

Parent Handbook Supplement

WELCOME!

The management and staff at Rain Trees would like to welcome you and your child to the Rain Trees community. We trust that this partnership will be positive and productive.

The Parent's handbook is a document to answer queries and to provide information about school procedures and policies. If you require any further clarifications please do not hesitate to speak with the School Administrator, your child's Class Teacher, the Principal or the Director.

Our team at Rain Trees is fully committed to delivering a constructive, progressive and fun curriculum.

THE BUILDING, LOCATION & FACILITIES

Maintenance

We carry out the following maintenance works on a regular basis:

Cleaning /chemicals

We employ a professional cleaning company to clean the school on a daily basis. After most activities tables in the classroom are wiped down with an antibacterial spray that is safe for children. Our toys are cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis but if we have an outbreak of anything contagious (such as HFMD) we clean the toys immediately.

Fogging /Rentokil

Our Pest Control company comes once a week to check and carry out mosquito fogging when the children are not around. We check the school/playground on a daily basis for any mosquito breeding.

Gardener

We employ a gardener once a week to cut the grass and clean up the garden.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Communication is very important to us at Rain Trees and we strive to keep parents informed as much as possible. We do this through the following: -

Daily Updates

Each class sends out a daily update every morning of the activities that they have done in school that day. This not only helps you to know what is going on but to encourage language development at home whereby you can discuss your child's day with them. The daily update includes photos taken from the previous day.

Urgent Communication

During school hours, please contact the school office and we can inform your class teacher. All our teachers have a work email that you can contact them through.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

September

We have a year ahead evening meeting at school in September where we invite all parents to come into school to meet the class teacher and find out about the school year ahead. During this meeting the class teacher will go through how she will be organizing the class and discussing the topics and curriculum to be covered.

November and March

We hold individual parent meetings in November and March to discuss your child's progress. These meetings are 10/15 minutes long.

June

After our school reports are given out we hold optional parent teacher meetings for anyone who has concerns or needs any further explanation after the report has been received.

Throughout the year our teachers are happy to meet with you should you feel the need or have any concerns. Likewise our teachers will contact you for a meeting if they feel it would be beneficial.

School Reports

We give out school reports once a year in June. If your child leaves mid school year we will give you a leavers report.

Contact Details

Please remember to keep the office updated on your contact details should we need to contact you if your child is sick.

Parent Absence from Singapore

If both parents will be absent from Singapore, please leave emergency contact numbers for both parents and details (including phone numbers) of whom is providing the care of the child in your absence. Please give these details to your class teachers and the school office.

Grievances

We hope that you will not have any grievance issues with us during your time at Rain Trees - as we believe in honest and open communication. However, from time to time some issues spiral. Any issues relating to the classroom/teaching should be addressed firstly to the class teacher - let her know your concerns, have a face to face meeting and see if things can be resolved if not then our school Principal will happily help out to resolve any issues.

If you are unhappy with our school policy/administration please contact our school Director Katie Terry.

CURRICULUM

At Rain Trees our curriculum is based on the UK early years National Curriculum (EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage).

All our children learn through a play based, topic. Each class follows a topic for half a term and incorporates the seven areas of the UK National Curriculum:

- 1) Communication and language
- 2) Physical development
- 3) Personal, social and emotional development
- 4) Literacy
- 5) Mathematics
- 6) Understanding the world
- 7) Expressive arts and design

Through our planning we make sure that our children are exposed to a broad and balanced curriculum so that they get learning experiences in school that are varied and fun.

We provide a structure to our school day (just as parents do at home with meals, bedtimes etc.), as we believe that children feel safe and secure knowing what is going to happen in the school day and what is expected. We do however have flexibility within the day – some children get really excited about certain activities or are not interested in others. The class teacher will adapt to the children in this instance. It is only when children feel safe, that they feel happy and if they are happy – they learn!

We keep a lot of information about our curriculum in the school office – what and how our children learn. We are very happy to go through this with any parent should they wish.

MEDICAL & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Allergies

Please inform us if your child has any allergies and the necessary action required if your child has a reaction. We do not allow any nuts into the school and constantly remind parents about cakes/cookies etc. but accidents can happen. Some of our staff have first aid certificates and we are confident to administer epi-pens if necessary but prefer not to put on creams or give general medicine as we feel this should be given at home.

If your child has a specific allergy then from time to time you may need to provide an alternative to any birthday cake or treats that are bought into school (if relevant to the allergy). Your class teacher will inform you if this is required.

