



PRE-KINDERGARTEN PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

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*The fear of God
is the beginning
of wisdom*

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
WCA MISSION AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY	2
Purpose / Mission / Philosophy	2
Non Discriminatory Policy	2
Statement of Faith	2
Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality	3
Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life	4
Secondary Doctrine	4
PRE-K PURPOSE / PHILOSOPHY / GOALS	5
Purpose and Philosophy	5
Goals	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	6
Hours and Days of Operation	6
Staff / Child Ratio	6
Daily Schedule	6
Staff Policy	6
Admissions Policy	6
Placement Policy	7
Withdrawal Policy	7
School Closure	7
Visitation Policy	7
Parent Roster Information	7
Release Policy	7
Emergency & Accident Policy	8
Safety & Transportation Policy	8
Immunizations	9
Communicable Disease Policy	9
Healthchek	10
Discipline Policy	10
Potty Training	11
Snacks	11
Outdoor Play	11
Dress Code	11
ACADEMIC INFORMATION	12
Curriculum	12
Developmental Materials	12
Developmental Progress Assessment Plan	12
Plan for Providing Services	12
Student Records	12

INTRODUCTION

Dear WCA Pre-K Parents,

It is my honor and privilege to partner and walk alongside you in preparing your child for school and helping them learn, grow, and develop this year! 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. We want to instill a love of learning and a love for God in each child.

Our focus is on the process of helping your child learn and grow in a unique and individual way. 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. We 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 2022-2023 School Theme is: *Every Nation, Tribe, People, and Language* based on Revelation 7:9. "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." May we come together as the body of Christ and bring glory, praise, and honor to the Creator of all things.

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,



Jessica Reiner
Pre-Kindergarten Director

MISSION AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

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 Discrimination 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 personnel.

Statement of Faith

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)

Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ's relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Westside Christian Academy as part of the Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the WCA community, it is imperative that all persons employed by WCA in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Westside Christian Academy.

WCA employees of all classifications must be in full agreement with WCA's Statement of Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139.)

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.**

PURPOSE / PHILOSOPHY / GOALS

Purpose and Philosophy

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.

Goals

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
- Using the Lord's teaching when interacting with others
- Encouraging prayer
- Recognizing God's work in everything
- Applying and understanding Psalm 34:8

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

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)

Staff / Child Ratio

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

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

Daily Schedule

A typical day will follow this general schedule:

- Drop Off / Welcome/Bathroom
- Free Centers
- Circle Time/Calendar, Weather
- Bible Time
- Bathroom, Snack Time
- Storytime
- Math / Literacy Centers
- Gross Motor / Recess
- World Explorations
- Clean up / Dismissal

Staff Policy

In addition to meeting all standards of behavior, training and moral character required of any employee of Westside Christian Academy all staff in the pre-kindergarten program will meet or exceed the Ohio Department of Education rules in regards to education, training, background checks and compliance with all regulations. This shall be in compliance with the rules found in the Administrative Code section 3301.

Admissions Policy

Students admitted to Westside Christian Academy's Pre-K program must be 4 years of age by August 1st WCA is a Pre-K – 12th Grade school that admits families who desire to have their children in a school that holds the Bible to be the source of all truth and guidance. Parents must be born again Christ followers whose sincere faith in God compels them to live according to, and train their children according to, Biblical principles. New families applying for Pre-K follow the application process and meet the same admission requirements of students entering any grade at WCA. This includes having, at minimum, one parent who is a Christ follower and able to give a personal testimony of his/her profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. In addition, families applying for Pre-K will be asked to provide a Pastor Reference, adhere to our Statement of Faith and our Parent's Pledge, and attend an admissions interview with members of the School Board. Further explanation of the process can be found at westsideacademy.org/admissions

Students admitted to Westside Christian Academy's Pre-K program must be 4 years of age by August 1st, fully toilet trained, and able to use the bathroom independently.

Placement Policy

Westside Christian Academy's Pre-K program has one pre-k class, offering identical morning and afternoon sessions as enrollment allows. Students will be placed in the morning or afternoon session according to parent request on a first come first serve basis.

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).

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.

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.

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.

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:

- 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.
- 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.
- When a person unfamiliar to us picks up a child, we will ask to see their driver's license for identification.

