

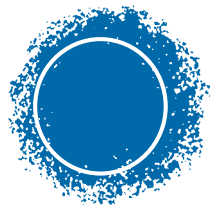
# SCIENCE SCHOOL

AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE



## Handbook & General Policies

2011 - 2012



MUSEUM OF  
**NATURE &  
SCIENCE**  
DALLAS, TEXAS

1318 South Second Avenue & 3535 Grand Avenue in Fair Park

**[natureandscience.org](http://natureandscience.org)**

P.O. Box 151469 | Dallas, TX 75315-1469 | 214-428-5555 x1381

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The Science School does not discriminate against any child based on gender, race, color, national origin, or religion. The Science School at MNS is part of the Museum of Nature & Science, which is in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal law: The museum is a not-for-profit institution and is governed by the Board of Directors.

## Our History

Back in 1957, the American Association of University Women in Dallas recognized the need for a preschool in Dallas, and thought that creating one with an emphasis on science would be particularly valuable. The president of the Southwest Museum of Science and Technology (also known as The Science Place) Dodson Carmichael agreed, and the vision became a reality known as The Science Place Preschool.

Designed as part of a hands-on museum, the school has responded to the needs of families over the decades—offering more days and extended hours, so that children could attend from one to five days per week, part-time or full-time; adding bilingual education (English/Spanish), and expanding the enrollment to include first-graders as well as preschoolers. More than just an enrichment opportunity, The Science Place Preschool became the only school for many families—and its popularity continues to grow.

The merger of the Dallas Museum of Natural History and The Science Place in 2006 resulted in a new entity called the Museum of Nature & Science—and with that union, The Science Place Preschool was renamed Science School at the Museum of Nature & Science. Today, we offer a wide range of classes and programs that integrate all the educational disciplines—math, art, language arts, social studies, music, and physical education—all with science as the basis, all geared for those critical years from preschool through first grade. And as space and public interest dictate, we are ready to expand our programs and enrollment even more!

Supported in large part by tuition and fundraisers, Science School has also received grants for materials and scholarships from the Junior League of Dallas. The Museum of Nature & Science also supports the school in a number of ways through its development, finance, marketing, custodial, education, exhibits, human resources, operations, and IT departments.

## Department of Family Protection & Services

The Science School at the Museum of Nature & Science is part of the Museum of Nature & Science, which is in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, and licensed by the State of Texas through the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

- A DFPS evaluation of Science School—including the department’s fire inspection report, sanitation inspection report, verification of liability insurance, letter of compliance, and list of snacks served—are available for parents to review.
- A copy of the minimum standards is also available for review, or can be found on the DFPS website at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us).
- The law requires that we report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to DFPS or a law enforcement agency. The local office of the DFPS is located at 8700 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX, 75247 and the phone number is 214-951-7902. The Abuse and Neglect Hotline number is 1-800-252-5400. Call this number to make confidential reports of suspected abuse and/or neglect.
- MNS and the school are designated as a gang-free zone. A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.
- Consumer product safety recalls can be accessed at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). This site gives information on recalled children’s products as well as other consumer products. You can also access this site clicking the link on the school’s Web page, [www.natureandscience.org/education/sp\\_School.asp](http://www.natureandscience.org/education/sp_School.asp).

Each member of Science School teaching staff acquires a minimum of 24 hours of professional development each year to stay current with educational developments, sharpen their skills, and learn teaching concepts and techniques. The staff also participates in First Aid and CPR training every other year.

# Our Teaching Methodology

The Science School uses a variety of age-appropriate learning centers—or stations—that empower children to select and explore activities that interest them, triggering their innate curiosity and motivating them to learn. Using science as our focus, we offer a complete curriculum that incorporates reading, writing, math, science, critical and creative thinking, discovery, problem solving, and other subject areas as appropriate, such as language, computers, dramatic play, and more. We also integrate exhibits and programs of the museum into our activities, as well as specific developmental objectives, including Texas Essential Knowledge Skills (TEKS) standards. Input and suggestions from parents are always welcome!

