ¼ inch or smaller, food for toddlers (12 months to 3 years old) must be cut into pieces ½ inch or smaller to prevent choking.

**This applies to all food, even food provided by parents/guardians.**

**Parents shall label all food items with their child's first and last name.**

For school-wide or multi-class activities involving food, every effort will be made to provide separate seating to avoid exposure to allergens.

# Student Life

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Food brought into the EC by parents for staff shall remain in the rotunda or EC breakroom to avoid allergen exposure to children in the classroom. For children walking in finishing their breakfast, children should finish their food in the rotunda before proceeding to the classroom.

The school's food vendor will provide allergen free options for the children in the class. All special treats or snacks must be allergen free with ingredient labels available.

## Water Bottles

Students are expected to bring a water bottle daily. Water bottles should be filled with water only and must be labeled with their first and last name. (Juice or sports drinks will not be permitted).

## Soiled Clothing

In the course of a day, your child will paint, enjoy water-play, climb outside, tumble on the rug, spill their juice and often use their sleeve as a napkin. We do have smocks and require that the children wear them before doing anything wet or messy. From past experience we know that the smocks do not keep children totally clean or dry. Children often reach under to scratch a leg and suddenly red paint is everywhere. We do not want the children to feel they must restrict their play and exploration because they are afraid of getting dirty. **Please provide a full set of extra clothing at all times for your child.**

## Backpacks

We ask that you provide a backpack large enough to contain the following for your child: artwork, rest items, weekly folder, soiled clothes, and a lunch box. It will keep all these items contained and easier to take home. Please be sure to have them labeled with your child's first and last name.

## Bringing Things from Home

Children may bring a small sheet or blanket and a soft rest time friend for rest time. Non-curricular items are **not permitted** at school and **must be left at home or in your car**. Separating children from these objects in the classroom can be very traumatizing and disruptive to their day.

Although we do our best to keep track of your child's items, occasionally items are misplaced or mistreated. Please leave all valuable or irreplaceable items at home. The Early Childhood Program faculty is not responsible for personal items brought from home.

**A special note on pacifiers and sipper cups:** Pacifiers are allowed at any time for children in the newborn through 1's rooms. Children in the 1 / 2's classroom may use a pacifier at rest time and will begin using open cups. Children over 2 years old are not permitted to use either pacifiers or sippy cups in the classroom.

Your child's first AND last name must be labeled on all bottles, pacifiers, sippy cups and water bottles.

## Rest Time

Rest time is a very pleasant, relaxing time of day. Your child's blanket and favorite cuddly toy await, soothing music is played and the lights are low. We sit down and rub backs until everyone is resting peacefully.

Students have their individual cribs (under 12 months old) and mats (1 year and older). Infants are placed on their back to sleep. They may assume a different position as they learn to roll over.

**Pillows are not allowed** for sanitary reasons.

We ask you provide your child with a **small** blanket and something soft and cuddly labeled with your child's first and last name. We are very limited on space so please keep these items cubby size and not too bulky. Large mats, sleeping bags, and oversized blankets must be kept at home. Rest items will be sent home Friday afternoons for laundering. Please return them on Monday morning.

# Student Progress & Development

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## Assessments

Formal assessments are done in the fall and spring. Assessment Reports will be sent home to families once formal assessments are completed.

Additional assessments may be performed as necessary to gain greater understanding of your child's social, emotional, physical or cognitive development. Examples include tools that assess phonemic awareness, numeracy, etc.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held periodically throughout the year. This is a time to exchange information and set goals, as well as report on your child's progress. Teachers will schedule times individually with parents. Parents may request a conference with the teacher at any time. Face to face communication is welcome and encouraged. If either a teacher or parent feels that an additional conference is necessary, an appointment will be scheduled.

## Student Placement

Many hours of work go into building classroom rosters. Age, maturity level, development, academic ability, and character, to name a few, are all considered during placement. The goal is to place your child in the room that is best suited to meet his/her needs and help him/her be successful. By age 3 your child will need to be potty trained, as they do not have diaper changing facilities in those rooms.

