

Life Christian Academy Preschool

1717 South Union
Tacoma, Wa. 98405
253-756-2461



HANDBOOK



WELCOME

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to Life Christian Academy Preschool. This handbook is provided to inform you of our early childhood programs and policies. Our mission at Life Christian is to provide a Christ centered environment of academic excellence where staff work in partnership with families to develop young students who will know and serve Jesus Christ.

In addition, it is the goal of Life Christian Academy Preschool to serve families with very young children in our community. Our purpose is to provide a secure and loving environment in which your child can develop learning skills and enjoy socializing experiences with their peers in a caring, Christian environment.

We provide reading, writing and number readiness activities for preschool children, as well as opportunities to develop skills in various art media. Each child is involved in activities that are structured to meet his/her spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, and motor development needs. As a ministry of Life Center Church, we are one of the cornerstones of Life Christian School.

Please feel free to call or just stop by with any questions you may have. Parents are always welcome!

Sincerely,

Tammy Holmes

Tammy Holmes
Preschool Director
Life Christian Academy
253-756-2461

Life Christian School Mission Statement:

Life Christian School provides a Christ-centered environment of academic excellence, where staff work in partnership with families, to develop students who will know and serve the Lord Jesus Christ with all their heart, mind and strength.



Life Christian Preschool Goals:

1. Develop an awareness of God, the Bible, prayer and values.
2. Develop communication skills.
3. Develop healthy, positive self-image.
4. Develop social skills with groups of children.
5. Develop self expression through art, music, rhythm, language, and other forms of play.
6. Develop fine and gross motor skills.
7. Develop intellectually through teacher directed activities and free play.
8. Develop self-control and independence.
9. Develop a positive attitude toward school and teachers.
10. Develop awareness of our world and it's differences.
11. Allow a child the time to enjoy childhood.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY:

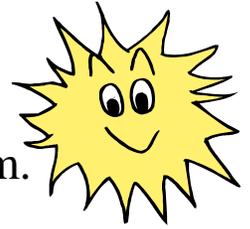
Our Preschool is open to all children without regard to race, creed, color or national origin. We accept children that are between 3 years (potty trained) and 5 years on a first come first serve basis. We are a Christian preschool and as such, teach Christian values.

STAFFING:

Each member of our staff has been employed as a qualified and competent person to provide loving and understanding care for each child. The lead teachers have graduated or attended accredited colleges and all staff attend child development and education related classes and seminars each year.

Morning Session: 8:50 – 11:15a.m.

Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 2:50p.m.



3 year old Class

(by September 1st and potty trained)

Tuesday & Thursday A.M.

Young 4 year old Class

Monday – Wednesday - Friday A.M.



Pre-Kindergarten: 4 - 5 ½ year olds

Monday – Friday A.M. & P.M.

Enrichment: 4 - 5 ½ year olds

Pre-requisite: Must be registered in a PreK class

Life Christian's PreK through 1st grade curriculum offers students the opportunity to experience a natural progression of skills. This unified approach provides a consistency vital to building strong reading skills and fostering future academic success.

Enrichment is provided for the working parent that needs longer care for their young one. The child must be registered in a PreK class in order to sign-up for Enrichment. This program is provided and has been developed to allow the child to grow in other areas beyond academics, i.e., beginning sign language, basic Spanish, science, cooking, music, themes, and large/small motor skills.

CLASSES ~ HOW DO CHILDREN LEARN?

Diversity in the Classroom:

Diversity is respected and supported through learning experiences. Classroom environment and activities reflect the diversity in our school and community.

Cognitive development:

Story time, writing centers, language activities and dramatic play offer an opportunity to practice pre-reading and writing skills. Rote and object counting, sequencing numbers, counting rhythms, and observing patterns help develop an understanding about numbers. Art and music enhance creativity and provide an opportunity for children to express their feelings. Children also learn to use tools and practice the skills needed to manipulate scissors, markers, brushes, glue, etc. Art and music are woven into the curriculum to reinforce learning concepts.

Physical development:

Outdoor play and games help develop large muscles and coordination while children learn to play cooperatively with others.

Social development:

Children learn social skills such as listening, sharing, taking turns, and using words to express their feelings, while respecting ideas and property of others. They also learn to problem solve when situations arise.