## General School Rules

- Keep hands, feet, and other body parts to yourself
- Treat our friends nicely and with respect
- Use appropriate language
- “Walking” feet
- “Inside” voices
- Share toys, materials, and equipment
- Take turns
- Listen to the teachers
- Use toys and materials properly
- Everyone cleans up
- Wash hands after using the restroom, touching animals and before eating
- Use tissues to blow your nose
- Cover sneezes/coughs with your elbow or shoulder
- Weapon-play or imaginary weapon-play is not allowed

Students are expected to follow all rules at all times, including during field trips and other school functions outside the classroom or museum buildings.

If your child is having trouble following rules and/or his or her conduct is disrupting the learning process, rest time, or safety of others in the class, we will notify you, and work with you to help alleviate the problem. We may request that you come and pick up your child if this occurs. Parents/guardians must do this immediately and the child cannot return to school for that day without permission of the director or person in charge in the absence of the director. Cooperation of the family is key, and an outside evaluation (at parents’ expense) may be necessary.

The Science School and museum reserve the right to dismiss students from school at any time due to behavioral problems. If this occurs, any tuition paid for time not attended will be refunded, minus the deposit (one month’s tuition), registration fee and supply fee. If a child accidentally or intentionally damages, destroys, or otherwise harms school property or the property of another child or person, you may be required to pay for the repair or replacement of the item/s.

## Discipline & Guidance

Discipline and guidance are important to a child's personal growth and comprehension of acceptable behavior, self-control, self-esteem, and self-direction. As educators and child-development professionals, we are very careful to ensure that our actions are appropriate for each individual child's age and level of understanding, and consistently administered. Positive guidance is our approach, which may include:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior
- Reminding the children of behavior expectations daily with clear, positive statements
- Redirection using positive phrases
- Using brief supervised separation or "time-out" from the group when appropriate for the child's age and development, approximately one minute for each year of the child's age
- Encouraging the children to use "their words" to ask, discuss, or let another child know how they are feeling
- Helping them learn the right words, how to use them and when to use them
- Reasonably involving the children in creating the rules for the classroom
- Treating each child with respect and dignity. This models appropriate behavior and encourages the children to treat their friends the same way

The following types of punishment are specifically prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriate lengths of time for the child's age and development
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child

# Basic Nuts & Bolts

## School Calendar & Hours

The Science School year runs from late-August or early-September through late-May or early-June. We generally follow the DISD calendar. The calendar is set each year and provided to parents before school starts.

### Regular School Year

*(all times are Monday - Friday)*

School Hours/Preschool: 9:30am to 1pm

School Hours/Elementary: 9:30am to 3pm

*(available for an additional fee)*

Spanish Enrichment: 3:30pm to 5pm

Early Care: 8:30am to 9:30am

Late Care/Preschool: 1pm to 5:30pm

Late Care/Elementary: 3pm to 5:30pm

### Summer Program

We also offer a Science School Summer program, which generally runs from early-June to late-July or early-August, with the same payment guidelines as those of the regular school year. Summer Program hours are:

*(all times are Monday - Friday)*

School Hours: 9:30am to 1pm

Early Care: 8:30am to 9:30am

Late Care: 1pm to 5:30pm

## Registration & Forms

Before deciding to enroll, parents and children are encouraged to visit the school during regular class hours. Parents or guardians can register their child (or children) by sending a completed-and-signed registration form to the school with the nonrefundable registration fee and deposit. Submission of registration materials does not constitute acceptance.

Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, with currently enrolled families given top priority, followed by members of the museum, and then non-members. All families must have (at minimum) an active family membership at the Museum of Nature & Science at the time their child starts school. If a class is full when a registration is received, the child will be put on a waiting list. Waiting lists are not carried over from year to year.

Children must be at least 3 years old and fully potty trained to attend Science School. You may be requested to provide proof of age, such as a birth certificate.

