

## ***Avondale House Student Handbook***

### ***Program Goals***

Avondale House Day School believes that each individual with autism has a special set of strengths, needs, and talents which determine how they engage in the learning process and we believe that autism affects us all. Because of our beliefs, our programs are designed to meet the unique needs of each person we serve, to support their families, and to educate the communities in which they live.

Avondale House Day School is both a contract site for public schools and a tuition-based private school. This provision allows parents to access services through various avenues. Ultimately, Avondale House is a school focused on providing educational/behavioral/therapeutic services, attention and expertise to both students with autism and their caregivers.

Avondale House Day School staff consists of Texas Education Agency certified special education teachers, licensed specialists, well-trained paraprofessionals, and skilled direct support staff.

### ***Criteria for Eligibility/Admission***

Avondale House Day School is a Texas Education Agency-approved Non Public School serving students ages 3-22. While we are TEA approved for educating students with multiple disabilities, we specifically focus on servicing students with a primary diagnosis of autism/PDD-NOS and multiple secondary diagnoses. Students are admitted to Avondale House Day School through two avenues.

**Contract Facility for Public Schools** – Avondale House is an approved contract site for all Texas public schools via ARD committee decision. Each Independent School District (ISD) has a unique process for providing services for students with autism. Public school parents are encouraged to work with their local ISD to evaluate and utilize all ISD services available before seeking a more restrictive contract placement.

**Private School** – Avondale House Day School is a tuition based private school for non-public school parents seeking an educational program specifically for students on the autism spectrum. We serve all functional levels, behavioral levels and academic levels of students with a developmental disability of autism and related educational, behavioral, and social needs. These related needs may include students with other developmental disabilities who would benefit from a school-based program which utilizes Applied Behavioral Analysis in a classroom setting.

Determination of eligibility for placement with Avondale House Day School typically involves the following process:

1. Parents schedule an interview and site visit with Avondale House school principal
2. School principal arranges with parents to observe student in current school setting or makes arrangements for observation to occur on Avondale House campus.
3. If determination is made to proceed with Avondale House enrollment, parents provide the following documents:
  - a. AH Student Enrollment packet
  - b. FIE (Full Individual Education Evaluation) or similar Diagnostic Evaluation from Developmental Pediatrician or Development Clinic
  - c. Educational Records from previous three years, as available
  - d. Medical Records/Immunization Records/TB Test

### ***Assessment***

Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) require educational evaluations be conducted and addressed every three years. This assessment can be provided by the Local Education Agency (LEA) or by licensed clinical professionals. Parents from public school placements will work with their local ISD to address assessment needs. Private school parents may seek their own assessment team or may contract with Avondale House Day School to provide these services.

### ***Types of Services Available***

- Academic/Educational Program for students ages 3 - 22
- Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Community Based Vocational Instruction
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
- In-Home Training
- Parent Training
- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Medical Collaboration
- Therapeutic Recreational Services
- Special Olympics
- Fine Arts Enrichment Classes (Music/Art)
- SIRE – Therapeutic Horseback Riding
- Support Group Meetings

### ***Staff/Student Ratio***

Avondale House Day School has eight classrooms staffed by a TEA approved Special Education Teacher and two behavior-trained teaching assistants. Each classroom has no more than eight students which supports a maximum student-teacher ratio of 1:4.

### ***Tuition and Fees***

Contract arrangements for private school tuition are made with Avondale House Chief Executive Officer. Avondale House is very fortunate to have community resources which help support our student activities. There are no fees for student activities.

### ***Calendar***

School calendar is included

### ***Attendance***

Student attendance is important. We recognize that student behaviors may interfere with a parent's ability to have student arrive on time or even get to school. Avondale House staff work with parents to address those difficulties and behaviors. We will help parents implement a behavior plan to address disruptive behaviors at home, before school, on the school bus and dismissing from school.

### ***Schedule of Service***

All students (public school and private school) will have the same team-approach process of working with Avondale House Day School to develop an Individual Education Plan and Behavior Intervention Plan. This process will identify students strengths, student deficits and the team will write together attainable goals on which to build student development. From this IEP, a Student Schedule of Service will be developed, identifying the detailed schedule of the student's day. From this schedule, each student will have posted either a picture schedule or textual schedule, depending on their functional ability.