Emotional development:

Our program is designed to allow children the opportunities to feel successful, develop friendships, and to learn about their feelings and to express them appropriately.

Children's progress:

Each child is observed, taking into account each child's learning style, rate of growth, strengths and needs. The parent will receive a progress report in January and May in order to share the progress and/or concerns about your child's development. All Prek children will be tested in February with the "Developmental Readiness Screen" as to their progress and readiness for kindergarten.

The Value of Play

The preschool classroom is carefully planned to provide a variety of learning centers and interest areas that are equipped with age appropriate, educational play materials and equipment.

These activities are provided in the preschool program to help develop physical, cognitive, social and emotional skills in the child.

Small muscle/manipulatives:

Beads, peg boards, puzzles, lotto games, small blocks, legos, etc. Your child will learn eye-hand coordination, small muscle development, colors, sizes, numbers, space relationships, shapes, language, likeness/differences.

Large muscle:

Outdoor play, climber, slide, balance and indoor movement activities. Your child will develop large muscle development, balance, coordination, energy and tension release, safety, and social growth.

Creative activities:

Painting, clay, markers, glue, playdough, chalk, crayons, scissors, tape. Your child will learn new sensory experiences, self expression, small muscle development and coordination, color, shape, textures, language, and whole/part relationship.

Blocks:

Large and small blocks used with various accessories such as trucks, cars, trains, animal figures, people figures, houses, etc. Your child will learn eye-hand coordination, muscle coordination, balance, shapes and math concepts, creative expression, construction, dramatic play, cooperative play, sequencing and problem solving.

Dramatic play:

Housekeeping area, puppet theater area, or special role playing activity. Your child will learn imaginative, cooperative play. Opportunity to act out real life experiences and feelings. Language and vocabulary development, emotional and social outlet.

Children are hands-on learners:

Children need to be free to feel, touch, hear, manipulate and explore in order to help them learn and remember information and concepts about the world around them.

Science experiences:

Your child will learn development of natural curiosity of the world, observation, prediction, sequencing skills, language concepts and following directions.



Clean-up:

Your child will learn a sense of orderliness and cooperation, satisfaction in helping, responsibility, and respect for property.



Storytelling:

Your child will learn to listen, appreciate books, develop vocabulary and speech, visual, auditory, memory, sequencing skills and self concepts.

Bathroom and hand washing:

Your child will learn good health habits and development of self-help skills.

Snack:

Your child will experience new tastes, awareness of good nutrition, practice self-help skills, social skills and language development.

Music:

Singing, movement, rhythms and games.

Your child will learn appreciation of songs and music, awareness of different sounds and rhythms, language development, muscle coordination, socialization skills and creative expression.

Field Trips:

The child will have the opportunity to experience new places, people, and concepts. They will learn to interact appropriately in other settings.

Your child at preschool:

You can expect your child to:

- Remain very close to you when you are in their classroom.
- Interact very little with the other children at first.
- Say very little about preschool at home.
- Change their behavior at home as they try out new independence.
- Have more colds and illnesses from contact with the other children.



How to help your child:

- Give the teacher any information that will help make your child's adjustment easier.
- Avoid building expectation too high.
- Casually tell them what to expect.
- Let your child know that other children will be there and that they will have many choices for playtime.
- Reassure your child that you will remain with them a short time, and that you will be back to pick them up.
- Provide comfortable clothes.

Overwhelmed Parents:

Parents are often surprised to find they have adjustments to make concerning preschool, just as their child does. Many new parents, as well as returning parents may find themselves a bit "lost" or "overwhelmed". This is a common reaction and in time you will feel more settled and comfortable with the situation and routine of your child in preschool. You will also find support from other parents and teachers in making these adjustments.

Children develop at different rates:

Each child has their individual strengths and needs. They need to be nurtured and encouraged to build upon their own individual developmental stage.

Children learn best through child-initiated activities:

Free time in the preschool program allows a child to choose activities that interest them and are free to explore the materials and equipment in order to practice learning skills.

Teachers support a child's learning experiences:

Cooperation skills and positive self-image are strengthened through supported experiences and learning activities.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES ~ FINANCIAL POLICIES

REGISTRATION FORM:

The registration form needs to be completely filled out and/or updated of any new changes.