Each child must have a registration form signed by the parent/guardian with the date of enrollment. The following forms must also be in the child's file before the first day of school:

- Field trip permission
- Directory permission
- Photograph release
- Water play activities permission
- Student information form
- Emergency information (to include names, phone, addresses of persons other than parents/guardians, doctor and hospital address and phone)
- Parent/guardian acknowledgment of receiving and reading a copy of the school handbook and policies
- Copy of current immunizations
- Medical statement
- Tuition contract

**Please keep us informed of any changes to your personal information, including approved drop-off/pick-up adults, address, telephone, emergency numbers, etc. This is very important!**

If any policy changes occur at Science School, you will be notified in writing or via e-mail before the change goes into effect, unless an immediate change is dictated by law or by regulations set by the federal, state, or city government, or by mandates from the Museum of Nature & Science board of directors.

## Tuition & Fees

The registration fee, tuition deposit, and subsequent tuition payments must be paid by the specified dates. Tuition and fees are non-refundable once paid.

- There is a late fee of \$25 for payments made after the 5th of the month.
- There is a late pick-up fee of \$15 for every fifteen minutes or part thereof for children picked up after 1pm (preschool), 3pm (elementary), 5:30pm (extended care).
- There is a class-change fee of \$25 for changes made after August 1.
- A returned check or refused credit card charge will result in a \$25 fee. The amount of the returned check or refused charge must be paid for in cash or money order, and if you have a returned check/refused charge you may not be allowed to pay by check or charge card in the future. Delinquent accounts may result in your child not being able to attend school or dismissal from the school.

The tax ID number for the museum is located on your tuition contract. Please keep this for your tax records. If you request another copy of your contract there will be a \$5 charge per request. These requests must be made at least two weeks in advance.

All financial information related to your tuition payments is managed by our finance department. If you have questions about your charges or payments, you can call them directly at 214-428-5555, ext.1437.

If you are participating in a flexible spending account at your place of employment and need verification and a signature from MNS, please fill out your employer's reimbursement form completely, including payments made to the Science School at the Museum of Nature & Science. Submit the form to finance at least two weeks before it is needed. The payments listed will be verified, the form will be given to our school director to sign, and then returned to you.

Financial aid/scholarship funds may be available. You can request an application from the office. Submission of the form does not guarantee aid or a scholarship.

## Medical Requirements

Each year, all students are required to file an immunization form and doctor's medical statement with the school. You can use the forms provided by your doctor. Immunizations must be current, including a record of a TB examination with negative results (if required by the Health Dept.) and a record of vision and hearing screening for children age 4 and older. (Note: The school provides vision and hearing screenings for enrolled students age 4 and older once a year, so once your child is enrolled, we can help you keep that item current.)

The doctor's medical statement must confirm that your child has been examined by a doctor within the last year and is fit to attend our school. Please submit a copy of any updated immunizations or examinations to the school if your child visits the doctor during the school year.

## Special Needs

We review special needs on an individual basis for children with disabilities addressed by ADA guidelines. If your child has special needs, please discuss these with the school staff, as any exceptions to the general rule will need to be preapproved by the school and written authorization stored in your child's school file.

## Attendance

Regular attendance is important for the continuity of each child's education and his or her adjustment to school. The length of time spent on each curriculum topic is usually more than a week, and the information, activities, and experiments from one week may be continued or expanded in following weeks. Arriving on time is also important for both continuity and minimizing disruption to the classroom routine. We record attendance each day, so please call or email us if your child will not be attending school because of illness or other reasons. You may leave a message on the school voice mail.

# A Typical Day

## Circle Time

We begin every day with Circle Time, a period designed to prepare children for the day. Forming a circle on the floor, the children and teacher begin each day with activities such as calendar and weather. The theme or educational activity for the day is then introduced and discussed as a group before the kids are set loose to explore it on their own at the various indoor learning centers or supervised outside activities. Each day also ends with Circle Time, during which students and teachers reflect on the discoveries of the day.

## Center Time

The purpose of Center Time is to focus more closely on social, emotional, cognitive and physical development. Center Time also allows for individualized attention from teachers—a time to leverage each child’s strengths and work on weaknesses at his or her own pace.

