

Westside Christian Academy

Pre-Kindergarten

Handbook

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

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Dear WCA Parents and Students,

I am very excited to partner with you in preparing your child for school and walking alongside you in training them to live a life through Christ! Our Pre K program will help your child transition into a classical education by immersing them in high quality literature, allowing them to develop a strong mathematical foundation through concrete, interactive activities, as well as leading them in an exploration of God's world in a way that is meaningful and relevant to a four year old. We want to instill a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge in each child.

Our focus is not on achieving a cookie-cutter product but on the process of helping your child grow. We want to do this in the context of a classroom that leads children as God designed, using their individual strengths to walk in a way that glorifies the Lord. I will work with each child in order to shepherd his or her heart, guiding them gently toward Christ and lighting their way with the truth of scripture. Though we are in the pre-grammar stage of Classical Education, much of what we do will mirror the grammar stage with memorization through chants, rhymes and songs.

The 2019-2020 School Theme is Pray without Ceasing taken from I Thessalonians 5:16-18 - *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (ESV)*. May we all allow God to deepen our prayer lives, abide in Christ, give thanks in all circumstances, and teach our children well in this realm.

Please take time to read this handbook thoroughly as it is one of the many communication tools we will use to ensure we are always on the same page as we strive to teach and lead your child alongside you! If changes need to be made they will be communicated with you. If you have any questions or concerns, please never hesitate to contact me!

Partnering in Christ with you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristina Hass". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink on a white background.

Kristina Hass
Pre-Kindergarten Director

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” - I Thessalonians 5:16-18

I. WCA’s Mission, Purpose and Educational Philosophy

Westside Christian Academy

Purpose – Mission – Philosophy

Westside Christian Academy seeks to aid children in their moral and academic development in order to be equipped to fulfill God’s purpose for their lives in the home, church, and society. WCA, as an extension of the home and of the church, exists to fulfill God’s commands to raise children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” While we believe that the Bible clearly gives the responsibility of training children to parents, WCA is here to assist parents in fulfilling this biblical responsibility.

Our mission is to integrate biblical truth with academic excellence so that our students will become leaders committed to impacting the world for Jesus Christ. The educational philosophy of WCA is based on the understanding that the knowledge of God is the beginning of wisdom, and that truth can only be understood through a relationship with Jesus Christ as the Creator and Sustainer of the world around us.

Included in our philosophy is the acknowledgment that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and has authority to guide us in our pursuit of Truth and in the instruction of the children entrusted to us. WCA’s philosophy embodies the concept that education is more than just academics; it also involves character development which prepares children to fulfill God’s will in their lives.

Our vision arises from a desire to create an atmosphere where Christian teachers and administrators can challenge their students to develop an understanding of God’s hand in all of creation while striving for the highest level of academic achievement. We believe that we have a God given responsibility to educate children in a way that integrates faith and learning. Through this integration, a Christian worldview is being instilled in our students, preparing them to impact the world for Jesus Christ.

Non Discriminatory Policy

Westside Christian Academy recruits and admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational programs and athletics/extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated desegregation.

Westside Christian Academy will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

Statement of Faith and Secondary Doctrine Guidelines

In accordance with the Mission of Westside Christian Academy, we hold the following Statement to be true and to be the foundation upon which the Christian Faith is practiced. We therefore request that all who wish to associate themselves with Westside Christian Academy accept and agree with the following statement:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, without error in its original writings, the only complete and authoritative source of His will and His plan for the salvation of man, and of guidance for Christian life. (II Timothy 3:16, 17)
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Gen 1:1; John 10:30; John 10:37-38)
3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin Birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His imminent return in power and glory. (Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23; Luke 1:35; Heb 4:15; Heb 7:25; John 2:11; Heb 9:12; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; John 11:25; Acts 1:11; Rev 19:11-16)
4. We believe that Man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners in thought, word and deed. (John 3:5; Rom 5:8)
5. We believe that the sinless life, sacrificial death and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only those who receive Jesus Christ are born of the Holy Spirit and thus become children of God. (Titus 3:4-7; Eph 2:8-9; Rom 3:21-28; Rom 5:8; Gal 4:4-7)
6. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, and that those who are saved through faith in Jesus Christ shall have eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord; those who have not believed in Jesus Christ through faith shall receive judgment and eternal damnation. (John 5:24; 28-29; Matt 25:46)
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 8:9; I Cor 12:12-13; Gal 3:26-28)
8. We believe that biblical marriage is limited to a covenant relationship between one man and one woman, ordained by God, made legally binding in an official ceremony according to state law. We believe that sexual relations are to be exercised solely within marriage of one man and one woman. (Gen 2:22-24; Matt 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9; Eph 5:22-33; Heb 13:4)

