

St. David’s

Christian Early Learning Center

Parent Handbook

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| "How great is the love the Father has lavishedon us that we should allbe called children of God."1John3:1 |

## Table of Contents

Introduction-

 Our History, Affiliation, Mission, Philosophy page 3

Policies and Procedures-

 Admission Policy, Waiting List School Tour, Registration 4

 Our Classes, Hours of Operation, 4

 Class Placement, Student/Teacher Ratios 5

 Registration Fee, Tuition Rates and Payment, Late Fees 5

 Returned Check Fee, Late Pickup Policy 5

 Calendars, Absences/Holidays, Snacks and Lunches 6

 Emergency and Weather Delays and Closings 6

 Vacation Credit, Withdrawal 6

 Staff and Curriculum 7

 Our Staff, Our curriculum, Kindergarten Readiness, 7

 Time with Jesus, Discipline 7

 School/Home Communication 8

 Parent Observations/Conferences, Change of address/phone 8

 Emergency Pickup, Newsletters, Meetings and Other Communication 8

 Volunteer Opportunities 8

 Student Health 9

Medication, Immunization, Illness

Operational Policies

 Attendance, Arrival and departure 9

 Clothing, Share Days, Lost and Found 10

 Naps and bedding 10

 Accidents and Injuries, Emergency Preparedness 10

 Snacks and Lunches, 11

 School Pictures, School Visits. School Events, Field Trips 12

 Birthdays, Class Parties 12



## Introduction

Our History

St. David’s Preschool program began in 1962 when St. David’s Episcopal Church initiated a Kindergarten. When Kindergarten became a part of the public school in this area, a preschool program for three and four year olds was instituted. The CELC is now serving children ages 1- 6 years old.

Affiliation

St. David’s Christian Early Learning Center is an outreach of St. David’s Episcopal Church. Our program focuses on Christian teachings and does not teach church doctrine.

Our Mission

Mission Statement: The Mission of St. David’s Christian Early Learning Center is to meet the spiritual, cognitive, social, physical, creative and emotional needs of each child by providing an exceptional Christ-centered educational experience. We seek to minister to families through a sense of community, outreach activities and drop-in child care.

## Our Philosophy

We understand that children thrive best in environments that take into consideration their entire development. Our program is child oriented and encourages development in the spiritual, social,

emotional, intellectual and physical areas. We recognize the importance of these early years, and will strive to provide a happy and meaningful experience for your child.

## Statement of Faith

We believe in and celebrate the love and grace of God shown to us through Jesus Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit. We treasure all children as gifts from God.

 



## Policies and Procedures Our Admission Policy

The CELC welcomes children of every race, religion and ethnic origin. Children with special needs will be admitted as long as we are able to properly care for the child using our established staff and equipment. If modifications or additional staff are required, we may accept the child if the parents are able to cover the cost of modifications or additional staff.

Waiting List

Enrollment opens each January for the following school year. Our admissions are first come first served. In the event a class is full, a registration form will be accepted to place the child on a waiting list. You will be contacted when a space opens and will pay the registration fee at that time.

## School Tour

Parents are encouraged to tour the school with their child prior to registering. Parents may also schedule a visit with a teacher or observe a class in session. Parents who wish to do this should arrange child care for their children during their visit.

## Registration

A completed registration form and payment of a non-refundable $80.00 registration fee is necessary for preschool classes. Fall registration begins in January. Registration is completed by returning the registration form and with the fee. You will receive a confirmation of your registration along with further paperwork to complete prior to the beginning of the school year.