## Extended Care

Early Care and Late Care are provided during both the regular school year and our Summer Program. The hours are:

|             |   |                       |
|-------------|---|-----------------------|
|             | <u>Regular School Year</u>                              | <u>Summer Program</u> |
| Early Care: | 8:30am to 9:30am  | 8:30am to 9:30am      |
| Late Care:  | (preschool) 1pm to 5:30pm<br>(elementary) 3pm to 5:30pm | 1pm to 5:30pm         |

The afternoon extended day includes story time, rest time, snack, and activities. A beach towel or small baby size blanket, baby-sized pillow, and ONE “lovey” may be brought to school to use during rest time. Please put these items in a pillowcase and label all of them with your child’s name. Everything should be taken home and washed once per week. Mats are provided for students enrolled in extended care.

Any child enrolled in Science School can use the extended care program on a yearly basis or—based on availability—on a drop-in basis. We require 24-hours advance notice by email or phone for drop-in care. (Call 214-428-5555 x1381, or email us at [scienceschool@natureandscience.org](mailto:scienceschool@natureandscience.org).) Children using drop-in care need to provide their own mat in addition to the sleeping items noted above. The fee for this service is due on or before the date of use.

## What To Bring To School

- Please provide an extra set of clothing for your child. Sometimes accidents happen, and it helps if your child has his or her own clothing to put on. Please label each piece of clothing and put it in a large zipper bag, also labeled with your child’s name.
- If your child is staying for extended care, please bring nap items (see extended care section above).
- Please label all items brought to school, including lunch boxes, cups, coats, jackets etc. with your child’s name. Please note that we cannot be responsible for lost items.
- **We ask you to please leave all toys at home**, unless a teacher specifically asks for something that applies to a unit of study. Please note that weapon play is not allowed at our school. We appreciate your cooperation with this.

## Clothing

Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for outdoor play and messy activities. Undergarments are required. Children should wear closed-toe shoes with socks. Please do not send your child to school in flip-flops. Please send a coat, jacket or sweater with your child if the weather is cool or cold for outside play. You may want to send a sweater that stays in the classroom, in case the air conditioning is too cold for your child. Please label each of these items. No uniform is required, however on field trips and other special occasions we ask that children wear our school T-shirt.

## Lunches & Snacks

The Science School does not provide lunches or snacks for core school hours—it is your responsibility to send your child to school with a lunch and drink. For that reason, we are not responsible for recommended daily requirements or nutritional value or any food allergies that your child may have. (We may request that you not bring food that may cause allergic reactions in your child or others.) You will be asked to sign a form stating that they are aware of this policy. Because other children may have food allergies, we ask that students to not share their lunches with others.

### Water

Please send a bottle, glass with lid, or thermos with water every day. The children will use this when we have outside play time.

### Lunch

Each child staying until 1pm needs to bring a lunch with a drink and containers. Please note that refrigeration and heating are not available for lunches, so you might want to include a freezer packet in the lunch during warmer weather. Please do not send bag drinks (such as Capri Sun) or tube yogurts.

Ideally, lunch items should cover 1/3 of their daily requirements for the various food groups. Copies of the recommended daily requirements are available from the school. Food and containers that children can open and serve themselves—such as finger foods and sandwiches—work best. Please include any utensils your child might need, and label the lunch box, utensils, and any reusable containers with your child's name.

### Snacks

We ask each child to bring healthy snacks for the whole class several times during the year. The staff will assign snack days. We will send home a note and snack basket when it is your child's turn. Please feel free to ask the staff for snack suggestions or to request special snack times, such as holidays. A calendar of snacks that have been served is available in the classrooms for viewing.

Please wash and prepare any fresh fruits or vegetables, and include any utensils or other ware needed for serving or eating. Please do not send bag drinks (such as Capri Sun) or tube yogurt. We serve water every day. You are welcome to send other healthy drinks such as milk or 100% juice. Sweetened beverages are not allowed by DPFS.