IMMUNIZATION RECORD:

The immunization form must be filled out completely and signed at bottom. A copy of your child's immunization book or a copy from the Doctor's office must accompany the immunization form. Your child can be exempt from immunizations for medical, personal or religious reasons. You must see Director for exemption form. Medical exemption must be signed by a Doctor.

EMERGENCY CONSENT FORM:

This is an important document in case of injury to your child. Please fill out completely with Doctor, emergency contact numbers, allergies, & medications your child takes on a regular basis. Be sure to sign the consent for treatment/admission by hospital and also sign at the bottom of form. Check any medical history on back of form.

PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION:

A list of persons authorized to pick-up your child from preschool class or events in case the parent/guardian is not able to. Identification will be required for first time pick-up.

WAITING LIST PROCEDURES:

Classes are filled on a first come first serve basis according to date of enrollment. If classes are full, the child's name will be put on a waiting list. Parent/guardian will be notified when an opening occurs.

RATE SHEET:

A current rate sheet is included in your packet

REGISTRATION FEE:

Non-refundable and must accompany application form.



TUITION PAYMENTS:

Tuition payments are due by the 15th of each month. Preschool is on a 9 month billing – August through April. You will receive your billing the first of each month. If a child enrolls at mid month, their tuition will be pro-rated.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES:

All statements will be mailed to the student's primary place of residence. If someone else is paying the tuition, the parent/guardian will be responsible to forward the statement to that individual.

All payments must be mailed directly to the Key Bank lockbox (P.O. Box 11626, Tacoma, Wa. 98411-6626). **Payments cannot be taken into any Key Bank.** The only payments accepted in the school office will be, families paying cash or using their credit card. There will be a 4% handling fee if using your credit card.

PAYMENT POLICY:

- 1ST of month: Statement mailed
- 15th of month: PAYMENT DUE
- 20th of month: Parent must contact the Accounting Office or Preschool office to make payment arrangements. A 5% late fee is added to account.
- End of month: Child will be temporarily suspended until account is brought current.

RE-REGISTRATION:

All accounts must be current in order to re-register your child for the next school year. If there is a balance owing from the previous school year, your child will not be able to start school until balance is paid in full. Any outstanding accounts not paid will be turned over to a collection agency.

CREDITS:

Monthly charges are set with the school year in mind; therefore we do not credit for in-service days, or holidays.

HOLIDAYS:

We observe the following holidays: Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day & the day after, Christmas break (normally 2 weeks), MLK Day, President's Day, & Memorial Day. There are two in-service days during the school year (October & March), and a one week break in April for Spring break.

Snow days will be made up if the entire school has to make the days up. Otherwise there is no make-up or credit to accounts.

HEALTH & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

IMMUNIZATIONS:

In order to meet state requirements and be in compliance with the Health Department, an immunization form is required for each child. Your child will need the following immunizations to meet state requirements:

4 DTP shots

3 polio shots

4 HIB shots

1 MMR shot

3 Hepatitis B shots

1 Varicella (chickenpox)

4 Pneumococcal (PCV)

EXEMPTION:

A child can be accepted into preschool without immunizations when the parent/guardian signs the immunization form on back stating, they are opposed to their child being immunized due to religious, personal, or medical reasons. A medical exemption must be signed by your child's Doctor.



Children who are not immunized will not be accepted into preschool. If the child is exempt from immunizations, the child will not be allowed to come to preschool during a disease outbreak. Example, measles, whooping cough, etc. This is to protect the child not immunized and to reduce the spread of the disease.

PICK-UP FORM:

You will be filling out a pick-up form that will also have an area for allergy and medical concerns. With so many children having serious allergies or medical concerns, it is imperative that this form is filled out and accurate. We want to protect these little ones and keep them safe and healthy.

SICK CHILD:

We ask that you keep your child home, if he/she is showing any symptoms of illness. We know it is difficult for you to miss work, but we do not have facilities or extra personnel to care for a sick child. By bringing your child to school sick, you are exposing the other children to his/her illness.

CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES:

Occasionally children will contract a contagious illness such as pink eye, fifth disease, lice, etc. In such instances, the child may not be in preschool until treatment has occurred (if on antibiotics for 24 hours), or a Doctor has released the child to return to school.