Medical Emergency Procedures/First Aid

We have first aid certified staff in school and any small grazes or bumps can be dealt with in school and we will inform you that day. All classrooms have a small first aid kit. If we have a medical emergency we will contact you immediately (or your emergency contact indicated on your application form) and take your child to KK Children's hospital, which is less than a 10-minute drive away. As per our terms and conditions it is the parent's responsibility to reimburse any fees and charges incurred by Rain Trees in respect to any medical attention

given to the child. Please ensure that we have up to date contact details for both parents and your emergency contact.

HFMD

From time to time Singapore has a surge of hand foot and mouth disease. If we have a child with HFMD at school we sterilize the classroom and step up our temperature checks in the morning to include looking for blisters on the children's hands and in their mouths.

We cannot stress how important it is for you to also check your child for any signs of HF&M before sending them to school.

The following are symptoms of HF&M: -

- Fever lasting two to three days; although in some cases a child may not get a fever
- Sore throat and runny nose
- Mouth ulcers, a blister-like rash over hands, feet and buttocks
- Vomiting, diarrhea, tiredness and weakness

If your child appears unwell, we advise you to seek medical attention and keep your child at home under observation. Should your child be diagnosed as having Hand Foot and Mouth disease; please inform us at school immediately. Your child will also need to get an 'all clear' letter from your doctor before they are allowed to return to school.

If the kindergarten is closed by MOE due to an outbreak of HFMD disease there is no refund of fees or make up of lost school days.

Illness

Please notify the office if your child is sick and is not coming to school. If your child becomes sick at school we will call you and ask you to come and collect your child. Any child who has a temperature of over 37.5C is sent home – we do daily temperature checks at the beginning of the day before the children come into the school building.

If we feel that your child is contagious – e.g. green mucus or is really not coping with the school day (bad chesty cough, sleepy, crying) but has no temperature then we may still phone you to come and get them. Our children are all very young and if they are not feeling well the best place to be is at home.

If your child has a broken bone, please refrain from bringing them into the school until 1 week after the permanent cast has been fitted. This will allow the bones time to heal and 'knit'. Our staff will not be able to carry children around the classroom if a child's injury needs to be protected or they are unable to put weight through their legs, ankles or feet. In this instance the best place would be at home in order for them to heal quickly.

Fire Emergency

We have a fire evacuation policy at school. Should we need to evacuate the school we take the children up the road towards the bridge (there is a small grass verge down the side of our next door neighbor's house) we will then begin to call all parents to come and collect their child.

Haze

We follow the MOE guidelines on haze management in schools <http://sssc.schoolsports.sg/sites/default/files/763/SOP%20for%20haze.pdf>

If the kindergarten is closed in line with the MOE guidelines then there is no refund of fees or make up of lost school days.

SCHOOL FEES AND PAYMENTS

Refundable Acceptance Deposit

Once a place is offered at Rain Trees all parents pay a \$1000 Acceptance Deposit. This needs to be paid within a week of the place being offered otherwise the place will be forfeited. The return of the deposit and the deadline for withdrawal, will be clearly stated in the Newsletter and in our Year Ahead Dates.

We will need to receive, in writing, your intention to withdraw by the deadline. We will acknowledge this within 3 days. You will then be sent a leavers form. This form needs to be returned to the school office within 3 days of being sent. Failure to return this form completed, will mean non payment of the Acceptance Deposit refund. **If you accept a place at Rain Trees and then decide to not take up the place the deposit is forfeited.**

Fees

Our fees are paid per term (we have 3 terms). We will invoice you six weeks before the end of the previous term and require payment within 30 days. If you do not pay within the 30 days of our Terms and Condition of payment, a late fee of \$100 will be charged. **We do not under any circumstances refund school fees this includes reducing the number of days mid – term.** Terms and Conditions of Payments (and exact dates for invoicing & payments) can be found on our website.

We do, however, understand that some parents - especially those new to Singapore, can have cash flow problems. If you will be late with paying fees, please contact us in the office to let us know. We can be flexible on timing of payment as long as communication is kept open.

THE SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Class Times

Busy Bees

9am – 2.30pm - Busy Bees need to do full days

Fireflies and Dragonflies

9am – 12 noon

Optional afternoon sessions available

Butterflies

8.45am – 11.45am

Optional afternoon sessions available

The front door opens at 8:35am every morning. Please ensure that you bring your child to school on time as late arrivals disrupt all the classes and children can feel upset that they have missed out on the morning activities.

Class Structure

Currently we have four classes:

Butterflies for those children who are 2-3 years old.

Fireflies and **Dragonflies** for children who are 3-4 years old

Busy Bees for children who are 4 (up to age of 6)

Our Butterflies, Fireflies and Dragonflies can choose between 2,3 and 5 mornings. We can only offer an increase of mornings subject to availability of space within the class and is not guaranteed throughout the year.

