



Reading FriendsSM

The first step in successSM

**Parent
Handbook**

2012 - 2013

Reading Friends

Information and Policies

2012 - 2013

Classes begin on Tuesday, September 4, 2012

**Morning pre-school begins each day
at 9:00 a.m. and is dismissed
at 12:00 noon**

**Extended day is on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from
12:00 noon until 2:00 p.m. beginning on Monday, September
17, 2012, for Monday, Wednesday and Friday students only.**

Please read all policies carefully

Mission Statement

We live in a reading world; therefore, Reading Friends is dedicated to providing the young child a foundation for educational excellence.

Nancy Spencer
Founder

Audrey Fowler
Director

Shary Harman
Director

Leigh Pauling
Director

www.readingfriends.org

Parent Login Page
Login: FortWorth
Password: R3ad!ng

Reading Friends
5228 Pershing
Ft. Worth, Texas 76107
817-738-9430 phone
817-732-2079 fax
office@readingfriends.org
nancyspencer@readingfriends.org
audrey@readingfriends.org

Reading Friends Staff

Nancy T. Spencer	Founder
Audrey Fowler	Director
Shary Harman	Director/Developmental Class
Leigh Pauling	Director/Developmental Class/Primary & PK Art
Janet Hess	Developmental Class
Marcy Henry	Developmental Class
Megan Roland	Developmental Class/ Primary Language & Music
Brenda Witherspoon	Developmental Class/PK Discovery Time
Adrienne Relyea	Primary Math
Keely Marshall	Primary Motor Primary Outside
Tita Schmid	PK Math
Dina Simpson	PK Motor
Erica Sands	PK Outside

READING FRIENDS HAS THE ***RIGHT CURRICULUM***, THE ***RIGHT COMMITMENT***, AND IS THE ***RIGHT PLACE***. LET US FOCUS ON YOUR CHILD.

KINDERGARTEN PREPAREDNESS IS NOT JUST ABOUT A CHILD RECOGNIZING SHAPES, RECITING THE ALPHABET, AND/OR RECOGNIZING THE DAYS OF THE WEEK.

OURS IS A CULTURE AND AN EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE IN WHICH INCREASED EMPHASIS IS PUT ON PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS. PARENTS AND SCHOOLS ARE EXPECTING MORE OF CHILDREN BECAUSE RESEARCH IN THE PAST DECADE HAS SHOWN YOUNG CHILDREN ARE CAPABLE OF MORE THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT. MOST SKILLS CAN NOT WAIT UNTIL THE FIRST GRADE TO BE LEARNED.

EDUCATORS REALIZE YOU CAN INSTILL IN THE YOUNG CHILD HIS OR HER PERCEPTION OF SUCCESS AND A LOVE FOR LEARNING. THE READING FRIENDS™ PRESCHOOL IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDING THE YOUNG CHILD A FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE.

THE READING FRIENDS DIFFERENCE

• CURRICULUM

WE USE A MULTI SENSORY TEACHING TECHNIQUE INVOLVING THE TOTAL CHILD.

THE PHONICS ADVANTAGE© CURRICULUM IS A LANGUAGE BASED PROGRAM THAT IS THE HEART OF OUR PROPRIETARY CURRICULA.

CHILDREN RECEIVE STRUCTURED ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES THAT PRODUCE A FIRM FOUNDATION IN READING, WRITING, SPELLING, EXPRESSION, MATH, GROSS MOTOR, CREATIVE ART, MUSIC, SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE FREEPLAY.

• SOCIAL

THE READING FRIENDS PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE SUCCESSFUL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR LEARNING STYLES. CHILDREN HAVE DAILY OUTSIDE PLAYGROUND TIME AND SNACK WHERE THEY EXPERIMENT WITH SOCIAL INTERACTION AND COOPERATION.