Florida law (Section 1003.21(1)(a)2, Florida Statutes) specifies that children who have attained the age of five years on or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for admission to public kindergarten.

## Potty Learning

At Trinity School for Children, toilet learning is viewed as a significant developmental milestone that supports a child's physical, cognitive, and emotional growth. Success in this process requires a strong partnership between families and teachers. When adults collaborate, children feel more confident and comfortable, making the transition smoother.

Research suggests that the optimal window for successful toilet training is between 27 and 32 months of age. However, each child is an individual who develops at his or her own rate so readiness should always be determined by their own developmental cues.

Our teachers are skilled with helping families navigate the toilet learning process. We begin with potty exposure and encourage parents to provide these opportunities at home. This will help their child feel comfortable with the bathroom environment and sitting on the potty chair. Teachers are also skilled with knowing the readiness signs for toilet training. Communication between parents and teachers to discuss plans for potty training is crucial to begin potty training. Please contact your child's teacher before requesting potty training at school. A meeting will take place to discuss a plan. If you have any questions or concerns about the potty learning experience, please reach out to your child's teacher.

Your child will need to be potty trained to enter the 3/4 classrooms as we do not have diaper changing facilities in those rooms. As your child transitions into this phase, it is best to use pull-ups with the Velcro sides as this helps to encourage independence and fine motor skills. The goal is for your child to be out of pull-ups, including during rest time, when transitioning to the 3/4s classroom.

# Emergency Warnings

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## **Inclement Weather**

If it should become necessary to close the school for any reason, the announcement will be made over the local radio/T.V. stations. When possible, notification will be posted on our website and/or via email and Brightwheel. In times of natural disasters, such as hurricanes, the center will follow whatever instructions the Hillsborough County School District renders regarding the closing of area schools.

## **Communication During an Emergency**

**Our primary concern in emergency situations is the safety of our students.** The decision of when and how to notify families is made in conjunction with emergency personnel that are on the scene (i.e. the chief of police, the fire chief, etc). The decision of when and how to release students during an emergency is also made in conjunction with emergency personnel.

# **School Board 2025-2026**

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## **TAMPA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Trinity School for Children was created in 1999 by Tampa School Development Corporation, a 501c (3) non-profit corporation. The Board of Directors for this corporation serves as Trinity's School Board and governing body.

The purpose of the Trinity School for Children Board is to assure the education of students from infants through Upper School is in accordance with the educational philosophy of Bank Street College of Education. In addition, the intent of the Board is to raise, receive, manage and oversee the expenditure of funds in the direct provision of programming for children and youth, either solely or in concert with other agencies. The membership of the Board shall consist of only the members of the Board of Directors, referred to herein as the School Board.

### **School Board 2025-2026**

President, Katie Tinley  
Past President, Therese Holmes  
Secretary, Brad Abbey  
Treasurer, Marco Mendoza  
Board Members, Ronald D. Darrigo, Esq., Liezette Felicione  
Celeste Greco  
Parental Involvement Representative  
Yvette Gonzalez, 813-874-2402,  
Yvette.gonzalez@trinitysfc.com

### **Mission Statement**

We are committed to facilitate and support the highest quality of education through strategic planning, communication and accountability. By modeling the school's values, we shall foster a dynamic, nurturing and safe environment for lifelong learning for our Trinity School for Children family.

### **School Board**

The Board, under the leadership of the President and with the support of the Principal, maintains the integrity of the Bank Street College of Education philosophy and the values of the Trinity School for Children, while ensuring efficiency and accountability.

The Board and Principal are supported in meeting their accountability through full utilization of the corporate strategic planning process. The planning process enables the Board to develop, implement and review an integrated strategy used in identifying, developing and allocating resources considered necessary to meet the needs of our charter staff and students.

