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*"For I know the plans I have for you,"
declares the Lord,
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future."
Jeremiah 29:11*

Parent Handbook of Policies and Procedures

**amended January 2016*

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Columbus Christian Preschool, Inc.

Welcome

We would like to welcome your child and your family to Columbus Christian Preschool. We are happy that you have chosen us to serve you. This handbook has been developed to help make parents aware of our policies and procedures. Please read it carefully, keeping in mind that it has been developed for the benefit of all the children in our program.

Columbus Christian Preschool, Inc. is a non-licensed program. Because of the limited hours students may attend per week, it is granted an exemption through Bright From The Start and is not required by the state to be a licensed program.

COLUMBUS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

*"For I know the plans I have for you,"
declares the Lord,
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future."
Jeremiah 29:11*

The Mission of Columbus Christian Preschool is to help give preschool aged children a positive and successful future by providing a loving Christian environment where they can grow spiritually, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

Our Philosophy

Our focus is on the child as a whole. While developing social skills with group activities and imaginative play, we use a theme based curriculum to expose our students to a variety of planned academic material and incorporate basic Christian values to enhance the developmental stage of each age group.

Registration

Registration for the Fall session for students currently enrolled will be held in January. New families will be allowed to register starting in February. All waiting lists expire in May of that school year. We DO NOT carry over names on any waiting list from year to year.

Registration for any Summer Camp Weeks will be held in April. These are week long camps that one can register for individual weeks as needed or all the weeks. Tuition is due in full at the time of registration. Any waiting list for the Summer Camps expires at the end of the current Summer Session. Names on summer waiting list will not carry over to the fall waiting list.

Admission Requirements

The preschool accepts children from two months to five years of age, based on classroom availability at each facility location. Children are enrolled in classes according to their age on September 1; however, we reserve the right to maintain flexibility. "Class" requests and "Teacher" requests are not encouraged. Parents are asked to abide by this policy. The following must be completed prior to enrollment:

- *Completed forms: Registration, Medical Release, Parental Agreement, Immunization Record
- *Payment of applicable non-refundable Registration Fee and non-refundable Supply Fee
- *Tuition payment, if applicable at the time of admission

Withdrawal

We cannot refund tuition payments, registration fees or supply fees if you choose to withdraw from our preschool program for any reason. *A two-week written notice or a two-week payment is required for withdrawal from any class.*

Hours and Days Of Operation for Fall Session

The preschool operates from 9:00a.m. to 1:00p.m. daily.

Children, ages two months to twelve months by September 1, may register for the program offered in three sessions:
1) Mon/Wed 2) Tue/Thur or 3) Fri

Children, ages two years to three years by September 1, may register for the program offered in three sessions:

1) Mon-Fri 2) Mon/Wed/Fri or 3) Tue/Thur

Children, ages four years to five years by September 1, may register for the program offered in two sessions:

1) Mon-Fri 2) Mon/Wed/Fri

We consider all the surrounding county school system's calendars when selecting holidays, days out, and staff planning days for the CCP calendar.

Curriculum

Our goal is to focus on the child as a whole and provide them with a positive and successful future. While we seek to give the children in our program a balance of social skills, academic readiness skills, and self-help skills, their spiritual growth is important as well. We provide theme-based learning experiences that expose our students to a variety of planned academic and Christian material.

* Our written CCP curriculum was developed to include basic academic skills incorporating the daily recognition and formation of *letters, numbers, colors and shapes* through Circle Time and Table Activities. In addition to a weekly theme, the curriculum includes *handwriting, a Bible verse, letter sounds, counting by rote, calendar skills, weather recognition* and a *theme related story* read aloud by the teacher. Other daily activities, including *art*, are also based on the theme, letter, number, color or shape.

* In the older classes *sight words, time recognition* and *money recognition* are incorporated on daily basis, as well as the pledge to the American flag, the Christian flag and to the Bible. Twice a year the Four-Year students are assessed individually to show parents and teachers where additional academic attention should be focused.

Above all, we try to make learning fun, building upon the natural curiosity of the young child.

Music

During the Fall Preschool Session, each Monday / Tuesday all classes have a 30-minute music lesson taught by our preschool music and story teacher. Following the weekly theme, we enjoy learning new songs, learning about different musical instruments and have fun with creative movement, puppets and singing seasonal songs.

Story Time

During the Fall Preschool Session, each Thursday / Friday all classes have a 30-minute story time adventure taught by our preschool music and story teacher. Following the weekly theme, we enjoy reading books and flannel board stories with puppets and finger plays, Bible stories and fun spun tales.

