The Rise School™

OF HOUSTON

"Where Special Kids Shine"™

5618 H. Mark Crosswell
Houston, Texas 77021

Welcome to The Rise School of Houston! We are happy that you have chosen to volunteer with us. Expect to work hard while having lots of fun and learning a lot, too. Here are some guidelines for you that will hopefully answer any questions you may have about our volunteer program.

- You must be at least a High School Student to volunteer.
- There is a refrigerator and microwave in the employee lounge for storing and preparing your lunch.
- The hours that volunteers are in our classrooms may vary. Please meet with Peggy to schedule your volunteer hours.
- Also, please call us at (713) 532-RISE (7473) when you are not able to come in to volunteer.
- Feel free to ask questions about what to do if you are confused or do not understand! Please remember that information about specific children and families is confidential and cannot be discussed.
- Before volunteering, we will run a criminal history check on all volunteers.
- Volunteers are asked to sign in and out each time that you visit our school.
- Volunteers who assist in the classroom should dress comfortably. Much of your day will be spent on the floor or sitting in small chairs.

Classroom Responsibilities may include:
Playing with children
Talking to children
Feeding children
Giving bottles to babies
Assisting with group/individual activities
Assisting with activity preparation
Assisting with classroom artwork
Assisting with clean up after eating/activities

Clerical Responsibilities may include:
Copying
Library
Scrapbook
Filing
Word processing
Answering the telephone

We want your experience at The Rise School of Houston to be a positive and enjoyable one. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please talk to your teacher or to me.

Thank you,

Peggy Jackson
Receptionist/Lead Teacher Assistant
The Rise School of Houston

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VOLUNTEER/STUDENT APPLICATION

Volunteer/Student Name_____ Social Security #_____

FIRST MIDDLE LAST Email_____

Date of Birth_____ Age_____ Telephone Number_____

Address_____

_____ Zip_____

Spouse Name_____ Spouse Phone Number_____

List all of the cities where you have lived in Texas:_____

List of other names that you have used (married, maiden, etc.)_____

Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Name	Relationship to Volunteer	Phone Number
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Allergies:_____

Primary Physician's Name:_____

Phone Number:_____

Days and Times you are interested in Volunteering:

Special interests or skills:_____

Today's Date:_____ **Please mail or return this form along with a copy of your driver's license to:**

The Rise School of Houston

5618 H. Mark Crosswell St.

Houston, Texas 77021

pejackson@riseschool.org

Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

Form 2971
Revised Oct 2013

CHILD CARE LICENSING REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND CHECK

CCL

"Texas law gives you the right to know what information is collected about you by means of a form you submit to a state government agency. You can receive and review this information, and request that incorrect information about you be corrected by contacting your licensing representative."

Operation Name	Operation Number	Telephone No. (A/C)
Brenda and John H Duncan Rise School of Houston	1353926	713-532-7473

Operation Address (Street, City, ZIP)	Operation Mailing Address (City & Zip)	County
5618 H Mark Crosswell Jr St	Houston, Texas	77021

Complete the following information for each person required to have a background check. All names used currently or in the past must be provided. If you do not provide every name that each person has used, you may receive inaccurate results. Additional forms may be obtained from the Licensing office.

I verified **(by reviewing the person's social security card and/or driver license)** that the information on this form contains no willful misrepresentation and that the information given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the Department may contact others and, at any time, seek proof of any information contained here. I understand that any willful misrepresentation or failure to provide identifying information within the stated time limit is a cause for denial of the application or revocation of my license, registration or listing.

Kemberly A Kennemer, Office Manager
Printed Name of Director, Owner, or Operator — Signature of Director, Owner, or Operator — Date

☐ Initial ☐ 24 Month Check ☐ Fingerprint Check Required ☐ FBI Results in DPS Clearinghouse

Social Security Number	ID Type - Drivers License or ID Number -State

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	
Street Address	City	State	Zip
County	Telephone No. (A/C)	Date of Birth	Gender ☐ M ☐ F

You must list any other city in Texas where this person has been a resident, and any addresses, including county, where the person has lived outside of Texas in the previous five years:

Relationship of person to requestor
☐ Adoptive Parent ☐ Caregiver ☐ Director ☐ Foster parent ☐ Household Member ☐ Licensed Administrator
☐ Other Staff ☐ Staff ☐ Volunteer ☐ Other:

For Foster/Adoptive Homes only: Relationship between child/children to be placed and the foster/adoptive parent(s) or prospective foster/adoptive parent(s) ☐ Relative ☐ Fictive Kin ☐ Unrelated

Date Hired /Used by the Operation/Agency	*Ethnicity* (must accompany race)	Race
	☐ Hispanic ☐ Other	☐ White ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native ☐ Unable to Determine ☐ Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander

Other names used (married, maiden, etc.) First Name	Middle Name	Last Name

DFPS Use Only	Worker Name--Last, first	Mail Code

VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I acknowledge and certify that I am performing services for The Brenda and John H. Duncan Rise School of Houston (the "School") as a volunteer as that term is defined in the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 USCS 203(4)(A)), and I do not expect, nor have I been promised, any compensation for my services. I certify that I am offering my services freely and without pressure or coercion, direct or implied, from the school. I further represent that I am not currently employed by the School.