Regarding secondary doctrines: Because there are many different denominations and churches represented at WCA, occasional doctrinal differences may arise between students, families, and/or faculty. Although we all share a commitment to the central message of the Word of God and have agreed to not compromise on the primary doctrinal positions found within the WCA Statement of Faith, it is expected that some of us may hold secondary doctrines that are specific to our particular church or denomination and which may differ from doctrines held by other churches or denominations represented at WCA. When these differences are raised in the WCA community, they should be referred back to the parents and local church for guidance, and not let them divide the community that makes up WCA. In this spirit we adhere to the following statement by the seventeenth century German theologian Rupertus Meldenius: **In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things charity.**

I. **PURPOSE, PHILOSOPHY & GOALS of PRE-KINDERGARTEN**

Westside Christian Academy Pre-kindergarten strives to develop a positive attitude toward learning by equipping students with tools that will help them succeed in the grammar stages and beyond. Students are given a strong foundation by engaging in developmentally appropriate play and through exposure to high quality literature and practical math. Their natural curiosity about God’s world is encouraged through a variety of hands on experiences.

We seek to foster whole-child development, which includes not only cognitive growth but also social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth. Teachers strive to integrate the infallible Word of God into all areas of learning while cultivating an atmosphere of respect, love and grace that is honoring to our faith. Our recognition of God’s order in all areas of life, including the patterns of child development allows us the freedom to teach the way children learn and best meet them where they are.

The goals for our classrooms include:

- Encouraging spiritual growth
- Early literacy skills, including pre-reading and writing activities
- Developing problem solving and self help skills
- Fostering strong communication skills
- Teaching foundational math skills
- Exposure to age appropriate science and social studies concepts
- Increasing fine and gross motor skills
- Building multi-age relationships within the school community
- Developing parent partnerships

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” - Proverbs 22:6

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Hours and Days of Operation

4 days

Mon/Tue/Wed/Thur 8:30am-11:15am (morning)

Mon/Tue/Wed/Thur 12:30pm - 3:15pm (afternoon)

B. Staff / Child Ratio

Teacher/ Student Ratio 2:12 (morning) and 2:12 (afternoon)

The ratio always includes at least one preschool staff member with current first aid training.

C. Daily Schedule

A typical day will follow this general schedule:

Drop Off /Bathroom / Coats

Calendar

Bible Time

Bathroom

Snack & Math Centers

Literacy

Gym / Recess

World Explorations

Play

Clean up / Dismissal

D. Admissions Policy

Students admitted to Westside Christian Academy's Pre-K program must be 4 years of age by August 1st and fully potty trained. Families must complete the application process (application, pastoral referral, admissions interview etc) found on the school website and pay the application fee.

E. Placement Policy

Westside Christian Academy's Pre-K program has only one pre-k class offering identical morning and afternoon sessions as enrollment allows. Students will be placed in morning or afternoon through the admissions director.

F. Withdrawal Policy

A withdrawal form must be completed and received by WCA before a student is considered withdrawn. If a student withdraws after June 1 but prior to the start of the first day of school, 25% of the annual tuition will be charged. If a student

is dismissed or withdraws after the start of the school year but prior to the start of the 3rd quarter, 75% of the annual tuition will be charged. A written appeal from the family to the WCA Board President will be considered if extraordinary circumstances arise (e.g. military transfer, loss of employment).

G. School Closure

In the case of inclement weather, the headmaster may decide to close the school for part or all of the school day. The school will send out a school-wide email and text message for these closings or late starts or early dismissals. Parents should also use their own judgment concerning safe driving conditions in order to ensure the safety of the children.

