



CHRIST'S CHURCH  
ACADEMY

# Preschool Parent Handbook



**Christ's Church Academy Preschool program is accredited through ACSI and voluntarily complies with licensing requirements for the state of Florida. All preschool staff are trained annually in CPR, First Aid, and Early Education professional development.**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

### **WELCOME TO CHRIST'S CHURCH ACADEMY PRESCHOOL**

We're glad you are a part of our family! Your child is a gift from God, and we are excited to have them in our program. Thank you for putting your trust in us.

This handbook is designed as a reference for you. It contains specific information as well as the policies and procedures set forth by our Preschool. Please feel free to contact us at 904-260-2015 if you have any questions or problems. When you sign your child's Confidential Enrollment Form, you are acknowledging that you have read this handbook in its entirety.

### **OUR MISSION**

It is the mission of Christ's Church Junior Academy to seek God's will in developing each child's unique potential to become a life-long learner, a disciple of Jesus Christ and a productive citizen.

We strive to MAKE DISCIPLES, BETTER DISCIPLES, and MORE DISCIPLES. (Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:42, Mark 15:15).

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:**

Christ's Church Academy Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

### **ENROLLMENT**

It is the policy of Christ's Church Academy Preschool to use the following procedures to enroll students. The process is as follows:

The preschool is open to children from the community. Priority will be given to current CCA/CCAP students and siblings, followed by children from the community. Children need to be fully potty-trained upon the first day of their PreK3 class as unfortunately, we are not set up for diaper changing in those rooms.

Upon acceptance of enrollment, we require that an information packet be completed for our files (health examination, medical consent forms, allergy information, immunization records, emergency phone numbers, etc.). These forms must be on file before the child attends class at Christ's Church Academy Preschool.

Due to documented religious and medical exemptions, some children in care may not have current immunizations.

## **TUITION AND FEES:**

Christ's Church Academy Preschool is a non-profit organization and operates on funds provided by tuition and fees. All fees are used to provide salaries, equipment, and supplies; therefore, all fees must be paid for in advance and on time.

Christ's Church Academy Preschool annual tuition is based on expenses necessary to operate the preschool from August through May and is assessed each year to accurately reflect budget requirements. Tuition is divided into equal installments, so the payment does not vary month to month.

In the case of emergency closure tuition will remain the same.

An application fee/enrollment fee is required for each family from our two-year-old through four-year-old program. This fee secures your child a place in a class. The fee is non-refundable.

All tuition fees are billed through FACTS. We do not send statements.

There is no credit given for absences and there are no make-up days.

Tuition must be always kept current. Please contact the director if you are having trouble meeting your obligations.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL PROGRAM:**

Our school operates on funds provided by tuition and registration fees. There are many expenses of a continuing nature. To ensure our income for the year it is understood that students are enrolled for one entire school year, or such portion as may remain after the date of entrance. Tuition is non-refundable if your child is withdrawn.

Fourteen (14) days' notice must be given for withdrawing a child from Christ's Church Academy Preschool.

If you have registered your child (or any of your children) for the following school year and you withdraw for any portion of the year, you will lose those spots.

If you are planning an extended vacation during the school year, you must pay tuition every month to save your child's spot. Tuition is due on the first of every month. Failure to pay this will result in withdrawal from school.

## **REQUESTS FOR TEACHERS**

A great deal of thought and planning goes into forming classes, and it is difficult to honor parent requests, while considering the best interests of all of the children. Therefore, we do not accept teacher requests. Teacher recommendations for the placement of children for social and/or developmental reasons have top priority. Consideration is also given to separating children and to reasons for not placing a child with a specific teacher. Finally, it is our policy to consult parents of same-age siblings regarding their wishes to have the children placed together or separated.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and carline begins at 12:45 p.m. for all ages. We do have an Early and Aftercare program (with limited spots) that is available from 7:45 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Please see the front office if you are interested.

Children need to know that someone will bring them to school on time and be waiting when school is over. Therefore, please be prompt both in bringing your child to school and in picking them up. Class activities begin promptly each day and are disrupted by late arrivals.