Classes for next year are decided in June. Parents will be told before the end of the school year which class their child is going into. Our teachers move around age groups to gain experience and there is no guarantee of any particular teacher for the following year.

Staffing Ratios.

Butterflies has a maximum of 22 students, one teacher and 2 or 3 assistants (which is a ratio of 1:6 max).

Dragonflies has a maximum of 22 students, one teacher and 2 assistants (which is a ratio of max 1:9). Fireflies has a maximum of 18 students, one teacher and 1 assistant (maximum ratio 1:9).

Busy Bees have up to 22 students, one teacher and one assistant (which is a ratio of 1:12 max).

Term dates – on website

Our term dates are on the school website. We follow the Northern Hemisphere timetable with 3 terms.

Uniform

We currently have no uniform at Rain Trees (but this may become a requirement in the future). We only ask that children come appropriately dressed in clothes that **if** they get paint or glue on (despite wearing art aprons) it is not upsetting.

As we currently have no school uniform we do not have anything prescriptive in terms of colour. We do however request that our children wear shoes and not flip-flops or crocs. **(If you can shake the shoe off the foot then it is not appropriate for school)**

We require all children to keep a labeled pair of gumboots/wellies in school for when it has finished raining but the garden is wet.

Ministry of Education

We are licensed under the Ministry of Education to take children from the month that they turn 2 until they are 6.

All of our teachers are registered with the MOE and any changes to our school day – including an increase in fees has to first be approved by this governing body.

If the MOE closes our school (e.g. due to the Haze or HFMD) there is no refund of fees or make up of lost days.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Arrival procedure

On your child's first day we suggest that you park up on University Road (as you will be at school for a short while) come into your child's classroom and help them unpack their school bag, there will be lots of activities set out in the classroom so please feel free to sit down and play a short while with your child to help them get used to the busyness of the classroom – if the teacher or TA is free they will come over and chat – take your cues from the teacher, TA or your child – if they are happy playing – a swift 'goodbye – "Mummy/Daddy are going now – see you later", and a quick kiss/hug is appropriate – if your child starts to cry – one of us will step in but you should leave ASAP – staying is not going to help at this point. We will call you if they get too upset but more often than not once you are gone we can distract your child with a fun activity and the crying stops.

Once your child is used to being at school you will find that drop off is a lot quicker – some parents are happy for us to take the children from the car and bring them in to school ourselves. Others park up and quickly come into the class to drop off.

If you walk to school or use a stroller we would appreciate it if you could take the stroller back home and not leave it at school as it takes away space from the children's play/bicycle area. If you have no alternative and must leave the stroller at school, please collapse the stroller and leave at the back of the car porch by the cupboards.

End of the Day

At the end of the school day we ask that any parents/helpers picking up children wait outside the school gate. The class teacher and teaching assistants will bring the Busy Bees and Dragonflies class up the inside steps to hand over to you one by one, and the side gate to the outside steps will be opened for you to pick up your child from the Butterflies or Caterpillar classrooms. The children are always excited and happy at pick-up but we, as always, have their safety in our minds. We ask that the person picking up comes in through the gate and collects their child from inside the gates – we don't let any child leave school unless they are holding hands with an adult because of the road.

Parking

The solid white line in the middle of the road in front of our school means it is illegal to park on the side of the road. We recommend to parents that if you are going to be at school for any length of time to park up by the bridge or round on University Road. If you are going to be quick, please park /or get the taxi to wait, on the side of the road of our school building so as not to block the traffic and please be mindful of blocking our neighbours driveways. We are always on hand in the morning to help children get out of cars and get them into school quickly.

Items to bring to School

Water bottle

All children need to bring to school a labeled water bottle – the children can drink water whenever they need to throughout the day and we actively encourage them to drink after playtime and when they are eating.

Sunhats

We have a 'no hat no play' policy at school – all children need a labeled sun hat that we keep at school during the week but send home to be washed on a Friday.

Wellies/Gumboots

Our garden can get muddy in the rainy season or if it has been raining heavily. We feel it is important that the children still go out and play if the garden is muddy and all children need are a pair of labeled wellies so that their school shoes don't get ruined.

School bag

Spare set of clothes in a zip lock/plastic bag (so we can then put the wet/dirty clothes back into the zip lock/plastic bag if we need to change their clothes).

Nappies

If your child is still wearing nappies please make sure they have spare nappies in their school bag.

Food

We are a nut free school as some of our children are severely allergic. Please remember not to bring any nuts (including nutella, peanut butter, almond butter, pesto etc.)

Before your child comes to school please make sure that they have had a good breakfast. It is not appropriate for them to bring their breakfast to school and eat it in the classroom.