## Afternoon Extended Care Rest Time Materials

The afternoon extended care includes story time, rest time, snack, and activities. Mats are provided for students enrolled in extended care, but a beach towel or small baby size blanket, baby-sized pillow, and ONE "lovey" may be brought to school for rest time as well. (Large blankets and pillows, sleeping bags, rolled sleeping mats, etc. will be sent home to be replaced with items of the appropriate size.) Please put these items in a pillowcase and label all of them with your child's name. All of these items should be taken home and washed once per week.

# Handling the Unexpected

## If Your Child Gets Sick

We will contact you if your child becomes ill at school so that you can come and pick him/her up. He or she will be separated from the class until you arrive. As a general rule, The Science School will not administer medications to children. We welcome parents to come to the school if they need to administer any required medications.

Please keep children home if they have a fever of 100° or more, skin rash, and/or discharge from the eyes, ears, nose, or any other visible signs of illness. Your child can return to school after he or she has been free of symptoms for 24 hours and/or has been to the doctor and the doctor has cleared your child to return. If you have visited the doctor, please bring a note from the doctor stating that your child is cleared to come back to school. Please know that we may be required to report some illnesses to the Health Department.

If an outbreak of chicken pox, lice, or similar contagious medical conditions occurs within our student body, we will email you or send a note home alerting you.

## Emergency Preparedness Plan

### Medical:

If a child suffers an accident at school that doesn't require emergency medical care but still needs a doctor's attention, we will notify parents/guardians as quickly as possible. If they cannot be reached, we will call the individuals listed on the emergency form. If no one can be reached, we will call the child's doctor for further instructions. In the case of a situation that places a child at risk we will contact 911 and/or the authorities and then we will call parents/guardians as quickly as practical. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will call the person or persons listed on the emergency form. In each of these cases, we will fill out an accident/incident/illness report, ask that you review and sign it, and then we will store it in the child's file. If a child has an accident that causes a scrape, bump, etc., we will take care of the "boo-boo" and notify parents/guardians when child is picked up or by phone/email.

### Fire:

Security will notify local authorities if needed. The Science School will evacuate building according to fire diagram and meet in parking lot across from the building. If needed, children will be moved to Nature Building or Planetarium Building to a space/room designated by security or the authorities. Planetarium children will be moved to Science or Nature building to a space/room designated by security or the authorities.

### Severe weather:

Security will notify local authorities if needed.

**Science building:** Children will be moved to back area of classroom A or B. We can also move to hallway or tunnel as directed by security or the authorities. **Planetarium building:** Children will move to inside classroom, area by bathrooms or bomb shelter as directed by security or the authorities. If needed and safe to do so, teachers will direct students to move from the Science Building to Nature Building or Planetarium Building to a space/room designated by security or the authorities. Planetarium children will move to Science or Nature Building to a space/room designated by security or the authorities. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone text and/or email if pick-up is needed, where to pick-up and when it is safe to do so. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will call the person or persons listed on the emergency form. We practice fire drills monthly and severe weather drills four times a year in order to be prepared for these unexpected events.

**Other emergencies:**

Security will notify local authorities if needed

Children will be moved as a group to area designated by security or authorities. Parents/guardians will be notified by phone, text and/or email if pick-up is needed, where to pick-up and when it is safe to do so. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will call the person or persons listed on the emergency form.

**Mishaps, and “Boo-Boos”**

If your child suffers an accident at school that doesn't require emergency medical care but still needs a doctor's attention, we will notify you as quickly as possible. If you cannot be reached, we will call the individuals listed on your emergency form. If no one can be reached, we will call your child's doctor for further instructions.

In the case of a situation that places your child at risk, we will call you as quickly as practical. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will call the person or persons listed on the emergency form.

In each of these cases, we will fill out an accident/incident/illness report, ask that you review and sign it, and then we will store it in your child's file.

If a child has an accident that causes a scrape, bump, etc., we will take care of the “boo-boo” and notify you when you pick up your child or by phone/email the same day.