- When dropping off, please have your child ready to exit (things gathered, good-byes said, etc.) before a teacher opens the car door. It is important to keep car line moving consistently to avoid backups on Greenland Road.
- **Remain in your car.** All children will be put into and taken out of the car from the driver's side. For the safety of the children and Staff, please put your car in Park while your child gets in or out of your vehicle. Please refrain from using your cell phone during drop-off and pick-up.
- Please pull into a CCAP parking area in the afternoons to buckle your children in their car seats. The staff will not be responsible for securing seat belts.
- We look for your car tag at drop off and at pick up to help with the flow of traffic and to ensure the safety of the child. If the car tag is not displayed at pick-up time or we do not recognize the driver, we will not load the child. The person picking up will have to park and show identification, and have it matched against the emergency contacts listed on the enrollment form before we will release the child.
- Please be considerate of the other drivers in the car line. This is not the time to talk to your teachers. If you would like to schedule a conference with your teacher, she will gladly be obliged. There is simply not enough time to talk and keep the carline going.

**Carline is mandatory. This is for the safety of all of the children and parents. If you choose not to use the carline, your student will be walked by someone from the office to their classroom at 9:15 or when carline is over. Walking your student to the classroom makes separation more difficult, not only for your student but the other kids in the classroom.**

## Late Fees

School is out at 1:00. (Afternoon carline begins at 12:45 pm)

- There is a \$10.00 charge beginning at 1:00 and \$1.00 per minute thereafter. You will be asked to withdraw from the program if you are consistently late.
- You will be billed immediately for the late charges, and they will be on your next statement.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

In the event of severe weather conditions, any closure will be communicated to families on the website, social media, texts, and by email. We will always decide based on safety for all our families and staff.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Please label your child's bag and all other items brought to school, even those inside their bag. We ask that an extra change of clothing (appropriate for the season) be kept in their backpack. Children should be dressed in comfortable, washable, play clothes. They will be involved in projects using paint, paste, cooking ingredients, sand, mud, etc. Please dress them to participate in these activities.

Tennis shoes are preferred for school wear for the safety of the children. For the safety of your child, please do not send them in cowboy boots, dress shoes, or flip flops.

Outdoor play is a part of our program at Christ's Church Academy Preschool. Unless it is extremely cold or wet, each class has an outdoor playtime. Please dress your child accordingly.

## **Class Parties and Birthday Celebrations**

Each class may observe or celebrate birthdays differently. Your child's teacher will share with you how your child's class will celebrate birthdays. In consideration of the feelings of our young students, please do not send birthday invitations to school unless every classmate is invited. Your sensitivity in this matter will help us avoid hurt feelings.

Many classes also hold special themes or holiday celebrations such as Thankful Feasts, birthday parties for Jesus, Easter celebrations, etc. Please adhere to your teacher's guidelines for these events.

*Please note that siblings are not permitted in the classroom for celebrations.*

## **CHAPEL POLICY**

We love our Parents! We are happy for you to join us for many activities such as special events, plays, and musical programs. Please know that parents do sometimes cause more anxiety with our students than you realize. It is so very hard for them to say goodbye several times throughout the day, and it is also hard on those who don't have parents present. This is why we ask that parents not attend chapel. This only lasts for 20 minutes and sometimes takes more than that to settle the children back down! Please understand that this is for the benefit of all the children in the preschool.

## HEALTH

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us.

Upon enrollment, a Florida health form (gold form) and immunization record (blue form) must be signed by your child's doctor and must be on file with our office before your child can attend. Your child's immunization form (blue) must have a current expiration date; it is NOT valid if this date has expired. Please be sure your child's doctor does this when filling out forms. Shot records must also be updated each time your child is due for a new immunization, or your current form expires.

We strive to make sure every child in the preschool has age-appropriate immunizations. However, with the religious exemption that is allowed by the Department of Children and Families, some children in our care might not be immunized.