Snack

Rain Trees provide a mid-morning snack for all the children that is fresh or dried fruit, plus biscuits or crackers. If your child has any particular food allergies please let the school know and you will need to provide an alternative snack. For children staying in the afternoon, we will also provide another fruit snack if the children need it.

Lunch

For those children who stay for lunch they need to bring their own food. We recommend you provide a healthy nutritious lunch (no nuts or chocolate/sweets) that is easy for your child to eat by themselves. Our children eat their lunch in the classroom before going out to play. There are always adults with the children when they are eating.

Behaviour

We believe that all our children should feel safe and secure during their time at Rain Trees. We have a positive behaviour policy and constantly encourage the children to be kind and considerate towards both their peers and adults alike. We teach the children to respect all members of the Rain Trees family (from their friends, to the cleaner and the gardener) through positive reinforcement and modeling good behaviour.

If any child is consistently defiant or aggressive we will help them to understand that this behaviour is not acceptable through explanation and understanding. At most we give 'time out' for our older children and distraction/removal from a specific activity for our younger children. If aggression/defiance is a continual problem then we will ask the parents to come in and discuss with the class teacher so that we can work through and be consistent together in our approach both at home and at school. We have our full behaviour policy kept in the office that is available for any of our parents to read in school.

Birthdays

We love birthdays at Rain Trees and are happy for you to bring in some cake to share with the class if you would like to. As most parents do not like their child to have too much sugar we recommend that a small mini cupcake per child is probably the easiest way to celebrate. If you want to bring in a big cake please provide plates and forks.

Please talk to your class teacher about the most appropriate time to bring the cakes in if you would like to be here (or you can leave them at school at the beginning of the school day). We will sing happy birthday in both English and Mandarin, blow out the candles and share the cake/cakes out.

Sadly we cannot host birthday parties for your child.

It is important that you discuss and arrange with your class teacher before the day as some of our children have very severe allergies and might not be able to eat cake. In these instances it gives us time to inform the parent of that child so that they can provide a suitable alternative treat.

N.B. We are a nut free school – please make sure that the cake has no nuts in it or we will not be able to serve it to the children.

Book Bags

We will provide a book bag for your child at the beginning of the school year. If you lose your book bag they can be purchased in the office for \$10.

Class involvement/class parent

We are very happy to have parents in to help in school – teachers will ask for help with the big water play, mystery reader and cooking etc. Every class will nominate a class parent who will help co-ordinate the parents with certain activities (such as class parties) and arrange social events for parents/families outside of school.

Library

Rain Trees is full of fabulous books. In order to nurture a love of books and reading all our children will bring books home to share with you. Our younger children bring home books for you to read and our older children may bring home a reader (if appropriate) plus a library book.

Mosquito Repellent and Suntan Lotion

Although we take every effort to stop mosquitos breeding at Rain Trees (we have weekly fogging and daily checks for water pooling) we cannot guarantee that there are no mosquitos at school. If you have concerns please put repellent on before your child comes to school. Some parents use the mosquito patches and place them on their child's clothes at the back.

All our children wear sun hats during outdoor play – they get 20-30 minutes a day. If you are concerned about the sun please put sun lotion on your child before school. If it is a very hot day the class teacher might shorten the playtime.

We have a 'No Hat – No Play' policy at Rain Trees.

Nappies/Toileting

Please let your class teacher know when your child is ready to start toilet training – we will then be able to support what you are doing at home.

If your child is still in nappies, please make sure they have spare nappies in their school bag.

If a child has an 'accident' at school, it is nothing to worry about. We will change your child and put them into their spare clothes without making a fuss

Photos

We take a lot of photos of the children at school - not only for the teacher's assessment purposes but also for the daily updates. These photos are stored in the parent's secure area of our website so you can view them at any time. We occasionally use these photos for marketing purposes.

Trips Out

From time to time the class teacher might organize a school trip out that is topic related. You will be given information relating to the trip and will need to sign a consent form plus pay for any additional costs. For any trip out we need parent support to increase the student/adult ratio and our teachers do a risk assessment of any venue to make sure it is suitable for the children.

If you decide to opt out of any planned trips then you need to keep your child home on that particular day, as we have no cover at school.

Water Play

Once a week we have 'Big Water Play' in the garden. We fill up the paddling pool with water, get the hose out and each class gets a turn at having lots of fun getting themselves and the teachers wet.

On these days the children need to bring their swimwear and towel to school and we recommend that you put suntan lotion on at home before school. We require parent helpers for this activity so that we have enough hands to help get the children changed - your class teacher will ask for help/put up a rota.

CONTACT DETAILS

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