### **History**

The Tampa School Development Corporation, sponsoring corporation of Trinity School for Children, was founded and incorporated in January 1999. The corporation's board consisted of a group of parents, educators and community business professionals who demanded an alternative to traditional education for all children and their families. The Board's belief in the Bank Street philosophy of education was rooted in a conviction so strong, that they conquered insurmountable odds to open Trinity School for Children on August 12, 1999.

The Board's goal was met by opening a school with a quality administration, faculty and curriculum driven by the sole purpose of educating in an understanding, developmentally appropriate learning environment. Centered on a social studies curriculum, the children were to learn how their academics affect their relationship with the world around them. By emphasizing mutual respect, self-expression, creative and inquisitive thinking, the students at Trinity School for Children proved that children naturally love to learn. They proved that school is an extension of their personal development. An open-enrollment charter school, Trinity School for Children was made available to all children in the greater Tampa Bay area.

## TAMPA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

### Governance

Tampa School Development Corporation operates under the Sunshine Law Standards as they apply to charter schools and public entities.

### Meetings

Meetings are usually held once a month, but subject to change, and are open to the public. Board workshops are held as needed. A calendar of the year's scheduled meetings, times and locations is available on the school's website at [www.trinitysfc.org](http://www.trinitysfc.org). Changes in this calendar are posted in the front offices.

### Public Accessibility

Copies of all documents pertaining to the organizational structure and operation of the Tampa School Development Corporation/School Board are kept in the Trinity School for Children office and are available for public viewing by request to the corporate secretary.

These documents include, but are not limited to:

- The School's Charter
- Corporation By-laws and Articles of Incorporation
- 501c(3) Determination Letter
- Sales Tax Exemption
- Financial and Operational Records
- Approved Board Meeting Minutes

### Confidentiality

All Records pertaining to students and employees, deemed confidential by the State of Florida, remain in the office in secured fireproof file cabinets.

### Disciplinary Procedures

Trinity School for Children's success is achieved through the collaborative efforts of students, parents, faculty and the civic environment creating a mutual respect for each other.

Attending Trinity School for Children is **not an entitlement** for your children; **it is a choice**. As a family, you make the choice to enroll your children and abide by our policies and procedures. The school has the right to choose to dismiss any child whose family does not abide by our stated policies. Our expectation is that as a Trinity family you follow all of our policies.

When children misbehave at our school there are consequences. Generally, classroom teachers handle minor issues; if the problems escalate then our division coordinators and/or our guidance staff may become involved; and, when the issues become major or reoccurring, the principal will take action. The ultimate consequence of continuous misbehavior is student dismissal.

As a Board, it is our responsibility to maintain a collaborative and safe learning environment by crafting clear policies and procedures for members of our school community, including students, parents, visitors, and family members, and making sure that those policies and procedures are fairly and consistently enforced. Infractions of policies and/or procedures will be heard either by the School Board or by the Board's Disciplinary Committee. Individuals are notified that they must appear before the Board or Disciplinary Committee in writing. If brought before the Board or its Disciplinary Committee, families will have the opportunity to state their case. If a parent or family fails to appear, that individual's child(ren) may be subjected to immediate dismissal from Trinity School for Children.

## **TAMPA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Below is a list of the various disciplinary infractions that the School Board and/or Disciplinary Committee may handle. This is a working document, however, the School Board and/or Disciplinary Committee has discretion to modify or add to the list of infractions.

### **Infractions that may result in immediate dismissal of your children from Trinity:**

- Bringing weapons, drugs, or alcohol onto school grounds.
- Engaging in behaviors outlined in the zero tolerance policies (See “Parent Expectations” and “Student Expectations” sections of this handbook).
- Threatening or physically hurting a staff member, student, or parent.
- Violating probation set by the School Board/Disciplinary Committee/Administration.