Children will not be permitted at our school with any of the following conditions:

1. Fever of 100 degrees within 24 hours. In case of fever, your child must be kept at home for 24 hours after his/her temperature is normal. Your child must be fever-free without the use of medication for 24 hours.
2. Vomiting within the past 24 hours.
3. Diarrhea within a 24-hour period.
4. Draining rash or undiagnosed rash lasting over a 24-hour period.
5. Eye discharge or pink eye. Children can be readmitted after a medical diagnosis to rule out bacterial or viral infection, or 24 hours on antibiotic treatment.
6. Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.
7. Open oozing sores and scabs, unless properly covered and 24 hours on antibiotic treatment.
8. Head lice – A child identified as having head lice shall not be permitted to return until the following day, and only provided that treatment has occurred and has been verified. Verification of treatment may include a product box, box top, empty bottle, or signed statement by a custodial parent or legal guardian that treatment has occurred. Our facility must also treat areas, equipment, toys and furnishings with which the child has been in contact. (As per DCF Requirement:65C-22.004)

NOTE: Sick children will be sent home. If your child arrives sick, he/she will not be permitted to stay. Also, if your child becomes sick during the morning, you will be called and required to pick him/her up immediately. Your child will be isolated in the preschool office until parent pick up.

It is important that small children go to bed early. School is not fun for children who are tired when they get there. The day is a burden instead of a pleasure when that happens. Please be sure that your child gets enough rest and eats a well-balanced breakfast.

Allergies, special diets, etc. must be brought to the attention of the director and teacher. An informational meeting with the parents may also be needed.

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS**

All of our staff have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of any children involved at Christ's Church Academy Preschool.

Child abuse is defined as a child who has had:

- any non-accidental physical or mental injury (i.e., shaking, beating, burning)
- any form of sexual abuse (i.e., sexual exploitation)
- emotional abuse (i.e., excessive belittling, berating, or teasing which impairs the child's psychological growth)
- at risk behavior (i.e., placing a child in a situation which might endanger him by abuse or neglect)
- injuries which are inconsistent with the explanation given.

Child neglect is defined as a child who has been:

- abandoned
- denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, for example a child who has not been provided appropriate food, clothing, shelter, education, mental care and supervision, or allowed to live under circumstances, conditions, or associations injurious to his/her well-being.

Given our adherence to a Zero Tolerance Policy with abuse and neglect, it is our plan to ensure that the staff is aware of the signs of abuse or neglect. The staff at Christ's Church Academy Preschool must take immediate action to help the child whom they suspect is being abused or neglected. As mandated reporters, the director and teachers of the Preschool must report actual or suspected abuse or neglect or the imminent risk of serious harm of any child to the Department of Children and Families.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or DCF are called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of DCF or the police when they are called.

## **FIRST AID KITS**

First Aid Kits are stored in various places throughout the school. By Florida law, all topical antiseptics, sunscreen, and other skin preparations may be applied only with prior medical authorization. We clean wounds with antibacterial soap, unless otherwise directed by parents, with authorization from a licensed health care provider. First aid kits are available to staff at all times.

## **POTTY TRAINING POLICY:**

Potty-trained preschool children:

- No longer wear diapers (disposable or cloth) or disposable underwear (pull-ups)
- Can tell the teacher when they need to go to the bathroom, and
- Can attend to their own hygiene. A teacher will assist when needed.

**All children in the three-year-old and the VPK Program must be potty-trained.** If your child is not potty-trained by the first day of school, you will need to withdraw them, and they will be placed at the top of our waiting list.

In the event the child is found not to be fully potty-trained as indicated by three accidents, a meeting will be held with the teacher and director to determine when the child can return to the classroom.

Soiled items will be placed in a Ziploc bag with a note attached, to be sent home.

## **LUNCH/SNACKS**

All children have lunch at school (provided by parents). Foods associated with young children's choking incidents must be cut into ½ inch or smaller pieces to prevent choking. Examples of this are hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, and cheese cubes/sticks. If food of this kind is not cut into appropriate sizes, we cannot allow the children to eat it.

You will also send in a snack and water bottle/sippy cup each day. We do ask parents not to send in "sugary treats" except on special occasions such as birthdays or holiday parties.