## Our Classes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Caterpillars (2 year olds) Mon/ Wed  | 9:30-12/12:30-3  |
| Little Sprouts (3 year olds) Tue/ Thurs  | 9:30-12/12:30-3  |
| Shooting Stars (4 year olds) Mon/ Wed / Fri  | 9:30-12/12:30-3  |
| Busy Bees (5 year olds) Mon/Tues/Wed/Thur  | 9:30-12/  |
|  Mon/Tue/Wed/Fri  | 12:30-3  |

 Club Discovery Tues PM 12-3/Wed PM 12-3 / Fri AM 9:30-12

 Play and Learn (1-6 years) Mon/Thur/Fri 9-1

 Tue/Wed/ 9- 3

## Hours of Operation

Our offices are open daily from 9:15-3:15 Monday-Friday



## Class Placement

Children are organized into the classes they are registered for based on age and teacher recommendation. We take into consideration requests for teachers or classmates, but base our decision on providing the best educational experience for all the students

## Student/Teacher Ratios

1-2 Years old: 6 students/ staff member

1. Years old: 7 students / staff member
2. Years old: 8 students / staff member
3. 5 Years old: 9 students / staff member

## Tuition Rates and Payment

Tuition is divided into 9 equal payments and is due the first of each month starting September 1st through May 1st.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  Caterpillars– 2 Days  |   | $130/mo., $1170/year  |
|  Little Sprouts– 2 Days  |   | $130/mo., $1170/year  |
|  Shooting Stars-3 Days  |   | $155/mo., $1395/year  |
|  Busy Bees-4 Days  |   | $185/mo., $1665/year  |
|  Club Discovery– 1-2 Days  |   | $75-105/mo  |

If two siblings attend, the older child pays full tuition, second receives a $25/month discount.

Play and Learn is $8/hr for the 1st child, and $4/hr for each additional sibling attending.

 Payments may be made in advance monthly, or periodically according to use.

Late Fees

Any tuition payment received after the tenth of the month, will be assessed a $5.00 late fee.

Returned Check Fee

All returned checks will be charged a $20.00 fee.

## Late Pickup Policy

Please be prompt. You don’t want to miss the announcements. A late fee of $5 will be assessed.

## Calendars

Year-at-a-glance calendars are provided annually. Please make note of school holidays and special events. Monthly calendars are also provided as part of the monthly newsletter and are available on our website. Class calendars are posted outside of each classroom and include information on share days and special classroom events.

## Absences/Holidays

There are various holidays scheduled throughout the school year including 2 weeks off at

Christmas and 1 week off at Easter. These holidays are factored into our academic calendar and tuition.

If it is necessary for your child to be absent, please let us know by phone or email. We encourage you to have your children attend most of their scheduled classes so they do not fall behind.

However, please follow our guidelines for keeping children home due to illness.

## Emergency and Weather Delays and Closings

If Peter’s Township Schools close due to bad weather or emergencies, we will also be closed.

If there is a delay in the Peter’s system:

The morning preschool sessions will begin at 10:30 AM and end at 12:30 PM

The afternoon preschool sessions will begin at 1:00 PM and end at 3:00 PM

The Play and Learn classes will begin at 10:00 AM and end at the usual time for that day.

Vacation Credit

We do not issue vacation credit

## Withdrawal

Preschool registration is a 9 month commitment. Should the student need to withdraw due to a change in circumstances, a minimum 30 days notice is required. A prorated tuition will be assessed if notice is given within the month. Withdraws for other reasons may result in billing for part or all of the remaining tuition.

## Refunds

We do not provide refunds.



**Staff and Curriculum**

## Our Staff

Our staff is made up of loving Christian educators and aides who have training and experience in early education. All of our staff members are CPR certified and have current clearances.

## Our curriculum

Our curriculum provides a variety of learning experiences designed to meet the Pennsylvania

Standards for Early Learning and the spiritual goals set by the Association of Christian Schools

International. We plan learning activities using art, movement, dramatic play, reading, hands on discovery and more!

## Kindergarten Readiness

Our program provides kindergarten readiness activities as outlined by the Pennsylvania Standards for Early Learning. We continually observe and assess the children’s progress and share this information with you at conferences. If at any time you would like to discuss your child’s progress and development, please approach your child’s teacher or the director.

## Time with Jesus

Our learning experiences are built around our spiritual goals for the children. Therefore, our Christian themes are built into many of our learning activities. We also have “Time with Jesus” at the beginning and end of the day to give the children time to give thanks and pray for their needs and the needs of others.