EMOTIONAL UPSETS:

Please keep the preschool informed of any emotional upsets, loss of sleep, or family situations. Your child's disposition will be affected by any of these situations. Being aware of these problems will help the teacher understand your child's needs.

IN CASE OF ILLNESS:

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will notify the parents by phone immediately. If the parent cannot be reached, those listed as emergency references will be contacted. We ask that you pick your ill child up as quickly as possible for your child's comfort, but also for the sake of the other children. Your child will be isolated from the other children in the preschool office, or the nurse's office. No one can take care of their child better than you and you are the one they want and need.

MINOR INJURY:

When any minor injury occurs, (example, small cuts, abrasions) we will do the following:

- 1) The teacher will evaluate the minor injury and administer a band aid, ice, or simply some TLC.
- 2) The child will be taken to our school nurse.
- 3) The teacher will record the incident and treatment on one of our Ouch Report forms.
- 4) The teacher will advise the parent/guardian of the incident and treatment used.

SERIOUS INJURY:

In the event of a serious or life threatening emergency to your child, the following actions will take place:

- 1) A staff member will remain with child and if necessary, first aid will be provided according to recommendations of the American Red Cross.
- 2) School nurse will be contacted and directed to area of child.
- 3) If necessary, 911 will be called. In most instances the nurse will make that decision.
- 4) Parents will be contacted. If parents cannot be immediately contacted, the first person on the emergency list will be called, and we will continue to call until we reach someone.
- 5) If necessary, the child will be taken to the Emergency Care Facility the parent has requested on the child's emergency form. This decision will be made by the Emergency Medical Team. A teacher will accompany the child to the emergency facility and remain with the child until parent/guardian arrives.
- 6) A report will be written by witness (teacher) of incident and by the school nurse.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT:

Prescription medications must be in original container from the pharmacy and labeled with:

- 1) Child's Name
- 2) Medication name
- 3) Dosage
- 4) Frequency of dosage
- 5) Length of time to be taken



All prescription medications must accompany a written consent from the child's Doctor in order for the school nurse to administer medication.

NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS:

(over the counter drugs, examples:)

- 1) Antihistamines
- 2) Non-aspirin fever reducers
- 3) Decongestants
- 4) Anti-itching ointments
- 5) etc.



All over the counter medications must be in original container and accompanied by a written consent from the child's Doctor with dosage, and frequency to be taken.



DISCIPLINE:

Discipline should not be punishment, but an attempt to steer the child toward behavior that is desired and acceptable. We work to make discipline a constructive learning device that teaches the child what he/she can do, rather than what he/she cannot do. We work to have your child express him/herself verbally when he/she has a problem. When a child misbehaves, we try to speak in a positive rather than a negative manner to him/her, and try to present options of acceptable behavior. **We never use corporal punishment within our program.**

If the child continues to have problems, he/she may be removed from a particular activity or given a "time out", which is taking a child away from the group and having the child sit quietly for a few minutes. After a few minutes the teacher will discuss with the child why they were in time out and what they need to do to correct the behavior. If they have hurt a child, they will be asked to go and apologize to that child.

If the problem persists, the teacher may discuss the problem with the preschool Director and/or remove the child from the classroom. The Director will handle the situation from this point and contact the parent/guardian concerning the problem or behavior.

We strive to teach children to use words instead of actions such as hitting, biting, or kicking to solve problems. If we are having problems in resolving the issue we will enlist the parent/guardian to assist us in working through the problem. We will continue to keep the parent/guardian informed as to the progress of the child. It is important to us that the parent/guardian realize we have the best interest of their child, and that we have an open door policy. Your child and family are very important to us.

We feel that firm, consistent, fair, and loving discipline is the best way to guide your child to acceptable behavior in our preschool. If at anytime you have concerns, please contact your child's teacher or the preschool Director.

The following is what we share with our teachers on discipline:

PART I – PREVENTION:

Love unconditionally, no matter what they are doing or have done. The key to prevention of problems is planned activities. Busy hands stay out of trouble. Always plan ahead and be consistent!!! Offer choices, be realistic, and

consistent in the behavior you expect. Children need to know what you expect from them. Always accentuate the positive!