Children must provide their own snacks, lunch, and drink. Please mark lunch boxes and thermoses clearly with first and last name. Items are unable to be refrigerated or warmed.

## **SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT**

\*\*\*Please be aware that Christ's Church Academy Preschool is a "Smoke Free" environment. Smoking/Vaping (including e- cigarettes) is NOT allowed anywhere on campus (this includes parking lot and playground.) \*\*\*

## **UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS**

Please encourage your child to talk about his/her school experience daily. We encourage parents and teachers to stay in close contact with each other. Teachers are not allowed to use their cellphones in the classrooms so please call the office and leave a message for the teacher if you need to have her call you.

Teachers will keep you up-to-date in various ways.

We ask you not to discuss your child with us when he/she is present, nor will we discuss another child with a parent.

Do not expect "products" to be brought home each day. We stress the process of painting, pasting, cutting, etc., and not the finished project.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to schedule conferences or meetings at any time with your child's teacher.



## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Rule 10M-12.013 (Child Discipline) of the Florida Administrative Code, as authorized by section 402.301 of the Florida Statutes require parents to be notified in writing of the disciplinary practices of Christ's Church Academy Preschool. It is our job to instruct (to show / model) the children on what is acceptable behavior at our school.

The staff establishes and consistently enforces reasonable, age-appropriate limits which helps foster self-discipline within the children, we place more emphasis on what children "may do" than what the "may not do." However, once a child understands what is expected of him and intentionally chooses to violate school rules or exhibits unacceptable behavior, he will experience a consequence.

Some of the methods that are used are listed below:

1. Rewards are withheld (stickers, happy faces, etc.)
2. Loss of privileges (cannot continue to play with certain toy, cannot continue in an activity, has to sit out of play on the playground).
3. Time Out Chair (children are placed away from the group and may return when they are ready to follow the rules).

Physical punishment is never used at Christ's Church Academy Preschool, and discipline is never associated with food, drink, rest, or toileting.

### **Dismissal Policy**

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from Christ's Church Academy Preschool.

#### **Immediate Causes for Dismissal:**

1. The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
2. Parent/Guardian threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
3. Parent/Guardian exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

#### **Parental Actions for Child's Dismissal:**

1. Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
2. Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
3. Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
4. Verbal abuse to staff.

#### **Child's Actions for Dismissal:**

1. Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
2. Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts

3. Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children
4. Excessive biting
5. Continued potty accidents in the 3's and 4's

**Proactive Actions That Can Be Taken in Order to Prevent Dismissal:**

1. Staff will try to redirect child from negative behavior.
2. Staff will reassess the classroom environment, appropriateness of activities, supervision.
3. Staff will always use positive methods and language when disciplining children.
4. Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
5. Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
6. Child will be given verbal warnings.
7. Child will be given time to regain control.
8. Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
9. Parent/ Guardian will be notified verbally.
10. Parent/Guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
11. The Director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
12. The parent/guardian will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
13. Recommendation of evaluation by professional consultation on premises.

**Schedule of Dismissal:**

1. If the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent/guardian's behavior warranting dismissal.
2. The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of dismissal period if it is not permanent.
3. The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to Christ's Church Academy Preschool.

A Child Will Not Be Dismissed for the following:

If a child's parent(s):

1. Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding the center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements.
2. Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center
3. Questioned the center regarding policies and procedures

## **OUR STAFF**

Our staff makes our program the quality that it is. They provide a loving, supportive, safe, and educational atmosphere. Each staff member is a Christian and strives to be the best possible example before the children. They are required to participate in at least 20 hours of continuing education courses each school term, although the majority do much more than this. All staff members must have earned their Child Care Certification from the State of Florida or be in the process of taking the required courses. We also have at least one CDA or ECE degreed personnel for every 20 children attending.

## **ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER/EMAIL CHANGES**

Please let the office know if your address, phone number, e-mail, or emergency information changes.

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF THE CHRIST'S CHURCH ACADEMY PRESCHOOL! WE PRAY THAT WE WILL BE A BLESSING TO YOUR FAMILY!