**A strong emphasis on Christian values is incorporated in every lesson during Music and Story Time.

Chapel

During the Fall Preschool Session, each Wednesday, the 3-yr and 4-yr classes meet for a Chapel service. After the Christmas break, the 2-yr classes attend Chapel. The fun Chapel songs are led by our music teacher and a Bible story based on our weekly theme and Bible verse is told by a minister of the church.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is due the 1st of each month and is considered late after the 10th. A \$10.00 late charge will be added to your monthly account if your payment is late. A reminder will be sent to you at the end of each month for the next month's fee. **REMEMBER, Tuition is due in full even when breaks occur in the calendar.** The staff is paid for planning and preparation time to better prepare classrooms for your children.

CCP requires a Non-Refundable annual registration fee due at the time of registration, Non-Refundable annual Supply Fee and a monthly tuition payment. *We offer a \$10.00 discount, per child, for additional children in the same family on the registration fee and monthly tuition but not the supply fee.*

****There is no reduction in tuition for absences.**

*****In the event of a returned check a \$20.00 bank fee charge will be applied and payment must be made in cash.***

****Failure to pay tuition for 2 consecutive months is reason for immediate dismissal from the program unless other arrangements are made with the director.**

All tuition payments should be put in the collection box marked "Columbus Christian Preschool" located at the director's office. CCP staff may not collect any form of money owed to the preschool unless in a sealed envelope and clearly marked with child's name. This includes fundraising money, field trip money, party money or tuition money. Money sent in lunch boxes should be in a sealed envelope and clearly marked so the teacher will not misplace it as trash.

****For current tuition and fee amounts see the attached price sheet in the back of book.**

Arrival and Pick Up of Children

For security purposes, everyone is asked to enter the building using the Main Entrance doors. These doors will remain locked during the school day and will be open at arrival and pick-up times.

For the safety of all the children in the class, we ask that you remain in the hall and allow the teachers to greet your child in the morning and walk them to the door at pick-up time. If you need to speak with the teacher, we ask that you schedule a parent-teacher conference.

We ask that you do not drop your children off in the classroom before 9:00 a.m. The teachers arrive at 8:30 and use this time to prepare for the day. You are responsible for your child if you arrive before 9:00 a.m.

Dismissal is promptly at 1:00pm. Please be considerate and be on time when picking up your child. A late fee of \$10.00 will be charged if children are not picked up by 1:00. We ask that parents keep their children with them after they have picked them up to avoid accidents. When you pick up your child from the classroom, our responsibility for accidents ceases.

***If you have grandparents, nannies, babysitters or friends picking up your child PLEASE make them aware of the Arrival and Pick Up policy.

Records Update

It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the director in writing of any significant change in student records as they occur, i.e. address, telephone numbers, work location, emergency contacts, child's physician, child's health status, immunization records, etc. Phone numbers on file in the director's office are used to notify parents should there be an urgent situation.

Child Pick-Up Permission

Please indicate on your registration form and inform your child's teachers of persons who are allowed to pick up your child. ***As a safety precaution a note or phone call is required on the day someone else will pick up your child.*** We cannot allow children to leave with anyone else without written permission or a call to the preschool director. For the protection of your child, we may ask for identification if we do not recognize someone.

Snack Time

The preschool will provide water and crackers or cookies each morning for snack. If your child cannot have water or the type of cookie we provide for any reason, **it is your responsibility to provide an alternate drink/snack for them.** Parents may be asked to contribute a box or bag of some type of snack item throughout the year. Your contributions are always appreciated. "Special Snacks" may be donated for the letter of the week. Your child's teacher will notify you when these are needed, **keeping in mind that items containing nuts are not allowed.**

Lunch Time

Children should bring a healthy lunch each day. Pack a lunch for your child that they can eat without much assistance from the teacher. Teachers can help open juice boxes, etc., but it's hard to open the lunch boxes of many hungry little ones all at once. Plastic, rather than glass, containers are required. Lunch boxes and all containers should be labeled with the child's name. **Please have all food ready to eat--** apples cut, eggs shelled, etc. **We do not have opportunity to heat or cook food items so please do not send food that requires heat.** Do not send foods where size would be a choking hazard. Remember to send a water bottle or juice box for lunch. Lunch time is scheduled by each individual teacher. Some food suggestions are: cut-up veggies and fruit, cheese and crackers, sandwiches cut in shapes, chicken nuggets, fish sticks, pizza slices.