PART II – CORRECTION:

Deal with each problem individually, and only with the current problem. Let the child explain their side of the situation and how to prevent it in the future. Never try to tell the child what you think happened or know what happened without giving the child the opportunity to explain his/her side of the story. You do not want to put words into the child's mouth. Redirect his/her attention to a more positive behavior. Attention spans with young children are very short and they quickly forget what happened a few minutes ago and move on. The child must experience the consequences of his/her behavior immediately. This can be a positive experience for the teacher as well as the child.

PART III – CONSEQUENCES:

Define the problem and explore all the alternative avenues. Use the one that will resolve the situation. Remember, follow-up and be consistent. The office should only be used as a last resort unless the offense is of a serious nature. The office is a great place for kids to visit for positive reasons too!

ARRIVALS / DEPARTURE & MISC. DETAILS

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES:

All children must be walked down into their classroom by an adult or older sibling. Never allow the child to go to their classroom alone – there are many halls, doors and exits that a child could detour through and get lost. The teacher would have no way of knowing that your child was dropped off and missing.

PICK-UP FORM:

You will be filling out a pick-up form that will inform the teacher as to who is allowed to pick-up your child. If an individual is not on this form they will not be allowed to take your child. We will call the parent/guardian to get approval for that person to take your child. Any individual that is new to the teacher will be asked to show identification for safety and security reasons. Your child's safety is our top priority.

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS:

If someone else, other than those listed on the pick-up card, is to pick your child up, please notify the child's teacher or the preschool office. You may call the preschool office at 253-756-2461. If we haven't been notified, we will not release the child until we make contact with the parent/guardian. Anyone new will be asked to show identification. There will be no exceptions.

SIGN-IN/OUT SHEET:

When the child is brought to class, there will be a sign-in and sign-out sheet. The child must be signed in with time of drop off and again signed out with time of pick-up.

CUBBIES:

Each child will have their own cubby with their name on it. This cubby will be used for the child to store his coat, hat, mittens, backpack, show-n-tell, etc. The teachers will also use this area to put your child's papers, artwork and memos.

TOYS:

We ask the parents to encourage your child **not** to bring their personal toys to school. They tend to get lost, taken home by another child, or cause conflict. Each class will have a specific show-n-tell day, at which time the child can bring in an item of interest to show.

LABELING:

To avoid loss and confusion, please mark everything your child wears or brings to school clearly. Children will inevitably misplace items and if we have their name on their personal belongings, we can get the item back to them. If an item gets left at school, check with your child's teacher first, preschool office second, and lost & found lastly.

CLOTHES:

Play clothes are recommended unless otherwise advised (pictures, programs, etc). The children will be using playdough, painting, etc. and we don't want the children to fear getting dirty. Outdoor play is part of your child's day, so please be sure to dress the child appropriately, according to weather conditions. Having a covered area allows the classes to go outside during in-climate weather.

POTTY ACCIDENTS:

Children must be potty trained, as we do not have the facilities to care for children not yet potty trained. However, if your child has an accident occasionally, please send extra clothing in their backpack. If the child has an accident and has no clothing from home, we will provide some clothing and ask that you launder it and return it to your child's teacher.

SNACKS & BIRTHDAYS:

Each month you will sign up on the snack calendar in your child's class. If your child is assigned to a day, you will need to bring enough snack for the entire class. In accordance with state health requirements, the snack must be store bought and sealed. This is required in order to protect the children from any outbreaks of salmonella, E-coli, etc. We will make allowances for Birthdays, and special parties.

Birthdays are a "Special Day" for your child. You may bring in a homemade item for this special day. If your child's birthday falls on a weekend, the teacher will assign a day as close to the child's birthday as possible. If you have something special planned for your child and the class, please notify your child's teacher.



FIELD TRIPS:

Due to the age and safety of the children, the Preschool participates in only two off-campus field trips a year. We will go to a pumpkin farm in October, and each class will set-up a field trip in the spring. The children will ride on one of our school buses with the teachers, and if there is room the parents can ride on the bus also. Many parents choose to follow the bus and may or may not take their child with them in the car. Either way is O.K. with us.



This handbook has been provided in an effort to answer many of your questions. Should you have any unanswered question, please contact your child's teacher or the preschool Director. This is your preschool and your family and child are very important to us.

Feel free to visit your child's classroom but remember that during class time, the children come first. The teacher's will be more than happy to talk with you before or after class. From all of us in the preschool department, thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your child's learning experience.