• HOURS

READING FRIENDS BELIEVES CHILDREN ARE BEST PREPARED FOR KINDERGARTEN WHEN THEY ARE ABLE TO PRACTICE A REAL WORLD SCHOOL DAY; THEREFORE, READING FRIENDS ACADEMICS AND CLASS ACTIVITIES START AT 9:00 AM AND END AT NOON WITH OPTIONS FOR EXTENDED SOCIAL INTERACTIONS THREE DAYS A WEEK UNTIL 2:00 PM. READING FRIENDS DOES NOT OFFER DAYCARE AND/OR BABYSITTING SERVICES.

• TEACHERS

READING FRIENDS TEACHERS MUST HAVE COMPLETED THE BASIC AND ADVANCED READING FRIENDS CURRICULUM CERTIFICATION.

• STUDENT RATIO

READING FRIENDS SERVES A FINITE AMOUNT OF CHILDREN AND STRIVES TO MAINTAIN THE NURTURING INTIMACY THAT CREATES A SOLID FOUNDATION OF SELF CONFIDENCE IN THE CLASSROOM. OUR TYPICAL STUDENT RATIO FOR 3-5 YEAR OLD STUDENTS IS 12:1 AND THE RATIO FOR 2 YEAR OLD STUDENTS IS 6:1.

Curriculum Concepts

Developmental Class

Our programs for children age 2 - 3 focus on the following skills:

- Receptive language development
- Verbal expression
- Vocabulary development
- Perceptual motor training
- Listening skills
- Number recognition
- Color recognition
- Shape recognition
- Creative art
- Singing (music)
- Indoor and outdoor play

Primary Class

Our programs for children age 3 - 4 focus on the following skills:

- Pre-reading skills
- Letter recognition
- Receptive language development
- Verbal expression
- Vocabulary development
- Perceptual motor training
- Listening skills
- Number recognition
- Color recognition
- Shape recognition
- Creative art
- Singing (music)
- Indoor and outdoor play

Pre-Kindergarten Class

Our programs for children age 4 - 5 focus on the following skills:

- basic phonetic concepts
- sound-symbol association
- coding and blending
- decoding-spelling
- handwriting
- basic math concepts (addition, subtraction, fractions, time)
- vocabulary development
- verbal expression
- creative art
- singing (music)
- social studies
- science
- life skills
- indoor and outdoor play

All Classes

All children enrolled in the Reading Friends program will have classes in:

- Spatial awareness-laterality and directionality
- Balance
- Locomotion
- Visual-motor coordination
- Rhythm
- Gross motor coordination
- Fine motor coordination
- Body image

**Reading Friends
School Calendar 2012 – 2013**

- * Parent Orientation – Monday, August 27, 2012.
- * First Day of School – Tuesday, September 4, 2012.
- * First Extended Day – Monday, September 17, 2012.
- * Columbus Day Holiday – Monday, October 8, 2012 – no class
- * Group and individual school pictures:
Primary Class group and individual pictures – Wednesday, October 10, 2012.

Developmental Class group and individual pictures –Thursday, October 11, 2012.

Pre-kindergarten Class group and individual pictures –Tuesday and Wednesday, October 10 and 11, 2012.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKE UP DAYS FOR PICTURES
- * Pre-Kindergarten fall conference day – to be announced
- * Harvest Parties **DO NOT SEND ANY FOOD ITEM WITH NUTS**
Developmental Class – Tuesday, October 30, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.
Primary Class – Wednesday, October 31, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten Class – Wednesday, October 31, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.

COSTUMES ARE OPTIONAL
- * Thanksgiving break – regular dismissal on Friday, November 16, 2012. Stay Late will be held on Friday, November, 16, 2012. Classes resume on Monday, November 26, 2012.
- * Christmas parties **DO NOT SEND ANY FOOD ITEM WITH NUTS**
Primary Class – Monday, December 17, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten Class – Tuesday, December 18, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.
Developmental Class – Tuesday, December 18, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.
- * Christmas break – Regular dismissal on Thursday, December 20, 2012. Classes resume on Tuesday, January 8, 2013.
- * Spring conference day - to be announced for:
Developmental Class
Primary Class

Pre-Kindergarten Class

- * Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – Monday, January 21, 2013 – no class

- * Valentine’s Doughnuts with Dads
Primary Class – Wednesday, February 13, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.
Developmental Class – Thursday, February 14, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten Class – Thursday, February 14, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.