In the event there is an emergency at the museum—such as severe weather—we will accompany all students to a safe location within the museum. If we need to evacuate the building and cannot return to it, we will try to relocate to another building if necessary and call you to pick up your child. We practice fire drills monthly and severe weather drills twice a year in order to be prepared for these unexpected events.

**Weather Closings**

In the event of inclement weather, please follow the announcements on KRLD 1080 radio. We generally follow DISD's decisions. If they are closed, we are closed. We will also leave a message on the school voice mail. If children are at school when bad weather rolls in, we will call you with an early dismissal so that you can pick up your child.

## For Parents & Guardians

Your positive attitude has a tremendous impact on your child's enthusiasm for attending school, and their enjoyment of a rich, empowering experience! Our teachers genuinely care, and want to know about your child, so please feel free to discuss anything with us that will help us to know your child better. We have regularly scheduled Open Houses, plus parents and guardians are welcome to visit at any time and participate in our activities.

Additionally, we ask that you help us in our application of the rules, policies and procedures of The Science School and the Museum of Nature & Science, and represent us in a positive light. Verbal abuse, vulgar language, interference with the teaching or learning process, or disrespectful behavior by a parent or guardian towards students, staff, the school, or the museum may result in the dismissal of your child/children from school.

When parents or guardians are divorced or separated, we assume that the all parties have access to their child/children unless we are provided with legal evidence that indicates one has sole custody. A copy of the document must be provided for the child's file. If a non-custodial parent or guardian arrives to pick up a child and that person is not on the list as an approved person to pick up the child, the child will not be released to him or her. If necessary, we will call the authorities to remove the person from our premises.

### Transportation

The Science School does NOT provide any transportation to students, either to and from school or for off-site field trips. Parents/guardians or other designated adults are responsible for all transportation, and encouraged to carpool. For your convenience and the safety of pedestrians, please use the designated pick up/drop off areas. You'll find the locations described in the following Carpool sections.

### Pick Up & Drop Off Procedures

If you are dropping your child off in the classroom, or picking he or she up from the classroom, you will need to sign him or her in and out each time that occurs. Each family will be given a Science School ID card that identifies you as a parent or guardian. If your child is dropped off and picked up by a carpool driver, our staff will take care of signing him or her in or out, noting time of arrival or departure.

If someone other than a parent, guardian or designated person on file is picking up your child, you need to notify us in advance in writing each time—and provide the adult's name and driver's license number. That person must park and come into the school so that we can make a copy of the driver's license, date it, and attach it to your note and put it into your child's file.

If a designated person is picking up your child for the first time, we ask that you let us know and that they show us their driver's license for verification before we release your child to them.

In order to prohibit a parent or legal guardian from picking up a child, we must have a court order on file.

If you would like to check on your child during the day, please contact the school director by phone or email, and we will be happy to check on your child any time and let you know how he or she is doing. Our staff is generally available after class time (except during carpool monitoring hours) for conversation or conference about your child. Please call the school office (214-428-5555 x1381) to schedule a time.

## Carpooling

The Science School has classrooms in both the Science building and the Planetarium. Pick-up and drop-off areas are different for each building, so please note the instructions below.

### Science Building Carpool:

We gather and dismiss children from Science building classes through the front doors—to the lower left of the main entrance stairs—at 9:25am, 1pm, 3pm (for elementary only) and 5:25pm (for extended care. All extended care is provided at the Science building.). Cars can drop off and pick up—but not park—in the drive. Please refrain from using cell phones, pagers, PDAs, etc. when dropping off and picking up children in the carpool line.

When picking up, please wait for the staff to bring your children to you. **Do not get out of your car or leave your car unattended in the carpool line at any time.** Once your child is in the car, please pull forward out of the drive to put seatbelts on.

Our doors remain locked during the day for security purposes. If you need to drop your child off late or pick up your child before a regular dismissal time (1pm for morning classes, 3pm for elementary, and 5:25pm for extended care) you will need to ring the doorbell or knock at the school's door and one of the staff members will let you in. Please be patient with us, as we don't always hear the knock or doorbell the first time!