I understand that as a volunteer I am not entitled to nor shall I receive any employment benefits that are offered or provided by the School to its employees.

In consideration of being permitted to participate as a volunteer for the School and to perform volunteer services for the School, I, the undersigned, for myself and for my personal representatives, heirs and next of kin, do hereby WAIVE, RELEASE, DISCHARGE, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE the School, its Board of Directors, officers, officials, employees, or agents (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Released Parties") from all liability to me, my personal representatives, heirs and next of kin for any and all claims, demands, damages, or loss, including claims for personal injury (including death) or damage to property whether caused by the Released Party's negligence or otherwise, while I am participating in or performing any volunteer services for the School.

I hereby agree to ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR AND ALL RISK of bodily injury, death, or property damage due to negligence of the School of otherwise while performing volunteer services for the School.

I have read and voluntarily sign this waiver of compensation and release of liability agreement, and agree that no oral representations, statements, or inducements apart from the foregoing written agreement have been made to me.

Dated this the_____day of_____, 20____.

_____ _____

Witness Volunteer's Signature

_____

Volunteer's Name PRINTED

The Rise School™

OF HOUSTON

"Where Special Kids Shine" ™

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

History

The Rise School of Houston (hereinafter "Rise") is a non-profit organization established for the purpose of providing the highest quality of early childhood education services to children with Down syndrome or other developmental disabilities and to children without disabilities from ages 6 months up to 6 years of age. The provision of Rise services is based on recommended practices to young children with diverse abilities and their families.

It is important to understand the history of how the Rise School™ came to be established in Dallas and now Houston. When a local Dallas family gave birth to twins on Easter Sunday in 1995, their lives changed dramatically after their infant son was diagnosed with Down syndrome. Since that day, they have been busy raising three active children and at the same time researching what could and should be done for children with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities. This research covered hundreds of meetings throughout the United States to determine what vital element was missing. They visited with parents, schools, institutions, doctors, hospitals, and homes for people with special needs hoping to find something specific that would significantly improve the lives of these special children and their families. As a result of their efforts, they formed the organization Friends of Children with Down syndrome in order to promote this cause.

Finally, in September of 1997, this family found that special "something" in Tuscaloosa at The University of Alabama. It was a program named "RISE" which focuses on the needs of toddlers and preschoolers who have developmental disabilities. Under the long-term leadership and influence of Martha Cook, Ed.D., RISE has developed and implemented an effective early childhood special education approach. A unique component of that program is the integration of children having developmental disabilities with peers not having developmental concerns, which has resulted in children's achievements beyond previous expectations.

With enthusiasm and encouragement, this family proceeded to raise the necessary initial funds to establish a Rise School in Dallas and a Rise School in Houston, with both schools dedicated to emulating the RISE Program of the Stallings Center at the University of Alabama. In January 1999 a group of influential Houstonians raised the initial funds to start at The Rise School in Houston, making that school the second Rise School in Texas. This same group also established the needed affiliation with Texas Children's Hospital.

Rise Mission Statement

The purpose of the Rise School of Houston is to provide the highest quality of educational services to children with Down syndrome or other developmental disabilities and their non-disabled peers by:

Providing exemplary services based on recommended practices to young children with diverse abilities and their families;

Offering instructional opportunities through collaboration with various academic programs at local colleges and universities;

Engaging in research that positively influences practice in the field of early childhood education at the local, state and national levels;

Interfacing with the community through outreach and public awareness activities;

Disseminating information and providing technical assistance to other community based agencies; and

Affecting education policy and systems change at the local, state and national levels.

School Philosophy and Goals

The goals of Rise are to:

a) provide family-centered services designed to meet the individualized needs of all children and families
b) provide a blend of educational and therapy services within the context of a developmentally appropriate curriculum; and
c) to prepare children for their next educational environment. The school adheres to the philosophy and recommended practices of both early childhood special education and general early childhood education. The philosophy is based on the following premises and design of the Rise Program at the University of Alabama:

1. Services are family-centered with particular emphasis placed on the family as the primary decision-maker in each child's education.