- * President’s Day holiday - Monday February 18, 2013 – no class

- * Spring break – regular dismissal on Friday March 8, 2013. Stay Late will be held on Friday March 8, 2013. Classes resume on Monday March 18, 2013.

- * Easter parties **DO NOT SEND ANY FOOD ITEM WITH NUTS**
Primary Class – Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at 11:15 a.m.
Developmental Class – Thursday, March 28, 2013 at 11:15 a.m.
Pre-Kindergarten Class – Thursday, March 28, 2013 at 11:15 a.m.

- * Good Friday - Friday March 29, 2013 – no class

- * Easter Monday Holiday – Monday, April 1, 2013 – no class

- * Pre-Kindergarten Class program – Monday, April 29, 2013 at 11:15 a.m.

- * Last extended day – Friday, May 10, 2013.

- * Last day of class – Wednesday, May 15, 2013.

School Policies

Arrival and Dismissal of Children

The doors to the school will unlock each morning at 8:50 a.m. Children will be signed in each morning upon arrival in class. Children will be dismissed to a parent or authorized individual and placed in a car seat or seat belt in the back seat of the car. By law, no child will be allowed in the front seat. Under no circumstances will a child be released to an unauthorized person without written permission and proof of identity.

Illness and Exclusion

Children who become ill during their time at school will need to be picked up immediately upon notification. We will remove the child from the group and keep them comfortable until the parent arrives. The child will be supervised while waiting. A child who develops a temperature of 100.4° will not be allowed at school.

Parents will be required to provide alternate or emergency phone numbers at time of enrollment.

Dispensing Medication

Reading Friends will not dispense medication to children since we are only open three hours per day during normal class times. If your child is asthmatic or has allergies, please notify the office. If your child uses an inhaler or an EIP-PIN, please provide one for the school with written authorization to administer in the event of an emergency. No other medications will be given at school.

Procedures for Handling Medical Emergencies

If your child has a medical emergency that needs special attention immediately and you cannot be reached, we will call an ambulance so the child can be transported to the appropriate medical facility.

Parental Notifications

Parents will be notified immediately of the following situations:

1. Injury to a child that required medical attention;
2. A child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the center;
3. A child has been involved in any situation that placed the child at risk;
4. A situation that causes the center to become unsafe, such as fire, flood, or damage to the building due to weather.
5. If your child injures another child, you will be called and your child will be sent home.

Parents will be notified at the time of pickup of less serious situations, including, but not limited to:

1. Minor cuts
2. Scratches
3. Bites
4. Various first-aid treatments by employees.

Discipline and Guidance Practices

At Reading Friends, we use a contingency management program for our discipline and guidance of children in the classroom. This program allows the children to become active participants in the classroom because they make the class rules with the teacher's guidance; therefore, they feel a personal ownership of the class. At the beginning of the year, many warnings are given about breaking specific rules. If the warnings are not heeded, the child's symbol (leaf, monkey, ball, etc) will be lowered on the wall with no further verbal reinforcement. As soon as the child's behavior improves, the symbol is raised back to where it was originally, with the other classmates. At this time, verbal praise is given and reinforcement of the good behavior is praised. We have found that this helps children to internalize appropriate behavior. By concentrating on the positive rather than the negative, our classrooms are happier places.

Meals and Food Service Practices

Reading Friends does not allow peanuts or tree nuts in the building. Please do not send any food item with peanuts or nuts of any kind with your child (There is a pecan tree in our backyard). Children with nut allergies are sensitive to even the smell and this can become a life-threatening situation. Please pay close attention to prepared foods such as Lunchables as these can contain nut products.

Snacks will be served daily to all classes. Snacks will include items such as Baked Goldfish, Graham Crackers, Pretzels, etc. Bottled water will also be served to help keep the children hydrated and to cut down on sugar-based juices.