Punctuality is important, so please make sure your carpool driver is here on time. We meet the children at the carpool line 5 minutes before classes begin. When you arrive late a teacher will need to leave the classroom to open the door for you.

### Planetarium Building Carpool:

We gather and dismiss the children from Planetarium-building classes through the door located at the end of the building—across from the parking lot— at 9:25am, 1pm, 3pm (for elementary only). Please refrain from using cell phones, pagers, PDAs, etc. when dropping off and picking up children in the carpool line.

When picking up, please wait for the staff to bring your children to you. **Do not get out of your car or leave your car unattended in the carpool line at any time.** Once your child is in the car, please pull forward out of the drive to put seatbelts on.

If you need to pick your child up early, or drop off after the regular carpool time, present your Science School ID card to the museum staff member at the Planetarium's front desk. Do not go to the regular school entrance. These doors remain locked for security purposes.

## Conferences & Evaluations

A mid-year progress report is sent home for each child in February. Formal conferences are scheduled at the end of the school year, but you are welcome to schedule a conference at any other time as well. The end-of-year conference includes a review of your child's annual developmental evaluation. We also conduct a parent survey/evaluation at the end of the school year, and we welcome your comments, concerns, suggestions, or compliments!

Parents/guardians should not try to engage a staff member for a "mini-conference" during carpool or at any school function. Teachers are available for phone calls, emails, or conferences after school by appointment. Alternatively, you can email or call with information or questions and we will respond to your message as soon as we can. If it is a serious issue, we can schedule a conference.

## Comments, Concerns or Complaints

We welcome letters, emails, phone calls with suggestions, comments or accolades. As a parent or guardian, we encourage you to express any concerns you might have involving your child. Please approach the classroom teacher(s) first—most questions or situations can be resolved at this level. The school director will become involved only if appropriate, and generally after it has been addressed with the classroom teacher(s). If the situation remains unresolved, or it is otherwise appropriate, the museum's Director of Education—and, if necessary, the COO or the CEO—will step in to try and find a solution.

## Volunteering

We need parent volunteers! Parents can support us by:

- Serving as room parents and helping with parties and special events
- Helping with our annual carnival and auction
- Being school and/or museum volunteers. Volunteers help in the class with preparation of materials, in the office, on field trips, or in other parts of the museum
- Assisting with fundraisers to help the school raise funds for equipment, scholarships, and other needs

All parents who are regular classroom volunteers need to fill out a volunteer application and pay a fee for a background check. This is coordinated through the museum's Volunteer Manager.

If you are helping with a field trip or other school function, please know that you are considered to be a representative of the school and subject to the same rules and policies pertaining to student behavior during any school-related function.

## Student & Family Directory

Each year we publish a directory with children's names, parent/guardian names, addresses, home phone and emails. This is shared with Science School families only. If you do not wish to be included in the directory, or if you want some information omitted, please indicate this on the directory form that is placed in your child's file.

## Miscellaneous

### Ongoing Fundraisers

There are several programs that help us raise funds for scholarships and operating costs. Some, like our School Carnival, happen once a year. Others are ongoing, and by participating, you can help support The Science School in a very important way!

#### School Carnival

Each Spring, Science School holds a carnival and auction run by the parents. Usually scheduled for a Saturday afternoon, it's a family event loaded with fun, and a major fundraiser that supports our scholarships and special programs, as well as the school's general operations.

#### Box Tops For Education

Hundreds of General Mills® products feature "**Box Tops for Education**" coupons on their packages. Please clip them and bring them to Science School, or shop online at the Box Tops for Education Marketplace ([www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com)). Money from these coupons will be donated back to our school by General Mills®.

#### Office Depot®

Many supplies available at Office Depot® are included in their "**5% Back To Schools**" program. Any time you make a purchase at Office Depot®—whether you shop online or in-store—provide The Science School's member ID number (70201269) at checkout, and 5% of the eligible costs will be donated back to us!