In addition to the Behavior Intervention Plan, Avondale House Day School will conduct Functional Assessments as student behavior escalates to determine the function of the behavior as well as a targeted plan to address the behavior.

### ***Student Meals***

Avondale House Day School does not have an on-site cafeteria. Students are asked to either bring a breakfast and lunch or parents may opt for a public school lunch provided by a neighborhood school. Students who are eligible for Free/Reduced lunch in the public school are eligible for the same food service from a neighborhood school. Applications for Free/Reduced lunch are included in the Student Information Packet.

Lunch full price is \$2.25. Lunch reduced prices is \$.40. Eligibility rules for free or reduced lunch may apply.

Parents who would prefer their child have a hot meal can send meals daily which staff will warm. Parents who prefer their child have a public school meal can make arrangements with our receptionist to pay for meals in advance. Parents who would like their child to have a choice can send a lunch, purchase a school lunch and staff will present choices to the student.

Students who are on special diets will be supervised during meal time to support that diet. Parents are asked to provide appropriate snacks as per teacher request.

### ***Personal Belongings***

Personal belongings request are student specific. Avondale House Day School asks that each student come to school daily with a backpack and lunch kit (unless purchasing lunch). If your student needs a preferred item for transportation or to complete some tasks, please communicate this to staff and an arrangement or supportive behavior plan can be developed. If a student's personal belongings create a behavior problem, staff will help parents develop a more success-focused option. Any personal belongings sent to school are the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian sending the items. Avondale House cannot be responsible for lost or damaged personal property.

### ***Dress Code***

Avondale House Day School does not have a uniform. We do encourage students to dress appropriately for the weather as well as for safety. If a student has clothing specific difficulties, parents and teachers will work to decrease those intolerances and difficulties. Dressing for safety includes:

- Tennis shoes or soft sole shoes
- "Right" sized clothing – not too loose, not too tight
- No hoop earrings (girls or boys)
- Daily showers/baths with clean clothes (if your student has aversions to cleaning /brushing, etc – staff will work with parents to develop and implement a hygiene IEP)

### ***Birthdays/Holidays/Special Days***

Avondale House Day School recognizes and celebrates many holidays as part of our students' educational program. We expose students to vocabulary, sight/sounds/smells of various holidays as well as celebrate our students' special days. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions or offer celebratory items to their child's teaching team. We welcome parent and family traditions that would help your child make connections and generalizations to home.

### ***School Visitors***

Avondale House Day School welcomes ISD's, parents and their representatives to visit Avondale House. We have many staff, ISD personnel and therapeutic support staff in the classrooms daily. We also have the opportunity for any approved individuals to observe classrooms via video monitors located in our viewing room. Avondale House is very fortunate to have video cameras located throughout the building where teaching and learning can be observed daily without observation affecting instruction. You may contact our principal or assistant principal to schedule your visit.

### ***Parent Involvement***

Avondale House Day School welcomes parent involvement in many forms. Some of the opportunities include:

- Annual ARD/IEP meetings
- Quarterly Review of student progress
- Individually scheduled conferences with administrator, behavior specialist, related service providers, and teaching teams
- Attendance at social events for the Avondale House organization or the Avondale House Day School

### ***Medical/Medication***

Avondale House has a nurse who annually trains all staff in school-related appropriate medical issues. Our students are taught to self-administer their medications. Details of this procedure are discussed with parents in a meeting with the nurse. Parents are encouraged to stay in communication with the nurse for both medication and medical issues. All prescribed medications must have a written order from the physician. (Copies are acceptable.) All orders must be renewed every 6 months, unless an earlier termination date is indicated. The nurse will fax renewal orders to the physician. He/she may require written permission from you prior to providing renewal orders to Avondale House.

Many over the counter (PRN) medications are available at Avondale House and can be given if the parent/guardian has provided signed authorization. If medication is in a different form, i.e. liquid, or is not on the list provided, the parent/guardian must provide the PRN medication, with the child's name printed on the container.

### ***Transportation***

Avondale House Day School receives students via public school bus, private contract transport companies or parent provision of transportation. We also have four vehicles used to transport students on various community based instruction outings.

### ***Arrival/Dismissal Procedures***

Avondale House Day School hours are 8:15 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday. Parents are asked to have their student arrive at 8:15 a.m. and be picked up at 3:15 p.m. Staff are not available to supervise students prior to 8:15 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m.

### ***School Floor Plan***

See attached.