### **Infractions that may be addressed by the disciplinary committee include:**

- Violating the school’s parking policies.
- Violating the school’s drop-off and/or pick-up procedures
- Bouncing checks to the school and failing to correct the matter immediately.
- Failure to keep your accounts payable to the school in good standing.
- Failure to follow the rules established by individual teachers for Field Study experiences.
- Failure to procure a Visitor's Badge when asked to do so by staff or Board members.
- Failure to attend mandatory teacher conferences or classroom meetings.
- Failure to complete the required number of parent hours.
- Repeated failure to support/respect our philosophy and/or our mission.
- Failure to act in accordance with the Parent Handbook.
- Providing inaccurate information when asked to provide your name to a staff or board member.
- Failure to comply with reasonable requests made by a staff or board member.

## **Grievance Procedure**

The following is the proper protocol for Trinity School for Children families who have a grievance or concern to voice:

1. Schedule a time with your child’s teacher to discuss the issue.
2. If further action is needed, schedule an appointment with Administration to discuss the issue.
3. If further action is still needed, schedule an appointment with the Principal to discuss the issue.
4. If further action is still needed, schedule an appointment with the CEO to discuss the issue.
5. After the above four steps are taken and you feel your issue has not been handled to your satisfaction, you may contact the School Board President, Katie Tinley, at [Katie.Tinley@trinitysfc.com](mailto:Katie.Tinley@trinitysfc.com).

This procedure has been set up because your concerns are important to us. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## TAMPA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

### Special Magistrate Procedure

If none of the above steps are successful you may email [TSFCSpecialMagistrate@trinitysfc.com](mailto:TSFCSpecialMagistrate@trinitysfc.com) to seek relief using the following Special Magistrate School Procedure.

#### 6A-1.094125 Special Magistrate for Unresolved Student Welfare Complaints.

- (1) Purpose. As an alternative to filing a declaratory judgment action in court against a school district, a student's parent may request a Special Magistrate be appointed to address a parent's dispute involving the requirements described in s. 1001.42(8)(c), F.S. The purpose of this rule is to provide information about the process to request appointment of a Special Magistrate.
- (2) Definitions. In this rule, the terms have the following meaning:
  - (a) "Days" means business days and excludes state, federal and school district holidays;
  - (b) "Department" means the Florida Department of Education;
  - (c) "Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate" or "Parental Request" means the written form adopted by and incorporated into this rule.
  - (d) "Parent" means the definition of that term provided in s. 1000.21, F.S.;
  - (e) "Parties" means the parent who submitted a request for appointment of a special magistrate and the school district;
  - (f) "Special Magistrate" means an administrative law judge provided by the Division of Administrative Hearings under s. 120.65(6), F.S., or a person appointed by the Commissioner of Education who is a member of the Florida Bar in good standing with a minimum of five years of administrative law experience;
- (3) Parental Obligations. In order to request appointment of a special magistrate, a parent must:
  - (a) Complete the form entitled "Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate;"
  - (b) Describe the nature of the dispute;
  - (c) Describe the resolution or relief sought at the school and school district level;
  - (d) Describe the resolution sought from the special magistrate and the State Board of Education;
  - (e) Demonstrate that before filing for the appointment of a special magistrate, resolution of the dispute was sought by the parent with the student's principal and subsequent to that, resolution was sought by the parent at the school district level, all in accordance with the procedures adopted by the school district for resolution of the dispute; and
  - (f) Provide and maintain accurate contact information such as an email address, telephone number and mailing address for the parent.
- (4) School District Obligations. Each school district must:
  - (a) Designate at least one person responsible for responding to Departmental inquiries regarding a request for appointment of a special magistrate and notify the Department of the name and email address of the individual;
  - (b) Within five (5) days of receipt of notice that a parent has requested the appointment of a special magistrate as described in subsection (3), provide to the Department a statement addressing whether any of the grounds for dismissal as described in paragraph (5)(b) of this rule apply to the parental request for appointment of a special magistrate; and
  - (c) Expeditiously contract for payment of a special magistrate appointed by the Commissioner of Education and notify the Department within no more than twenty (20) days after receiving notice of the appointment of a Special Magistrate that an agreement has been reached for payment with the appointed special magistrate.

**TAMPA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**Special Magistrate Procedure (continued)**

(5) Department of Education Obligations.