## Discipline

We begin with positive methods of discipline. We believe classroom management begins with respect for the Lord, respect for the teacher, and respect for each other. Our first line of discipline is redirection using positive language such as, “we keep our hands to ourselves”, and giving

better choices. At times we use separation from the group and activities to give the child time to think about their choices. We use this time to pray with the children and talk about good choices before they return to the group.

**School/Home Communication**

## Parent Observations/Conferences

Parent conferences are held at the beginning, middle, and end of the year as scheduled with your teacher. We have an open door policy with parents. You are welcome in our school. If you would like to spend time in the classroom, an appointment can be helpful. Child care arrangements will need to be made for children who are not in the class.

Change of address/phone

Please notify us of changes of address, phone, or emergency contacts or releasees immediately.

## Emergency Pickup

Our Student Information and Emergency release form allows for 3 persons we may contact in the event of an emergency or release your child to. Please notify us in writing of changes in that list.

If your child will need to be picked up by a person not on your list, please notify us in writing.

## Newsletters

A monthly newsletter is distributed at the beginning of each month. Please pay special attention to the month at a glance section and the school calendar. These areas will keep you informed of coming events and holidays.

## Other Communication

We use many forms of communication. Teachers are open to discussion during drop off and pick up times. We welcome questions and comments at all times. The director’s door is always open to your thoughts, suggestions, and concerns. Announcements are often made via email by the director and teachers- be sure to add our email to your address book. If you do not use email, please let us know so we may provide you with paper copies. Communications are often sent home in backpacks so please check your child’s backpack daily.

## Volunteer Opportunities

We have numerous ways parents can participate in our school. We welcome help with the library, office tasks, photography, newsletter, parties, events, gardening, and more. Parents are also welcome to serve on our leadership team. We provide a sign up sheet annually, teachers often ask for volunteers, or simply contact the director.

**Student Health**

## Medication

We can administer only emergency medications and then only with direct permission and directions from the doctor and parents. (example: epi-pen).

## Immunization

Immunizations must be up to date. A child health record with attached record of immunization must be updated annually and kept on file with the school. Children who are not up to date on immunizations must have a plan in place to catch up or a letter of exemption signed by the doctor.

## Illness

Children must be free of signs of illness for 24 hours prior to attending school. Signs of illness include fever, fatigue, vomiting, diarrhea, poor appetite, and green nasal discharge. Children with signs of illness will be separated from the rest of the children until a parent or permitted person can take the child home.

## Operational Policies Attendance

We encourage regular attendance in order to get the most out of your child’s preschool experience. If a child must be absent, please call the school. We will provide you with information about what your child may have missed during absences.

## Arrival and departure

Preschool Parents enter with their children through the white office doors or through the narthex doors (doors under the car port). You may proceed to the hallway outside your class and put things in your cubby. Please do not enter before class time so staff has time to prepare.

Preschool classes dismiss from the narthex. The doors to the narthex are opened 10 minutes before dismissal. You may enter through these doors and await report from the teacher and dismissal of the students.

Play and Learn students enter and exit through the office doors. The child is signed in and out in the office. You may drop off and pick up your child from the classroom.

## Clothing

Children should be dressed for active play and appropriate for the weather. We attempt to play outdoors year round so please dress children accordingly.

Please send a complete change of clothes in a freezer bag labeled with your child’s name. This will be kept at school in case of accidents until the end of the school year.

Lost and Found

Look for items in the Lost and Found box located in the office area.

## Naps and bedding

Children who stay in Play and Learn for the afternoon will be required to rest. Children over 2 will be provided with a nap mat. Children under 2 will be placed in a crib. A sheet and blanket

must be provided from home and should be taken home to be laundered regularly. We will store your bedding in a ziplock freezer bag if your child naps with us frequently.

## Accidents and Injuries

Minor injuries such as cuts and bruises will be treated with general first aid. You will be provided with an incident report to sign that we keep in your child’s file. If your child needs immediate medical attention, we will call you immediately and call a local ambulance if needed. If you have special instructions regarding emergencies, please put it in writing and give it to the director.

