

2018-2019



Parent Handbook

A mission of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

1400 Killian Hill Road, Lilburn, GA 30047

770-925-2411

Director's Letter

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Good Shepherd Preschool & School Age Programs! Thank you for selecting us to play this important role in your child's life. Our staff is proud to offer a Christian environment where your child will feel safe and loved.

We believe that children are born learners. They want to touch, smell, taste, hear, and see everything. Children are naturally curious and creative. By offering a wide variety of hands-on activities in the classroom, a music and movement program, outside activities, and weekly chapel, we hope to interest and excite your child every day. Our goal is to help each child develop a love of learning and build a positive sense of self.

This handbook is your guide to the policies, procedures and goals that have been set for this school year. Please read it thoroughly and refer to it first to answer any questions you may have throughout the year.

We look forward to being a part of your child's world.

Cheerfully in Christ
Janet Martin
Director

"Children are a gift from the Lord, they are a reward from Him."

Psalms 127:3

Statement of Purpose

Good Shepherd Preschool & School Age Programs is an integral part of the ministry of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, serving the community as well as the congregation by providing a Christian learning environment for preschool aged children. The school strives to instill Christian principles in an atmosphere that promotes spiritual, social, cognitive, emotional and physical growth. Our goal is to help children learn to establish healthy and meaningful relationships with their peers, to be respectful of themselves and others and to find joy in the learning process.

History & Administration

Good Shepherd Preschool was established in 1978 and is a mission of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church. The governing board consists of seven church members and the preschool director. The board meets monthly to review the progress and needs of the preschool. The preschool board members are chosen by a nominating committee and are asked to serve a three year term.

Tuition

Drop In-Rates Before and After Care:

Early Morning Care: \$15.00 / day

Afternoon Care: \$15.00 / day

Extended Day Care: \$20.00 / day

In order to secure a place in our before or after care class on a drop-in basis, please call the office to inquire about availability. Your child's teacher will not know if we have spaces available on any given day. You must speak with someone in the office **prior to 12:00 p.m.** to confirm a spot in our afternoon classroom. Once you have reserved a place in one of our extended hours classes, you will be invoiced and responsible for payment. A 24-hour notice is required for cancellation.

- The fees for preschool are based on yearly tuition and broken into ten equal payments. You may choose to pay the tuition yearly or in monthly installments due by the 10th of each month. There is a 2% discount for paying yearly. However, if monthly tuition is not paid by the 10th, a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed to your account.
- Any family more than 14 days past due in payments will be forwarded to the Preschool board for information, and a recommendation will be made for payment action.
- Any family more than 30 days past due in payments will cause suspension of their child/children's enrollment. (Exception is if a family has signed and is in compliance with a formal payment plan.)

Checks should be made payable to Good Shepherd Preschool with your child's name clearly noted in the "memo" section of the check. Place your check in an envelope and send it to school in your child's folder or drop it in the tuition slot outside of the director's office. Payments can also be made online at www.goodshepherdpc.org. **Staff members will not accept tuition checks in carpool.** If you are having difficulties making your tuition payments, please contact the Director immediately.

Reduced Tuition

Good Shepherd Preschool values and supports families. We are pleased to offer our families a reduced tuition program. Our ability to offer reduced tuition is dependent upon the availability of funds for the school year. The number of reduced tuition agreements awarded, as well as the amount of the reduction is based on the following criteria: the availability of funds, the number of applicants, the family's size and annual gross income, and special circumstances that would affect the ability to pay full tuition. To learn more about the reduced tuition program or to request an application for reduced tuition, please contact the Director.

Registration Fee

A non-refundable registration fee is collected from all students. The registration fee pays for the consumable supplies for the classroom during the year and programs that are presented by outside resources.

Withdrawal and Schedule Changes

In order to withdraw from the program, please request a withdrawal form from the preschool office. The withdrawal form is due to the office at least two weeks prior to your child's last day. If we do not receive two weeks notice, you will be invoiced for your child's monthly tuition, and responsible for payment. This notice allows for the teacher and Director to plan accordingly for supplies and other applicants. If you would like to make a change to your child's schedule, please request a Schedule Change Form from the preschool office. All schedule changes must be approved (according to availability) in advance.

Returned Checks

If your personal check is returned to us for non-sufficient funds, we request that you come to the preschool office to correct the situation immediately. Please be prepared to pay in cash for the amount of the check plus the bank charges that the school may have incurred.

Transportation

Transportation is not provided for our preschool students.