(a) Review of “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate.” Upon receipt of the form entitled “Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate,” the Department will:

1. Review the form and provide an opportunity for the parent to provide missing or supplemental information within twenty (20) days of receipt of a Departmental notice that missing or supplemental information is needed;
2. Notify the school district of receipt of the Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate; and
3. Provide written notice to the parent and school district that the request has been provided to the Commissioner of Education for consideration or provide notice of dismissal of the Parental Request.

(b) Dismissal of Parental Request for Appointment of Special Magistrate by the Department. The Department will dismiss a Parental Request under the following circumstances:

1. The parent notifies the Department that the dispute has been resolved or withdrawn;
2. The Parental Request form has not been substantially completed, after the opportunity to provide missing or supplemental information has been provided;
3. The parent has not demonstrated full and complete use of any school and school district procedures adopted by the district under s. 1001.42(8)(c)7., F.S., for resolving the dispute;
4. The matter in dispute falls under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended, and its implementing regulations, or under s. 1003.56, F.S., and rules adopted by the Department to implement s. 1003.56, F.S., or is otherwise outside of the scope of the student welfare requirements set forth in s. 1001.42(8)(c)1.-7., F.S.; or
5. The parent has failed to maintain accurate contact information with the Department or the Special Magistrate.

(c) Obligations Post Appointment of Special Magistrate. Upon appointment of a special magistrate by the Commissioner under subsection (6) of this rule, the Department will:

1. Provide the parties notice of the appointment of a Special Magistrate and advise the parties of the following:
  - a. the name and contact information of the special magistrate;
  - b. the time frame when the special magistrate is expected to provide a written recommendation to the State Board of Education; and
  - c. the requirement to maintain accurate contact information with the Department and the Magistrate;
2. Provide to the Special Magistrate the following:
  - a. The Parental Request and any supplemental information received by the Department upon review of the Parental Request; and
  - b. In order to allow sufficient time for review by the State Board of Education of a recommendation rendered by the Special Magistrate, the time frame(s) when a recommended decision is expected to be provided by the Special Magistrate to the parties and the State Board of Education. This timeframe may be extended by agreement of the parties.

(6) Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner of Education will review each pending completed Parental Request and decide whether to appoint a special magistrate utilizing the following factors:

- (a) Whether there is authority and the ability to provide effective relief to the parent through the special magistrate process;
- (b) Whether the parent is seeking or has already sought relief in court;
- (c) Whether due to a change in circumstances, such as a change in a student’s school or grade level or a change in procedures or training, the dispute is moot or not ripe; and
- (d) Whether grounds for dismissal of the Parental Request, as described in paragraph (5)(b) of this rule, are found to exist.

**TAMPA SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**Special Magistrate Procedure (continued)**

(7) Special Magistrate Procedures.

(a) Where an administrative law judge provided by the Division of Administrative Hearings is available and assigned to act as the Special Magistrate, proceedings before the Special Magistrate will be held in accordance with the rules of the Division of Administrative Hearings, except where inconsistent with this rule or s. 1001.42(8)(c), F.S.

(b) Where a Division of Administrative Hearings administrative law judge is unavailable or the Commissioner appoints the Special Magistrate; the following procedures apply:

1. The special magistrate shall set and notify all parties of the time and place of the hearings.
  2. Any party directly involved in the proceeding may appear at the hearing with or without counsel or by other representative.
  3. The parties or the magistrate may call, examine, and cross-examine witnesses and enter evidence into the record. Witnesses shall be examined under oath. Evidentiary matters before the special magistrate shall be governed by the Administrative Procedures Act.
  4. The magistrate may permit the submission of written memorandum by the parties.
- (c) Following the close of the hearing, the Special Magistrate shall prepare a recommended decision, determining whether a parent has demonstrated a violation of the requirements of s. 1001.42(8)(c), F.S., by the school district. The Special Magistrate's recommended decision shall be based upon the evidence presented and argument made before the special magistrate. The recommendation shall include findings of fact and recommendations for resolution of the dispute by the parties.
- (d) The Special Magistrate's recommended decision is due within thirty (30) days of the date a parent request is received by the special magistrate from the Department. The 30-day time frame can be extended upon agreement of the parent and school district. A party may be deemed to have agreed to an extension if unavailable for hearing at the date and time set or where a party fails to timely respond to scheduling orders issued by the magistrate.