H. Visitation Policy

Custodial parents or guardians of a child enrolled in the school are welcome to visit the school at any time. Grandparents & other loved ones are also welcome to be involved in, visit & volunteer in the classroom with prior approval from the teacher. If you are a prospective family interested in touring the school please contact the school office to schedule an appointment.

I. Parent Roster Information

The school will prepare a parent roster for each child's class. You have the option of omitting your name and phone number from the list. A class list will be passed out to each family in your child's class and will be available through RenWeb.

J. Release Policy

Our school's policy regarding the release of a child from the school to any other person than the custodial parent or guardian is as follows:

1. When a child cannot be picked up by his regular driver, the custodial parent or guardian must send a signed, dated note giving permission for the child to be released to an authorized person. We prefer this person to be on the emergency transportation form.
2. If an emergency arises during the school hours and a note has not been given to the teacher at the beginning of the class session, we then ask that the parent call and speak directly to the Director or the classroom teacher giving authorization for the designated person to pick up the child.
3. When a person unfamiliar to us picks up a child, we will ask to see their driver's license for identification.

K. Emergency & Accident Policy

In the case of an emergency and/or accident, the school will follow the posted medical and dental emergency plan (summon emergency transportation, administer first aid, and contact parents). The school will complete an incident report form.

1. **Serious Injury** In the event of a serious incident, illness, or injury, the following procedures will take place:
 - a) Staff member will summon emergency transportation (911)
 - b) Administer first aid
 - c) Contact parent/guardian
 - d) Children will be released to parent/guardian as they arrive.
2. **Loss of Heat, Power, Water** In the event the school has loss of power, heat, or water, the following procedures will take place:
 - a) Staff member will contact parent/guardian to pick up child.
 - b) Children will continue with regular activities
 - c) Children will be released to parent/guardian as they arrive.
3. **Building Evacuation** In the event that an evacuation of the building is needed (fire, bomb threat, threat of violence, natural disaster) we will follow the same procedures as the grammar & upper schools. See copy of school safety plan.

L. Safety & Transportation Policy

In every instance this school takes as its first responsibility the health and safety of each child. Problems that arise can be minimized by the application of the following principles:

1. Anticipation - anticipate possible hazards and take necessary precautionary and preventive measures.
2. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised. Reasonable and adequate supervision is the most important factor in the prevention of accidental injury.
3. Our school's policy governing arrival and departure of children so that a child care staff member is aware of each child's presence at the school is:
 - a. For arrival: Guardian drops child off at the appropriate door or, if late, checks the child in through the office.
 - b. For departure: Teacher releases child to guardian in the vehicle pick up line.
4. Our school has immediate access at all times to a working telephone.
5. The doors to the building are locked at all times and visitors are required to check in at the office.
6. Our school has a monthly fire drill. Records of safety drills are available through the school.
7. Our school has a fire emergency and weather alert plan posted in each classroom which explains action to be taken and staff responsibilities in case of fire emergency or weather alerts and diagrams showing evacuation routes.

8. When an accident or injury occurs, the school completes an incident report and a copy will be given to the parent/guardian.
9. Use of spray aerosols shall be prohibited when children are in attendance at the school.
10. A child care staff member shall immediately notify local public children services when the child care staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected.
11. Any custodial parent or guardian of a child enrolled in our school shall be permitted unlimited access to the school unless there is court documentation limiting access to the child.

M. Immunizations

The following immunizations are required and must be kept up-to-date or the proper exemption filed. The child's physician must notify the school in writing as additional immunizations are given.

1. Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis - 4 or 5 shots (2, 4, 6 & 15 months and 4 years)
2. Hepatitis B (Hep B)
3. Hemophilus influenza type b (HIB)
4. Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
5. Polio
6. Varicella Zoster (chicken pox)
7. Hepatitis A

N. Communicable Disease Policy

1. The administrator will review with all staff members the signs and symptoms of illness and proper hand washing and disinfection procedures. This review shall be given to each new employee and discussed periodically at staff meetings. No staff member shall attend the school if they exhibit signs of communicable disease. The administrator reserves the right to request a physician's note for a staff member to return to work.
2. A staff member is available to observe all children upon entering their group. The school will notify the parent or guardian when a child has been observed with the signs and symptoms listed on the communicable disease chart. This chart is posted in the Pre-Kindergarten classroom.
3. A child who has been suspected of communicable disease shall be provided with a cot and blanket and isolated in office. The child will be within sight and hearing of an adult. No child shall be left alone or unsupervised.
4. Re-admittance to school of any child who has been ill or who has been discharged to the parent due to illness: a. A verbal interview with the parent and inspection of child.