## Emergency Preparedness

Our school participates in fire and emergency drills with the Peters Township Fire Department on a regular basis. In the event we must evacuate our school during an actual emergency, parents will be notified by phone regarding pick up location and procedures. If we must vacate the property completely, we take the children on foot to our neighboring facility.



## Snacks and Lunches

We ask that parents provide snacks for children to share during class time.

Donated snacks must be **nut-free**. Food labels stating “contains peanuts or tree nuts”, “may contain nuts”, “manufactured in a facility that processes nuts”, or “manufactured on shared equipment” **are not safe.**

**‘Regular’ snack items** should be low in sugar, contain fiber or whole grain, and have less than 35% of its calories from fat. Foods listed below are nut-free and meet nutrition recommendations for snacks:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rold Gold Pretzels  | Teddy Grahams  |   | Barnum Animal Crackers  |
| Nabisco Nilla Wafers  | Graham Crackers  |   | Honey Maid Graham Stix  |
| Ritz Crackers  | Club Crackers  |   | Wheat Thins  |
| Goldfish  | Cheeze-Its  |   | Jello Brand Jello or Pudding  |
| Nutrigrain Bars  | Special K Bars  |   | Microwave Popcorn  |
| Raisins  | Fresh Fruits  |   | Fresh Vegetables  |
| Gogurt  | Danimals Yogurt  |  |  |

We encourage parents to bring in a plate of fresh fruit or veggies for snack. Please arrange dates with your teacher, and plan on taking any leftovers home after class.

**‘Sometimes’ snack items** listed here are nut-free and may be provided on special days, normally not more than once a week.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Oreo Cookies  |   | Mini Oreos  | Rice Crispy Treats (original)  |
| Hohos  |   | Rita’s Italian Ice  | Fruit by the Foot  |
| Fruit Roll-ups  |   | Marshmallows  | BettyCrocker Fruit SnackPopcicles  |
| Twizzlers  |   | Hershey Kisses  |  |
| Starburst  |   | Marshmallows  | Swedish Fish  |
| Sweet Tarts  |   | Tootsie Rolls/Pops  | Nerds  |
| Skittles  |   | Lollipops (read lables)  | Smarties  |

Homemade treats such as cookies and cakes may be brought on special occasions, if the dough or mix is nut-free and care is taken to prepare the food on a clean nut-free surface.

### Lunches

Children who are staying through the noon hours should have a nut-free lunch in a lunch container or bag labeled with their name. Lunches which contain perishable items should have a cold pack inside, or be placed in the refrigerator in the green room by the parent.

Lunches should have an item from each of the food groups:

Dairy- Milk, yogurt, or cheese

Protein- Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cheese

Fruits or vegetables

Grains- breads, cereals, rice, pasta, crackers

Food items should be cut into pieces that are easy for the child to handle and feed themselves easily.

\*\*Children with special dietary needs outside of nut allergy must provide their own snacks from home. Efforts will be made by staff to communicate special snack days so similar items may be provided for the child.\*\*



## School Pictures

We offer school pictures each fall and spring. All children will be photographed individually and as a group.

Participation and purchases are completely voluntary.

School Visits

Our school is open to parent visitors at all times.

## School Events

School events are an excellent way to be involved in your child’s education. From class parties class visitors, and grandparents’ days, to evening events such as our pageant and concerts, parents are given numerous opportunities to participate in our school family.

## Field Trips

We schedule field trips in the fall and spring. These trips are an excellent way to spend time with your child and preschool family. Children must be transported and attend with an adult.

## Birthdays

We celebrate every child’s birthday in school. Summer birthdays are celebrated on halfbirthdays. You may send a small (non-edible) treat for the entire class and/or a special snack found on the NUT FREE LIST.

## Class Parties

Seasonal parties and special celebrations are a joyful time for children. Room moms organize parties with the help of parent volunteers. Party plans should be discussed with the class teacher in advance. We would like to keep the focus of class parties on fun. Healthy snacks should be provided along with sweet treats in moderation. A few parents may volunteer to provide take home prizes and treats, but we ask this also be approached with moderation.