2. The assessment process is dynamic and ongoing and includes multiple procedures, information sources and settings. Assessment is linked to programming.

3. Services are designed around an individualized intervention plan consisting of goals and outcomes based on family's concerns, priorities and resources; the child's strengths and needs; and expectations of the child's next environment.

4. Services are offered that vary in intensity and structure, based on the individual and group needs of the children and their families.

5. Children's development is promoted in all areas including gross and fine motor skills, independence, cognitive skills, social competence and emotional growth and communication skills.

6. Therapy services (i.e., physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and music therapy) are provided within the context of the educational environment using an integrated approach. Therapy goals are educationally relevant and are implemented collaboratively by the therapists and teaching staff.

7. The foundation of the learning environment and activities is based on general early childhood education guidelines, which are blended with, recommended practices from early childhood special education.

8. Specially designed instruction and curricular adaptations and accommodations are embedded in the daily activities of the classroom.

9. The curriculum is designed to foster children's self-confidence, self-esteem, independence and curiosity.

10. The curriculum is guided by functional objectives that support children in their current environment and prepare them for more inclusive environments.

11. The curriculum reflects a balance between teacher and child-initiated activities.

12. The program addresses the children's transitions from one classroom to another and transitions to other more inclusive educational environments.

All children learn at a different rate and pace. It is the goal of The Rise School™ to work toward achieving an individual's full potential at a pace unique to each child.

In order to accomplish the goals of the Rise program, a total team effort is necessary. Having laid the groundwork to establish an effective teaching and learning environment, the management of Rise Schools now focuses on supporting that necessary teamwork. We depend on your understanding of Rise procedures to enable you to assist us in meeting our team goals. Our ultimate goal is to create a place where "special kids and exceptional volunteers shine".

Licensing

The Rise School of Houston is licensed by the Childcare Division of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Rise adheres to these standards with monitoring through TDPRS site visits.

Class Description

The program houses ten classrooms serving 8-12 students per classroom. Children are assigned to classrooms based on their chronological age and educational needs. The classrooms include: two infant classes (6 months to 18 months), two toddler classes (18 months to 24 months), two 2-year old classes, two 3-year old classes, a 4-year old class, and a 5 and 6-year old class.

Rise offers a number of services to families that may include physical, occupational, speech and music therapies using a collaborative/consultation service delivery model. Many of these services are delivered through an integrated approach in which the therapeutic activities are provided routinely by the teachers and instructional teacher assistants with ongoing input from the therapists. The therapeutic activities are integrated into the daily routine of each classroom. The therapists monitor the activities on a regular basis. Using this approach, therapy is delivered in an efficient manner during a child's school day. Recommendations are also provided to families for carry over in the home environment.

Incident Reporting

An incident report will be completed by the classroom teacher or by the person having knowledge of the facts when any accident, injury or significant event occurs. The report will be completed within 24 hours and will be filed in the child's records. Parents will be notified of any occurrence of an accident or injury.

Health and Safety Procedures

The following health and safety procedures are followed at Rise:

1. Fire drills are conducted monthly and severe weather drills conducted twice a year. Evacuation routes are posted in each of the classrooms.

2. All classrooms maintain a first aid kit.

3. The staff and volunteers wash their hands frequently and appropriately as children are nurtured and handled.

4. Frequently mouthed and handled objects/toys are washed and sanitized between uses by the children.

5. Diaper changing and toileting are performed by the staff of Rise only.

6. All classroom materials such as towels, washcloths, bibs, sheets and blankets are washed after single uses by the children or staff.

7. All electrical outlets at The Rise School are shock proof.

8. All instructional staff and the Director are certified in adult, child and infant CPR and First Aid.

9. All staff receives a physical and TB test annually.

Conscious Discipline

Every classroom has its share of disciplinary issues, and The Rise School of Houston is no exception. But where this inclusive preschool distinguishes itself is with how matters are handled. Recent research in brain chemistry and developmental psychology show that fear-based disciplinary programs seriously impair learning. Simply put, children need to feel safe to do their best learning.