(8) The following form is incorporated by reference and may be obtained at

<https://www.fldoe.org/schools/k-12-public-schools/>:

Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate, Form No. SM-1 (effective September 2022).  
*Rulemaking Authority 1001.02(1), (2)(n), 1001.42(8)(c), FS. Law Implemented 1001.42(8)(c)7.b., FS. History - New*

**Parent Partner Association**  
**PPA**  
**2025-2026**

## Parent Partner Association (PPA)

The PPA is a group of dedicated parents and teachers that want the best for our children. We are committed to enriching students' education and young lives through community fundraisers and events for the whole family. We also provide volunteer opportunities, because we know that when parents are involved at school, children go farther, and the school excels. When parents, school staff, students, and the community work together, the students win. All funds raised by the PPA go directly to enhance the learning environment at our school.

### Mission Statement

The purpose of this PPA is to provide programs and fundraisers that enhance educationally related opportunities for our students, our teachers, and the community.

### 2025-2026 PPA Executive Officers

<b>President</b>	Jennifer Crisafulli	jencrisa@gmail.com
<b>Vice President</b>	Jillian Anderson	jillianem87@gmail.com
<b>Treasurers</b>	Kaley Abbey Lindsay Procopio	kaley.dewey@gmail.com procopiolindsay@gmail.com
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Courtney Geoghegan	courtneygeoghegan@yahoo.com

### PPA Board Members

<b>Annual Giving Fund</b>	Jennifer Crisafulli	jencrisa@gmail.com
<b>Community Events Coordinators</b>	Ashley Fox Amanda Maddocks Jessi Losado	Ashley.fox@legrand.com AmandaBMaddocks@gmail.com JBuscia@gmail.com
<b>Holiday Shop Chair</b>	Debbie Morales	trinityholidayshop@gmail.com
<b>Homeroom Parent Coordinators</b>	Abbey Ahern - 5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Ashlee Odom - K-4 <sup>th</sup> Lindsay Seel - EC	abbey.d.ahern@gmail.com aodom9713@gmail.com lindsaypseel@gmail.com
<b>Lost &amp; Found Coordinator</b>	Katy Smith	curlykate7@aol.com
<b>Marketing Asset Coordinators</b>	Danielle Sherwin Shana Nichols	daniellejsherwin@gmail.com shananichols18@gmail.com
<b>Read-A-Thon Chairs</b>	Deviney Haley Alexa Leto Natalie Rivera	deviney.haley@ja.org alexaletto20@gmail.com nshultz74@gmail.com

## Parent Partner Association (PPA)

### PPA Board Members (continued)

<b>School Supplies Chairs</b>	Jennifer Bush Rebecca Larrea	jmg0751@yahoo.com
<b>Teacher Appreciation Coordinators</b>	Joana Lopez Brittany Williams Jenna Whiteside	lopezfamilylest19@gmail.com brittr28@aol.com jennanwhiteside@gmail.com
<b>Parent Hour Coordinators</b>	Ciara Calitri Marley Wilkes	TrinityParentHours@gmail.com
<b>Used Uniform Chairs</b>	Jillian Anderson Brian Alexander Bethany Muldowney	jillianem87@gmail.com balexander99@icloud.com bswicon@gmail.com

### Meetings

PPA Meetings will be announced via the PPA weekly blast. Parents are encouraged to take part in these meetings and become an active member of our school community. You can earn parent hours by attending meetings.

### Fundraising

The PPA sponsors various levels of fundraising initiatives each year, all of which are voluntary. They are spread throughout the school calendar and are a great opportunity for families to take advantage of volunteer hours and provide the school with consistent financial support. In addition, there are a few community fundraisers to provide our families an opportunity to get to know each other. Funds raised by the PPA go directly to enhancing the learning environment at our school.