Emergency & Accident Policy

Medical and Dental Emergency Plan

Parents will be notified immediately in the event of a serious accident, injury or illness. First aid will be administered by a staff member until either the parent arrives or emergency personnel arrive. If necessary, the child will be transported by an emergency squad according to the emergency medical information completed by the parent. The emergency squad will determine the necessity of transporting the child to a medical treatment center.

If a child is transported by the squad to the designated hospital, a staff member will stay with the child until a parent/guardian arrives and assumes responsibility for the care of the child. The staff members will bring with the child all medical records. Information concerning emergency dental procedures are located in the preschool office, as well as the classrooms.

An Incident/Injury Report will be completed by a staff member and signed by all parties. A written report will be provided to licensing within 3 days of the incident. Whenever a child suffers a minor injury or illness while on site, an Incident/Injury Report must be completed and signed by all parties. A copy of the report will be given to either the parent or person designated by the parent as someone who may pick up his or her child. Each child must have upon enrollment a Child Enrollment and Medical Information Form. The Emergency Transportation Authorization section of this form must be completed by the parent indicating that permission is granted.

Serious Injury

In the event of a serious incident, illness, or injury, the following procedures will take place:

- Staff member will summon emergency transportation (911)
- Administer first aid
- Contact parent/guardian
- Children will be released to parent/guardian as they arrive.

Loss of Heat, Power, Water

In the event the school has loss of power, heat, or water, the following procedures will take place:

- Staff member will contact parent/guardian to pick up child
- Children will continue with regular activities
- Children will be released to parent/guardian as they arrive

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.

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:

- Anticipation - anticipate possible hazards and take necessary precautionary and preventive measures.
- No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised. Reasonable and adequate supervision is the most important factor in the prevention of accidental injury.
- 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 main school entrance . b. For departure: Teacher releases child to guardian in the vehicle pick up line.
- Our school has immediate access at all times to a working telephone.

- The doors to the building are locked at all times and visitors are required to check in at the office.
- Our school has a monthly fire drill. Records of safety drills are available through the school.
- 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.
- When an accident or injury occurs, the school completes an incident report and a copy will be given to the parent/guardian.
- Use of spray aerosols shall be prohibited when children are in attendance at the school.
- 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.
- 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.

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.

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis - 4 or 5 shots (2, 4, 6 & 15 months and 4 years)
- Hepatitis B (Hep B)
- Hepatitis A
- Haemophilus influenza type b (HIB)
- Influenza
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Pneumococcal disease
- Polio
- Rotavirus
- Varicella Zoster (chicken pox)

Communicable Disease Policy

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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Parents of other children in the school will be notified of exposure to communicable disease by written notice in child's backpack.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Healthchek

Healthchek can be provided to individuals under the age of 21 who are enrolled in Medicaid. It is a program that can provide early health care for students. For more information, please visit <https://medicaid.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/medicaid/families-and-individuals/citizen-programs-and-initiatives/healthchek1/healthchek>

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.

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 the 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Dress Code

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

Curriculum

Westside Christian Academy maintains its own dynamic pre-kindergarten curriculum that meets or exceeds all Early Learning Standards for the State of Ohio. Students are taught based on the teachings of the Bible and encouraged to apply this in their interactions with others. For a copy of the Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum please see the head teacher.

Developmental Materials

The Pre-K program consistently uses developmentally appropriate materials, equipment and resources that meet the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional needs of the preschool child.

Developmental Progress Assessment Plan

The teacher will give each child an assessment of basic academic, physical, social, and emotional development in both the fall and spring, noting progress between them as well as areas of weakness or strength. The teacher will review the results of the assessment with the parents at both the fall and spring parent teacher conferences, which coincide with the grammar school and upper school conference dates listed on the school calendar.

The teacher will keep a running observational checklist for each student for a variety of developmental Ohio Early Learning Standards. This will also be discussed at the fall and spring conferences.

The teacher will also review the CDC developmental checklist appropriate to the child's age with the parents at each conference.

If additional meetings or communication is desired, please feel free to contact the head teacher.

Plan for Providing Services

If any combination of observation, assessment or diagnosis from a medical professional reveal a potential or current physical, cognitive, emotional or behavioral issue that requires additional services the teacher will arrange a meeting with the headmaster, parents and service providers as needed. Any lawfully required services available will be facilitated and a Student Plan of Progress (SPP) will be created to ensure proper goals and tools are given to help the student succeed.

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.