The Rise School of Houston has introduced "Conscious Discipline," a disciplinary philosophy that teaches children how to regulate their own behavior. One of the problems with the reward and punishment system traditionally used in schools is that they are external. Our goal is to inspire behavior change from within. Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive social and emotional intelligence classroom management program that empowers both teachers and students. Conscious Discipline offers a relationship-based community model of classroom management. The key is a sense of community, with the "school family" at the core of the program. The "school family" is held together through communication skills. These skills are taught during conflict moments in the classroom and through active learning lessons. The goal of the "school family" is to create problem-solvers. Love, expressed through safety, cooperation and respect is the tool used to give the system power. As we seek meaningful relationships with one another, we must also learn skills of interaction that promote respect. Developed by Dr. Becky Bailey, Conscious Discipline stresses seven skills:

1. **Composure** – Be who you want children to be.
2. **Encouragement** – We are all in this together.
3. **Assertiveness** – Saying "no" and being heard.
4. **Choices** – Building self-esteem and willpower.
5. **Positive Intent** – See the best in others.
6. **Empathy**- Handling the fussing and the fits.
7. **Consequences** – Learning from mistakes.

Strong relationships with the teacher and other students motivate proper behavior. Conflict is addressed as a "teachable moment" not a shameful event where the child is punished or sent away to time-out. A "Safe Place" is established within the classroom, where students deal with complex emotions. Conscious Discipline also requires teachers to remain calm and composed especially when dealing with disciplinary issues. We can't expect our children to demonstrate composure if the adults in their lives lack it.

Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment and other Forms of Harassment

a. General Harassment

Rise strives to provide a work environment free from harassment. Rise prohibits the harassment of any of its employees, regardless of whether that harassment is targeted specifically to the employee, based on an individual's race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, medical condition, sexual orientation, or physical and mental disability.

Prohibited harassment may include, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, derogatory comments or jokes, intimidation, negative stereotyping, threats, assault or any physical interference with the employee's normal work or movement, directed at an individual employee, their relatives, friends or associates. Harassment may also include written or graphic material placed on walls, bulletin boards or elsewhere on the school's premises or circulated in the work place that degenerates, show hostility or aversion towards an individual or group because of characteristics identified above.

b. Sexual Harassment

Rise also prohibits sexual harassment in the work place. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual conduct of any nature that creates an offensive or hostile working environment or unwelcome sexual conduct that is made a condition of working at Rise School.

Prohibits sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual conduct such as:

- Verbal harassment (e.g., sexual requests, comments, jokes, slurs);
- Physical harassment (e.g., physical contact); and
- Visual harassment (e.g., posters, cartoons)

Confidentially of Information

An employee or volunteer who gains knowledge within the scope of employment may not take advantage of such information for personal gain nor may such information be disclosed to anyone, except as required be the employee's position. Such information includes, but is not limited to, donor and membership lists, unpublished financial information, and protection and security systems of Rise.

Information gained about the children, their families, and volunteers through virtue of employment with Rise is considered confidential and is not disclosed to third parties without families or individual's consent. A breach of confidentiality may cause an employee or family serious stress or other difficulties. It is every employee's job to

rigorously respect all families', employees' and volunteers' right to privacy. Therefore, any breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action or discharge. Any inquiries from the press or news media should be referred to the Executive Director and/or the President of the Board of Directors.

Substance Abuse

Scope: This policy applies to all employees of The Rise School.

Purpose and Background: Rise is dedicated to providing its employees with a safe and productive workplace. It is recognized that alcohol, drug or other substance abuse by employees impairs their ability to perform properly and has serious adverse effects on safety, efficiency and the productivity of other employees, the students and the school as a whole.

Policy:

a. The manufacture, distribution and dispensation of any controlled substance in the workplace are prohibited. Possession or use of any controlled substance is permitted only when the substance is prescribed for the used by a physician, and it is actively being used in the manner prescribed.

b. For the purpose of this policy, "Controlled Substance" includes alcohol and prescription drugs as well as illegal inhalants and illegal drugs.

c. Employees/volunteers may not report to work while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs that could adversely affect their performance, jeopardize their safety or that of other persons or endanger Rise property.

d. Any violation of this policy results in disicinplary action up to and including discharge.

e. Any employee/volunteer who is convicted under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace must notify the Director of the conviction within five days of such conviction.

f. As a condition of employment with Rise every employee/volunteer must abide by the terms of this policy.

g. Alcohol and drug dependency are treatable conditions. Employees and volunteers with current alcohol or drug abuse problems are encouraged to voluntarily seek assistance for their problems and will not be disciplined or terminated due to their request for help in overcoming a dependency. Information regarding drug and alcohol counseling can be obtained by contacting the Director.

h. This policy does not require and should not result in any special regulations, privileges or exemptions from normal job performance requirements.

i. Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in The Rise School of Houston. Rise employees and volunteers may not use these products on the school premised or in the presence of children during Rise functions.

Personal Appearance

The Rise School and our profession as a whole are judged by families and by the public according to the appearance and professional attitude of each staff member. For this reason, employees and volunteers must be neat, clean, and dressed appropriately and comfortably.