

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Latch Key! We look forward to caring for your children. Please read the parent handbook and sign the bottom of this page. Return the signed and dated page by the end of the first week.

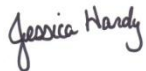
The Pearl Griffin Memorial Latch Key Program is a unique program for children ages 4 years old in Pre-K through Sixth Grade. We provide special afterschool care for children whose parents work outside of the home during afterschool hours.

Children enrolled in the Latch Key Program are loved and cared for by special staff of Howard Payne University students under my direct supervision. Your children will receive many things at Latch Key: TLC, supervised indoor and outdoor activities, help with homework, birthday parties, nutritious snacks and special visitors.

Please take time to read all the policies in this handbook. We have developed several policies to let you know our guidelines. If you have any questions please feel free to call me at 646-2138 or stop by my office.

Most importantly, I am here for the benefit of your child. Continued efforts on your part to abide by these policies will assure we can and will do the job to the best of our ability. Thank you for your cooperation in these matters.

Sincerely,



Jessica Hardy, Director

I have read and understand all policies in the parent handbook.

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Parent Signature

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Date

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Child/Children's Name

I give the Latch Key Program permission to use my child's picture in the newspaper as needed for publicity.

YES      NO (please circle one)

## **HISTORY**

The Pearl Griffin Memorial Latch Key Program began in 1983 as a local mission project of the Union Presbyterian Church in Brownwood. At that time, volunteers devoted their afternoons to giving special care to a small group of young children. Since that time, physical changes have taken place to best meet the needs of the children. In 1991, the program expanded to include the First Christian Church. In 1995, the older children met at the Family Services Center. In January 1999, the entire program moved to one location, First Christian Church.

## **PURPOSE**

The Pearl Griffin Memorial Latch Key Program is a non-denominational afterschool program for the Brownwood Independent School District children from low income families. Our goal is to provide working parents with the opportunity for their children to receive quality care. Through love and understanding children discover their own worth and develop values such as respect, honesty and fairness.

## **CURRICULUM**

Latch Key offers a child-centered curriculum. Developmentally appropriate activities are made available and the children are motivated to do the activities by their own interest and needs.

## **HOMEWORK TIME**

Homework time is available to children in grades 1 through 6. Please let your child's teacher know if your child needs to be doing their homework at Latch Key. We offer time after snack for the children to do homework or read quietly while the others do their homework before the planned activity for the day.

## **SNACKS**

Latch Key participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Nutritious snacks are served to the children daily when they arrive.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Families must fill out an application for each child every year by August. New applications will be available at the end of each school year. There is no cost to families who qualify. If classes are filled the child will be placed on a waiting list. Qualifications are that the children must be in Brownwood ISD, qualify for free or reduced lunches and parents must be working or going to school during after-school hours.

## **FUNDING**

Latch Key is a non-profit program. There is no organizational sponsor. Funding comes from local organizations, foundations, churches; The Brown County United Way and individual donations are also received in the form of memorials and honorariums.

## **LATE FEE**

Children must be picked up every day by 5:30! Please call if you are delayed due to situations out of your control. There will be a late fee of \$2.00 for every five minutes per child. The fee is due by the following day. Each family is allowed 5 late fees per school year before being dismissed from the program.

## **HEALTH POLICY**

Children may not attend Latch Key if the child:

- 1) Has a temperature of 100.4 or above
- 2) Has a communicable disease
- 3) Has vomiting or diarrhea
- 4) Does not feel well enough to participate in usual daily activities.

If any of these symptoms exist you will be notified by phone and you will need to make arrangement to pick up your child.

## **MEDICATION**

If your child requires medication during Latch Key hours you must bring the medication in an original bottle from the pharmacy with the child's name, name of medication and dosage on it. You must also fill out a permission form for the program to administer the medication.

## **EMERGENCIES**

In case of an emergency we will contact medical emergency services and then call parents and inform them of what is going on. We will then call our Latch Key Board President.