### Birthdays

The staff will try to assign your child's designated Snack Day around his or her birthday. On that day, we ask that you bring a healthy snack for snack time. If you like, you can also bring a special birthday treat for after lunch (cupcakes, cookies, and brownies work well), but we will celebrate your child's birthday whether there is a special treat or not. If you want to hand out invitations to an out-of-school birthday party in class, you can do so **ONLY** if the entire class is invited. Please consult your directory for addresses.

### Field Trips

We take walking trips around Fair Park and use the exhibits as part of our curriculum. Most off-site field trips are conducted during the second week of the State Fair. (School is not held during the third week.) Parents are notified at least 48 hours in advance of a field trip. A notice will also be posted at the school.

The Science School does not provide transportation, so children must be brought to the field trip sites by their parents or carpools. Parents are encouraged to participate, as well as other adults and siblings!

If a field trip must be cancelled, we will put a message on the school phone (214-428-5555 x1381) as soon as we know, and the trip will be rescheduled. There are no refunds for field trips not attended.

The school is not responsible for your child's care if they do not participate in a field trip. You will need to make alternative arrangements.

## **Water Play Activities**

The Science School uses only wading pools with no more than 1 foot of water, water tables, and sprinklers for water play activities. Extra staff is present at all times during water play activities and child/staff ratios mandated by the state for water activities are always met.

## **Class Pets**

We have a guinea pig named Nina. She is gentle and sweet. She is taken out of her home from time to time so that the children can pet her. This playtime is always supervised, and before and afterwards, the children wash their hands. If you do not want your child to be in contact because of allergies or health reasons, please notify your child's teacher.

We also have Peetie, an Australian bearded dragon; Spike, an Australian bearded dragon; a red-eared slider turtle; a fish tank; Crabs, the hermit crab; a goliath spider; and Tara, the tarantula. Although these pets are in our classrooms, they are NOT taken out of their homes for the children to pet. They are only for observation!

## **Educational Research**

Occasionally, we have the opportunity to participate in educational research projects. If we do this, we will notify you of the research and what we will be doing. Families can choose to opt out of the research by notifying us in writing.

## Withdrawal from School or Changing Schools

If you need or want to withdraw your child from enrollment at Science School, notice of your intention must be delivered in-person, in writing, to the school director at least 30 days prior to withdrawal. Any funds still owed for tuition must be paid. Records will not be released if there is any outstanding balance. No refunds will be issued for tuition and fees paid.

Likewise, if you need your child's school records sent to another school, your request must be delivered in-person, in writing, to the school director. Any forms and evaluations that we have in your child's file will be sent as directed by the parent or guardian. We cannot fill out individual forms for multiple schools.

Any requests for a recommendation letter need to be given to the school office staff at least 30 days before they are needed, along with information about what should be in the letter.

In all cases, please provide a stamped and addressed envelope for us to mail the letter and/or copies of our forms, or we will be unable to fulfill your request.

## School Address | Phone | Email

**Phone:** 214-428-5555 x1381

**Email:** [scienceschool@natureandscience.org](mailto:scienceschool@natureandscience.org).

**Webpage:** [www.natureandscience.org/education/sp\\_School.asp](http://www.natureandscience.org/education/sp_School.asp)

Please call or email us if you have questions, comments, concerns, suggestions, or would like a conference. Your input is important to us! If your call is an emergency (only) and no one answers our phone, call ext. 0 for the museum operators and they will locate us.

### **Our mailing address is:**

The Science School at the Museum of Nature & Science  
P.O. Box 151469 | Dallas, TX 75315-1469

### **Our physical address is:**

The Science School at the Museum of Nature & Science  
1318 South 2nd Avenue at Grand Avenue, in Fair Park | Dallas, TX 75210



**SCIENCE SCHOOL**  
AT THE MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE

1318 South Second Avenue & 3535 Grand Avenue in Fair Park

**[natureandscience.org](http://natureandscience.org)**