Early Morning Care Drop Off

Early morning care opens at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 9:30 a.m. **Children must be escorted into the classroom daily** (by someone at least 18 years of age), where they will be signed in.

Preschool Morning Drop Off

Children will participate in a morning carpool that begins at 9:25 a.m. **Your child should remain safely seated in their car seat in the backseat at all times.** A staff member will unload your child and escort them safely to their classroom. If you arrive early, please wait until a staff member is ready to accept your child. If you arrive late and carpool has concluded, please park your car in the parking lot and walk your child into the building and directly to their classroom. **Do not leave your car unattended in the circular drive while you walk your child to their classroom. Please refrain from parking on the sidewalk or along side of the circular drive.** Please do not use your cell phone during carpool.

Preschool Half-Day Pick-Up

Afternoon pick up is at 1:30 p.m. During the afternoon carpool, a staff member will assist your child in getting into the back seat of the car.

***Georgia state law requires children under age 8 to ride in an approved car seat or booster seat that is appropriate for their height and weight.**

We ask all parents drive slowly around the circular drive to the parking lot to securely fasten seatbelts. Good Shepherd Preschool and Extended Day will not be held responsible for children who are not safely buckled in their seat. Parents are asked to drive slowly and cautiously while in the parking lots. At 1:35, if the carpool line is completed, any child not yet picked up will be brought downstairs to the preschool Director's office. If you arrive after carpool is completed, please park in a designated parking space and come to the preschool Director's office to pick up your child.

We will not release your child to anyone other than the authorized names on your emergency list. We request written notice when an out of the ordinary pick-up is necessary. When someone out of the ordinary picks up your child, we will check the adult's photo ID to ensure that they are on your authorized list. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding in this matter. If your child will be going home with another student, please provide us with written notification of the change.

Afternoon and Extended Day Pick-Up

Afternoon care ends promptly at 3:30. Extended day care ends promptly at 6:00. An authorized adult, 18 years of age or older must come into the classroom and sign students out from the afternoon or extended day program.

Late Pick-Up

Please notify the school as soon as you realize that you will be unable to pick up your child on time. Being the last child at school can be traumatic for some children; your child's teacher or another member of our staff will offer comfort and activities to help your child pass the time in an anxiety free way.

There is a five-minute grace period at pick-up time before you are considered late. After 1:35 p.m. for preschool students, 3:35 for afternoon students and 6:05 for extended day students you will be considered late. Failure to be prompt in picking up your child will result in late pick up fees. **After two written notices for late pickup, a charge of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed to the late parent, payable to the school.**

Diaper Changing and Toilet Training

When your child is potty training, please send two sets of extra clothing each day, including shoes. Preschool teachers are able to help in the potty training process; please let them know when you begin.

Health Policies

The preschool staff will do everything possible to foster good health and well being for your child. In order to do this, we need your cooperation. Any child who shows signs of illness must not be brought to the preschool. Please notify the office if your child has a contagious illness.

Definition of Illness – Any child who has any of the conditions listed below or a child who shows extreme discomfort from teething, ears, stomach problems, etc., is considered ill and will be temporarily removed from the preschool. Our staff reserves the right to decide that a child should be sent home if he/she appears ill on arrival or becomes ill at the preschool. The parent that has been listed first to call will be notified.

Parents of children attending group programs do not have the right to know the health status of other children in the program unless there is a threat to their children.

Readmittance to the Preschool- Children will be checked by a classroom staff person upon returning to the Preschool to be sure the child is free of a contagious condition. Children who are sent home with an illness such as fever, diarrhea, or vomiting must be free of symptoms **without the use of medication** for at least 24 hours before returning to the Preschool. In the case of head lice, the child must be treated with recommended medicated shampoo and can return to the Preschool when all evidence of lice has been eliminated. Rashes of unknown origin are treated as if they are contagious. The child must be checked by a pediatrician and a statement that the child is not contagious must accompany the child when he/she returns. Caregivers and teachers need to know when a child has immunodeficiency, regardless of the cause, so that precautions can be taken to protect the child from other infections. The director will assure that the confidentiality of the child's health and other records are maintained at all times.

Good Shepherd is required by law to have a completed Certificate of Immunization on file for each child enrolled in our program. We must have this form within 30 days of child beginning our program. After the 30-day period, your child will not be allowed to participate until the form is received. Parents are responsible for providing the school with updated immunization forms as they occur.

If you choose not to participate in childhood immunizations for religious reason, we require a notarized letter for your child's file.