### Committees

#### Annual Voluntary Giving Fund Committee

This committee is responsible for setting the rollout and collection of the Annual Voluntary Giving Fund during the beginning weeks of each school year. This committee must work closely with Development to organize and track the collections and receive the list of contributors' names.

#### Community Events Committee

This committee is responsible for scheduling and coordinating community-wide events with the PPA Executive Board and Administration. The committee will create advertisements for the events, coordinate with the Treasurer in the collection of any monies, and solicit and organize volunteer efforts, if applicable. After each event, the committee will report volunteer hours to the Parent Hour Coordinators for timely credit.

## **Parent Partner Association (PPA)**

### **Committees (continued)**

#### **Holiday Shop Committee**

This committee is responsible for coordinating the Holiday Shop with the PPA Executive Board and Administration. This committee will have a PPA Chairperson(s) to spearhead this event. The committee will collect crafts and donations to display on campus for students to purchase. The committee must work with the teachers to create a shopping schedule for the students. The committee must coordinate with the PPA Treasurer to obtain a cash box, ensure proceeds are properly deposited and accounted for, and submit daily cash box proceeds to the accounting office (Greco Hall). Additionally, the committee must clean up the room used, and return unsold items to the PPA closet. After the event, the committee will report volunteer hours to the Parent Hour Coordinators for timely credit.

#### **Lost and Found Committee**

This committee is responsible for the lost and found bins at each building. The committee will ensure the bins stay organized and look presentable by performing a monthly clean out. The committee will organize items into trash, donate or return piles. The committee will create sign-ups to get parents involved with these responsibilities and offer parent hours.

#### **Marketing & Asset Committee**

This committee works with Development and the PPA Executive Board in marketing and advertising all Trinity PPA events. They are responsible for developing visual marketing ideas to utilize in announcing and advertising specific school events in our community. The committee will report any volunteer hours to the Parent Hour Coordinators for timely credit.

#### **Read-A-Thon Committee**

This committee is responsible for working with Development to schedule start and end dates for the fundraiser and the kick-off assembly date. This committee will have a PPA Chairperson(s) to spearhead this event. The committee will assist with advertisements for the fundraiser, propose incentive prizes to the PPA Executive Board for approval, and send fundraiser packets/flyers to the community. Throughout the fundraiser, the committee will respond to inquiries and questions in a timely manner. At the end of the fundraiser, the committee will report volunteer hours to the Parent Hour Coordinator for timely credit.

#### **School Supplies Committee**

This committee works with Administration to compile grade level lists of common school supplies needed for each grade. This committee will have a PPA Chairperson(s) to spearhead this event. The committee will coordinate and organize community supply areas on campus during the month of June, and as needed prior to the new school year starting. The committee may recruit parent volunteers and report volunteer hours to the Parent Hour Coordinators for timely credit.

#### **Teacher Appreciation Committee**

This committee coordinates with Administration to plan ways throughout the school year to thank our teachers for their wonderful work and dedication to our student body. The committee will solicit volunteers and communicate approved information to Homeroom Parents regarding the official community celebration of our teachers. The committee must report volunteer hours to the Parent Hour Coordinators for timely credit.

## **Parent Partner Association (PPA)**

### **Committees (continued)**

#### **Used Uniform Committee**

This committee is responsible for scheduling Used Uniform Sales events with Administration and the PPA Executive Officers. This committee will have a PPA Chairperson(s) to spearhead these events, typically two sales per year. The committee will collect donated uniform items, task committee volunteer assistants to ensure items are in “for sale” condition, and store said items before and after each sale. The committee must also coordinate with the PPA Treasurer timely manner to obtain a cash box, ensure proceeds are properly accounted for, and submit cash box proceeds to the accounting office (Greco Hall) or to an Executive Board Member for deposit. Additionally, the committee must clean up the location utilized for the sale and remove unsold items immediately after each sale event. At the end of the sale, the committee