Please do not send your child to school with breakfast items or drinks.

Immunization Requirements

All medical forms, including a complete shot record, wellness statement, and hearing and vision screening (4 yrs and up), must be signed by a physician and returned to the office by date of admission.

The Immunization Record must include the following:

1. The child's name and birth date;
2. The number of doses and vaccine type;
3. The month, day, and year the child received each vaccination;
4. The signature or stamp of the physician or other health care professional who administered the vaccine.

Hearing and Vision Screening Requirements

For children ages 4-5, you must provide Reading Friends the following:

1. The individual visual acuity and sweep check results; or
2. A signed statement stating the results of the hearing/vision tests are on file at another center; or

3. An affidavit stating the screening conflicts with your religious beliefs.

This information must be provided at the time of admission.

Open Door Policy

Reading Friends has an open-door policy with the Director regarding any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the center. We also support an open-door policy for parents who wish to visit the classroom during regular school hours. You are welcome to observe or visit the school at any time. However, discussion of your child's progress or behavior requires a scheduled appointment. A conference may be requested at any time by either the parent or Reading Friends. During school hours, all doors to the school will be locked for your child's protection.

Developmental Class

Our Developmental Class meets two days per week from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Please be prompt. A mid-morning snack will be provided for your child. On the first day of class, please provide a package of diapers and wipes (no pull-ups please). In addition, you will need to provide a change of clothes (shoes and socks included), marked with your child's full name. Children may bring their "security" blanket to help them feel more secure. If your child cries for more than 30 minutes, we will call you. This could be the onset of an illness and the child needs to be at home where he/she can be comforted and monitored.

Please put insect repellent and sun screen on your child every morning before school.

Primary and Pre-K Classes

Our Primary and Pre-K classes meet from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Please be prompt. A mid-morning snack will be provided for your child. If your child cries for more than 30 minutes, we will call you. This could be a sign of the onset of illness and the child needs to be at home where he/she can be comforted and monitored.

Please put insect repellent and sun screen on your child every morning before school.

Tuition

Statements will be mailed on the 25th of each month. Tuition is due on the first day of the month. Please remit promptly. A \$20.00 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received in the office by the 10th of each month. Please make note of this to avoid the additional charge. Non-payment of tuition for two consecutive months will result in non-admittance of your child until the balance is paid in full. There will be a \$25.00 charge for all returned checks.

School Closings

In the event of inclement weather, Reading Friends will announce our closing on KXAS-TV Channel 5 and WFAA – TV Channel 8. Please tune in by 7:00 a.m. Our phone recording will also be updated with closing information as well.

Class Times

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. sharp and dismiss at 12:00 p.m. sharp. Our staff meets every morning before the children arrive to prepare the learning environment. No children are accepted in the building before 8:50 a.m. unless previous arrangements have been made through the office. If you are unable to arrive at dismissal time, notification is required. Parents arriving 10 minutes after dismissal time will be charged a late fee of \$10.00. After 12:10 p.m., a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. Please leave a number of a person who can be reached if the parent or carpool fails to arrive at dismissal time.

Afternoon Extended Day

The afternoon extended day class is offered on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. The extended day class is open to Monday, Wednesday and Friday students only. The first day of extended day will be Monday, September 17, 2013, and the last day will be Friday, May 10, 2013.

All students must bring a lunch and a drink marked with their full name (including drink bottle). **Do not send peanut butter in lunches. If a sandwich is made with sun butter, it must be clearly marked.**

Please make microwaveable lunches and “happy meals” a special treat rather than a weekly occurrence.

Do not send glass containers. Include straws, plastic spoons and forks in lunches as needed. Peel fruit at home. We do not keep sharp knives at school. Please do not send soft drinks in lunches. On occasion, age appropriate videos will be shown. The charge for extended day for one child is \$25.00 per time. The charge for two is \$35.00.

Messages

Please do not ask staff members to deliver messages or personal items to other Reading Friends children/parents. Our staff cannot guarantee such delivery. Please make arrangements outside of school for these exchanges.