5. Parents of other children in the school will be notified of exposure to communicable disease by written notice in child's backpack.
6. The school does not administer any medications, vitamins, special diets, or fluoride supplements. If there is an exception to this policy, then the prescribed form would need to be completed and reviewed by the administrator.
7. We will observe a child with minor cold symptoms or who does not feel well enough to participate. If this child's condition worsens, we will isolate child and call parents.
8. A child who becomes ill during the day shall be released to his parents as soon as possible. If the custodial parent or guardian is not able to come to the school to take charge of an ill child, the school may discharge the child to the person who has been designated by the parent to take charge of the child.
9. We will isolate and send home any child with: Diarrhea, Severe coughing (whooping) (red/blue face) Difficult or rapid breathing, Yellow skin or eyes, Conjunctivitis (pink eye) – redness of eye, discharge, matted eyelashes, itching, burning, 100 degree temperature , Infected skin patches, Stiff neck with elevated temperature, Unusual spots or rashes, Sore throat/difficulty swallowing, Vomiting, Lice, scabies or other parasites. Decisions regarding discharging a child will be decided by the Director. If the Director is unavailable, the teacher may make the decision.

O. Discipline Policy

The teacher in charge of a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.

Constructive and developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times, such as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child, praising appropriate behavior, praying & reading scripture to identify right attitudes together, etc.

Discipline is done with respect and kindness. Teachers will make sure the children know what is expected of them, reviewing guidelines often, reminding them to obey. There is a big difference between willful disobedience and childish immaturity.

1. We will limit the child by first physically stopping them when necessary, talking about what happened, communicate with the other child (apologize, etc.), clean up or repair space or equipment as needed, separate from situation as needed. Afterwards, the teacher will discuss with the child what happened and the reason

why it happened. This process works to discover the feelings of the child's heart, and seeks to discover deeper meaning behind a situation or behavior.

2. Persistent behavior problems will be discussed with the parent, and together a plan will be worked out. Short term use of charts, stickers & other behavior modification techniques may be used sparingly. If necessary, the director and GS principal may dismiss a student from the program if he or she causes harm to others and/or continually disrupts the teacher from teaching.

*In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-37-10 (& common decency) there shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.

- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
- Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.
- The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the pre-kindergarten program.

P. Potty Training

All students enrolled in the program should be fully potty trained before the program begins. This means that the student must be able to go to the bathroom independently, with no assistance from an adult. If a child is not potty trained, the director will ask the child to be sent home for training. Once training has been completed, the student will be re-enrolled.

Q. Snacks

Parents are asked to pack 1-2 healthy snacks (i.e. fruit, crackers, pretzels) for the students to enjoy mid-day. Students are allowed to have labeled water bottles

with closeable tops in their classrooms. WCA is a peanut free facility, so please keep this in mind when packing a snack for your child.

R. Outdoor Play

We may regularly go outdoors as long as the temperature is not below 30 degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, it is very important that students come to school with coats, gloves, and hats on those cold days.

S. Clothing

Attire should not be overly distracting. It should be easy for the child to use independently in the restroom. Clothing should allow for active movement and play. It should also be weather appropriate for when outdoor time is available.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

1. Curriculum

Westside Christian Academy maintains its own dynamic pre-kindergarten curriculum that meets or exceeds all Early Learning Standards for the State of Ohio. For a copy of the Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum please see the head teacher.

2. Parent - Teacher Conference

Parent - Teacher conferences will be held twice per year, generally in the fall and spring and will coincide with the grammar school and upper school conference dates listed in the calendar. If additional meetings or communication is desired, please feel free to contact the head teacher.

3. Student Records

Student records will be maintained in a secure location to protect privacy and will include regular developmental assessments performed by the teacher.

“And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him” - Luke 2:40

The school's licensing record and copies of inspection reports are available upon request from the Department of Human Services. Their toll-free number is [1-800-686-1581](tel:1-800-686-1581) and may be used to report licensing concerns of the school.