Medication

Medication is given to children only if the parent has signed a medication form. A new form is required for every two weeks that the medication is to be given. Prescribed medication is given only from the original container, with the child's name on it. Please provide a dispenser for all medication. It is our policy that we do not dispense over the counter medications. The only exception is if your child must have medication such as Benadryl for the treatment of serious allergic reactions. Under no circumstances is medication to be placed in your child's bag. It must be handed directly to an office staff member.

Allergies

Allergy information is recorded by the parent at the time of registration. If your child has an allergy of any kind, please see that the preschool has written information explaining the allergy and what reaction may occur. Medical release forms must be signed if the preschool is to administer any medications for allergic reactions, etc. The information will be posted in the child's classroom.

Emergency Medical Care

If the staff determines that medical care is needed, every possible effort will be made to first contact the child's parents so that the parent can help in planning further steps to be taken in the particular situation. If emergency medical attention is needed and the parent cannot be reached or there is not time to reach the parent first, the child will be taken to:

Eastside Medical Center
1700 Medical Way
Snellville GA 30078

Minor Accidents and Medical Care- Preschool staff are trained in CPR and emergency first-aid procedures. When minor accidents occur that may or may not require medical attention, staff will handle the situation until parents can be notified. Attending staff are responsible for filling out an Accident Report form for Preschool files.

Home & School Communications

Office communication with you will generally be in the form of a monthly newsletter, which will include a calendar of events.

Individual classroom teachers will also send home newsletters weekly. Please send a written note in the daily folder when you need to communicate with the teacher. Our staff values our relationship with parents, and we strive to have effective communication with each of you. If you would like extended conversation with your child's teacher, please schedule an appointment with your teacher outside of school hours. Drop-off and pick-up times are not the ideal time for extended conversation because focusing on one parent will prevent the teacher from providing safe, optimal care for the entire class.

Conferences

There are no formal conferences for our 1 and 2-year-old classes. Feel free to make an appointment to discuss your child's progress with his or her teacher at any time throughout the year. We ask that prolonged discussion with teachers take place before or after class time, since our teachers need to provide all of the children in their classroom with their undivided attention at all times.

For our 3-year-old classes, we do a formal conference in the spring. A skills report will be provided for you at the conference. This report encompasses the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of your child.

For our 4-year-old classes, we do a formal conference in both the fall and spring semesters. As with the 3-year-old class, a skills report detailing the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of your child will be reviewed.

Our preference is to meet with you personally; however, telephone conferences can occur if the parent determines that scheduling is a problem.

Chapel

A weekly chapel service is held for all students. Chapel consists of singing, a short interactive telling of a Bible story, and collection of an offering (benefiting the Lilburn Co-op).

Behavioral Issues

Good Shepherd utilizes the *Positive Discipline* approach to behavior in the classroom.

Good Shepherd will strive to set up a classroom environment that will serve to decrease incidents of inappropriate behavior (stimulating classroom, clear rules that are well enforced, small group sizes, appropriate teacher/child ratio). However, despite these best efforts, whenever young children are grouped together it is inevitable that inappropriate behavior will occasionally occur.

When we believe that the behavior is either dangerous to the other children in the class or is taking from the quality of the program, we will ask the family to withdraw the child for a determined length of time. The faculty and the Preschool Board will determine whether or not a child needs to be withdrawn based on several considerations including: severity of behavior, frequency of occurrence, reason or extenuating circumstances. Each case will be handled individually.

Family Participation

We encourage parents to participate in their child's preschool day. Teachers will provide you with examples of how you can get involved. Parents have permission for access to all center areas used by their child.

Clothing & Personal Items

We recommend that all children wear play clothes that are practical, comfortable and washable. Your child needs to feel free to play, paint and participate in other art activities as he or she wishes. Rubber sole shoes are recommended for music & movement class as well as the playground. We request that boots, crocs and flip-flop

sandals not be worn. On rainy days we request that raincoats with hoods be used versus umbrellas during morning and afternoon carpool.

In our 2-year-old classes, we request that you keep a minimum of 4 diapers in their school bags at all times for changes during the school day. For this age group, we request that you provide a change of clothes, including socks, in a plastic zip top bag with your child's name on it.

For the 3 and 4-year-old classes, please keep in mind that the children are encouraged to have independent toilet habits and it is important that the children can manage their clothing accordingly, including buttons, zippers and snaps.