Class Parties

Parents interested in participating in class parties may sign up in the office. Please do not send cookies or candy with nuts! No balloons will be allowed for the safety of the children.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special days for children; however, we cannot interrupt class time for birthday parties. If you would like to provide cookies for snack time on your child’s birthday, please notify the office.

Because of Health Department regulations, all cookies provided for the class must be store or bakery bought – not homemade.

Reading Friends will gladly accept books donated to our library to honor your child on his/her special day.

Car Seats

If you need to leave a car seat at Reading Friends for the person picking your child up, please park across the street and walk your child and car seat into the building. Notify the person picking your child up to park across the street and come into the building to get the car seat. We will keep your child in the building until the car seat has been securely fastened in the car.

Conference Days

There will be two regular conference days scheduled for the Pre-kindergarten class - one each semester. The Developmental and Primary classes will have one scheduled conference day during the spring semester. There will be no class on conference day. Parents desiring an additional conference during the year must schedule it through the office. All conferences are oral and must be presented in person.

Please respect that dismissal time demands the staff's full attention. We are not able to answer detailed questions about students during dismissal. Please do not hesitate to call the office with your questions.

Toys

Please do not allow your children to bring toys to school. They will be asked to leave them in the car. Because our focus is on the children, we cannot be responsible for toys, jewelry, or personal items in the class.

Registration

You may register your child or children at any time during the year for the following school year. You may also pre-register infants at birth for the Developmental Class (2 year olds).

Outside Play

Weather permitting; students will participate in outside play everyday. Cool clothes for hot days and warm clothes (hat, gloves, and coat) for cold days. Please mark all items with your child's

name. Please apply insect repellent and sunscreen before arrival at school.

Class Changes (Primary and Pre-K classes)

The children will change groups often in the first few weeks of school. Please do not be alarmed if your child comes home and tells you they have changed groups. We want every child to be in the group that best meets their social, academic and emotional needs. We work very hard to place each child correctly. If we move your child after the first couple of months of school, you will be contacted and consulted before any move is made.

Dress Code

Children may wear shorts, pants, or dresses to Reading Friends. Please dress according to the weather. Sandals, flip flops, and Crocs™ are hard for children to play in, so please discourage these. No boots are allowed at Reading Friends.

Newsletters

Parents will be notified by Newsletter of all school and classroom activities during the school year. These will be posted monthly on the Reading Friends Website Parent Login.

Minimum Standards

A copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards and the most recent licensing inspection report are in the office for you to review at anytime. The phone number and website for the DFPS are (817) 321-8604 and www.dfps.state.tx.us. The phone number for the Child Abuse Hotline is (800) 252-5400.

Our goal at Reading Friends is to provide the safest environment for the children. Each of these policies will help to ensure their safety.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Circular driveway drop off and pick up policy.

Please do not use your cell phone in the carpool line. You will be asked to hang up.

Do not block the driveways of other businesses on Pershing.

At arrival and dismissal time, please enter the driveway from the east, circle to the far end of the parking lot by the bushes, and exit to the west. **Do not try to enter the driveway across oncoming traffic.**

Teachers will be outside each morning to greet your child at 8:50 a.m. Please form a single line on the north side of Pershing heading west and stop at the far end of the parking lot by the bushes to drop off your child. A member of the staff will get children out of the car. **Please stay in your car with your child until a staff member is ready for arrival! Please keep your child buckled in a car seat or seat belt until the car has come to a complete stop.**

At dismissal, teachers will place your children in the backseat buckled in a seat belt or car seat. You will be given a name card to identify yourself in carpool line. Please hold the card up as you approach the staff members. Please form a single line heading west as you do when dropping off each morning. **Do not get out of your car in the carpool line!**

If you arrive after staff members have left the parking lot at either arrival or dismissal, please park and come in the building. **All parents are welcome any time at Reading Friends.** You might feel more comfortable during the first week if you walk your children to the door. It will greatly help with separation if good-byes are said quickly. Do not park at the business to our east or the apartment building to our west, as well as the salon across the street. They will tow.