## **DAYS/HOURS OF OPERATION**

Latch Key has the same schedule as Brownwood ISD. The hours are from 2:45 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Latch Key is closed on teacher workdays, all school holidays and summer.

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Children may be picked up by the person/persons on the pick up list ONLY! If you need to add someone to the list please call or come by and let me know. Failure to do so will cause problems because we will not let your child go with someone not on the list.

## **DELIVERY OF CHILDREN**

Children will be dropped off by the Brownwood ISD Bus each afternoon. Latch Key does not provide transportation for the children. If the buses are running then your child will be dropped off with us unless you have let the school know otherwise.

## **ABSENCES**

Please let us know if your child will not be attending Latch Key. Please call 646-2138 and leave a message. We worry that they may have missed the bus or gotten on the wrong bus.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE/EMPLOYMENT**

Please notify us of any changes in address, phone numbers or employment. It is important to have the correct information in case we need to contact you when your child is sick or in which case an emergency arises.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by giving positive verbal rewards. This reinforces a child's good feeling about his/her behavior and serves as an example to the other children to act in such a way to receive this praise. Asking a child to stop and think about his/her unpleasant behavior enables that child to work at self-control.

If a child is not cooperating in a group listening situation, the child maybe seated by a teacher and reminded of acceptable behavior.

Removal from the group for a period of time for time-out is the next tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates unacceptable behavior. This time out is not a punishment rather a time when a child may calm down, remember what behavior the teacher is asking for and decide for him/herself when they are ready to rejoin the group with appropriate behavior.

All children will be spoken to and treated with respect.

If behavior problems persist, the parent will be ask to a conference.

Discipline policy

- 1) Positive reinforcement
- 2) Redirection
- 3) Removal from privilege
- 4) Time-out

Steps 1-4 will be used before sending a child to the office.

- 5) Time out in the office (extreme consistent uncontrolled behavior)
- 6) Parent Conference
- 7) Expulsion for 3 days
- 8) Termination of care.

### **TOYS/VIDEO GAMES**

Please leave personal toys and video games at home or in backpacks. Personal items cause conflicts among children and are sometimes difficult to keep track of. Latch Key is not responsible for replacing personal items if lost or stolen.

### **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

Children attending Latch Key need to be to attend to their personal hygiene by themselves. We understand accidents do happen from time to time and will assist when needed. After the third accident your child will be dismissed until toilet trained.

### **ANIMALS ON PREMISES**

Animals are not allowed on the premises. If you bring pets with you please do not bring them in the building with you.

### **DIRECTOR**

The director is available to discuss any concerns at any time between 10-5:30 Monday-Friday. You can stop by the office or you can call at 646-2138.

### **LICENSING**

If you wish to contact the local Licensing office, call 325-646-7051. If you wish to contact the FPS child abuse hotline, call 800-252-5400. Minimum Standards and most recent licensing inspections reports can be seen by going to [www.txchildcaresearch.org](http://www.txchildcaresearch.org) .

### **GANG-FREE ZONE**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

**SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Teachers are required to report to Child Protective Services of any child they suspect suffers from abuse and/or neglect.

Child Abuse hotline 1-800-252-5400

Child Protective services 646-0541

**PROCEDURE TO FILE A COMPLAINT**

Children who are eligible to participate in the program are not discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion or political belief.

If a participant thinks he or she has been discriminated against, call to make an appointment for a meeting. A written complaint must be mailed to: Director of Civil Rights, Texas Department of Human Services, M.C. E-609, 701 W. 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Austin, Texas or the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

# Building for the Future

This child care center/facility receives Federal cash assistance to serve healthy meals to your children. Good Nutrition today means a stronger tomorrow!

Meals served here must meet nutrition requirements established by USDA's **Child and Adult Care Food Program**

Questions? Concerns?

Call USDA at **1-800-795-3272**

**or**

Food and Nutrition Division at **1-800-TELL-TDA**

(835-5832)

**or**

Your child care center's/facility's contracting organization at

**Pearl Griffin Memorial Latch Key Program**

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 866-632-9992 (toll free), 202-260-1026, or 202-401-0216 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.