We request that you encourage your child to keep all of their toys and playthings at home to avoid issues with sharing or loss of such items. Good Shepherd Preschool and Extended day is not responsible for personal items brought from home.

Emergencies

It is extremely important that the school knows how to reach an adult family member during the hours that your child is in preschool. Failure to properly provide emergency numbers may result in a child being asked to remain home until the forms are completed. Please keep this information updated as changes occur.

Early Morning and Afternoon Snacks

Early morning snack will occur at approximately 8:30 a.m. Afternoon snack will occur at approximately 3:45 p.m. Good Shepherd will provide water to accompany snacks. Early morning and afternoon snacks provided by Good Shepherd Preschool will be peanut free.

Lunch

Lunches that are sent to school must comply with the USDA requirements as indicated in the meal pattern handout and the sack lunch recommendations posted on the information bulletin board. If lunches do not comply with the requirements, you will receive a notice from your child's teacher. If you have any questions about the USDA requirement, please let your child's teacher know.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special events for all children and you are welcome to celebrate at school. Birthday invitations may be sent to the teacher for distribution only if every child in class is included. Please do not send in balloons or candles.

Tote Bag

Please send your child to school with a tote bag daily. The bag will be used to transfer information, art projects and other materials to and from school. Please do not send your child to school with a backpack, as we do not have the storage place for this type of larger bag.

Fundraising

From time to time the preschool will participate in fundraising events for the school. While we encourage parents to participate in these events, it is absolutely and completely voluntary.

Insurance

Good Shepherd Preschool provides coverage for all our preschool children. In regard to claims, your personal insurance policy is considered the primary coverage and the preschool is considered secondary coverage. Please contact the Director concerning the filing of any claim.

Special Needs

If it is determined by the teacher and director that a child is having difficulty with adjustment to school, is struggling, is frustrated with the learning situation, or is disrupting the learning environment for other children, the Director and teacher will meet with the parents and discuss their observations. We are very fortunate to have established a close working relationship with Gwinnett County services for children with special needs. If a parent expresses interest, we will direct them to the appropriate resources. Good Shepherd Preschool will work hard to meet the needs of all students. If the occasion arises that the administration feels they are not capable of meeting the concerns of a special needs child, we reserve the right to ask the parent to find a school that might better serve the child with special needs.

Inclement Weather

Good Shepherd Preschool will follow the Gwinnett County Schools in case of inclement weather. If Gwinnett County schools are closed, the preschool will be closed as well. If Gwinnett County schools are delayed, our half-day classes will be canceled. All extended and full day classes will follow the delay set by Gwinnett County. For example: If Gwinnett County is delayed by 2 hours, we will open at 9:30. If Gwinnett County is delayed by 1 hour, we will open at 8:30.

Child Protection Policy

All Good Shepherd Preschool staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. All staff members have received and are familiar with the specific child protection policies of the church.

Parent Concerns

If a concern should arise that is related to something not covered by the policies stated in this handbook, this is the procedure to follow:

1. If the concern is a school wide issue, go to step 2. If the concern pertains to the classroom, contact the teacher in charge and arrange a conference time. Using the form provided in this book, fill out the necessary information. After this step has been taken, if further attention is warranted by the teacher or parent, go to step 2.
2. Contact the Director to arrange a meeting time. If this is the second meeting the form from the first conference will be reviewed at that time and the second portion of the same form will be completed. After this step has been taken and if further attention is warranted by the Director or parent, go to step 3.
3. A written request (see included form) needs to be presented to the Preschool Board explaining in detail the concern. (No request will be reviewed by the Board that has not gone through at least one of the previous steps.) If warranted, the parent will be invited to attend the next Preschool Board meeting.

PARENT CONCERN REPORT FORM

STEP #1 CLASSROOM CONFERENCE

Parent's Name _____

Date and Time of Conference _____

Parent's Statement of concern: _____

Parent's Comments: _____

Teacher's Comments: _____

We have discussed this matter and:

We agree that the matter has been resolved

We have not been able to settle this matter

Parent's Signature

Teacher's Signature

Copies of this form will be forwarded to the Director and placed in the teacher's and student's file.

STEP #2 DIRECTOR

Parent's Name _____

Date and Time of Conference _____

Parent's Statement of concern: _____

Parent's Comments: _____

Director's Comments: _____

We have discussed this matter and:

We agree that the matter has been resolved

We have not been able to settle this matter

Parent's Signature

Director's Signature

Copies of this form will be forwarded to the Director and placed in the teacher's and student's file.