CCP reserves the right to prohibit certain foods containing nuts, eggs or milk used in any way in a classroom setting if there are significant allergy concerns in any particular classroom. The classroom teacher or preschool director will notify the parents of the particular classroom if there is a need for caution.

Medication

A medication form **must** be filled out by the parent or guardian and **returned to the director** in order for Columbus Christian Preschool employees to assist parents when their child requires medication during school hours. The medication will only be administered if it is delivered to the director by the parent or guardian. Prescription medication must remain in the original prescription container and be properly labeled by a registered pharmacist as required by law. Nonprescription medication must also remain in the original container properly labeled with the child's name and specific instructions regarding dosage and time of administration. **All medication & forms must be kept in the director's office.**

Illness Policy

We ask for your cooperation in not bringing your child whenever he/she is ill. Children are not allowed to attend if they have any contagious symptoms such as, but not limited to, the following:

***Fever** -Fever is often a symptom of a contagious condition. Administering fever reducing medication just serves to mask the fever so that a continuing contagious condition could go untreated. When temperature elevation is suspected, your child's temperature will be taken. If the temperature is elevated to 100 degrees or above, you will be contacted to come for your child right away. All children should be free of fever, without the benefit of a fever reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning.

***Diarrhea** -When diarrhea is noted, your child's temperature will be taken. If there is a fever, you will be contacted to come for your child right away. If your child does not have a fever but has a second liquid stool, you will be contacted to come for your child. They should be free of diarrhea for 24 hours before returning.
****THE PRESCHOOL DOES NOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION FOR FEVER OR DIARRHEA!**

***Vomiting** -If your child experiences unexplained vomiting before coming to school, he or she should be kept at home. They should be free of vomiting for 24 hours before returning. If vomiting occurs while your child is at school, you will be contacted to come for your child right away.

***Green runny nose** -Serious head, lung and chest congestion that causes a continuous discharge from the eyes or nose will necessitate your child's absence. If your child has a clear runny nose due to non-contagious allergies, please let us know.

***Conjunctivitis** -Pinkeye is EXTREMELY CONTAGIOUS. If it appears that your child may be infected, he or she will be removed from the group and you will be contacted to come for them right away.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Our teachers will be happy to talk with you about your child's progress and adjustment. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled as needed. We ask that you schedule a conference with your child's teacher to discuss important topics rather than try to have a discussion during arrival or pick-up times. This will allow the teacher to concentrate on the wellbeing of all the children in her class.

In order for the CCP staff to provide the best service and attention to your child, call or text 706-570-6301 if you have any needs regarding your child while in school. During the instructional day, the CCP staff may have their cell phones in class for emergencies only, as all their attention is focused on their students. The above phone number is answered throughout the day for your convenience. Please feel free to call your child's teacher on her cell before 9a.m. or after 1p.m.

School Closings, Evacuations & Emergency

The Preschool follows the local school systems in closing due to questionable weather. Please listen to the local news or radio when bad weather occurs before arrival time. The preschool director has a Weather Radio and will be tuned in during questionable weather. If the need for an evacuation should occur while at school, each teacher is aware of our "Fire / Tornado Escape Plan" and has a copy of the procedure in her handbook.

In the event that we are faced with a city emergency, a representative from the preschool will be in contact with a representative from the City Emergency Team. The decision for the appropriate action taken by the preschool will be contingent upon the decision of the city representative.

--If we are told to evacuate the area, all available staff and transportation will be utilized. The city may provide any additional transportation needed. We will relocate all preschool children to a designated "Parent Unification Area" at St. Luke UMC 1104 Second Ave. If this area is unavailable, we will make the decision for a new location at the time of need. Parents will be notified by phone once we have arrived at our designated area and may pick up their child/children at that time.

--If the city representative advises us to "Shelter in Place," all windows and doors will be closed. We will turn off all air conditioning / heater units. Teachers and children will remain in their classrooms until we have received clearance from the city representative.

***Communicable Diseases** -When any suspected case of contagious disease is determined, you will be contacted to come get your child right away. If the doctor determines that your child has a communicable disease, you are requested to contact the preschool with the diagnosis as soon as possible. This allows the preschool to notify other families, if necessary. The preschool reserves the right to request a physician's written release for your child's return following a communicable disease.

****Active Chicken Pox** ****Measles**
****Mumps** ****Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease**
****Flu** ****Strep Throat**

***Ringworm or Impetigo** -If your child has ringworm, impetigo or pin worms, they are not allowed to return to school until the condition is cleared up. If your child has a skin lesion that is not considered contagious by the physician, in writing, and it is adequately dressed to prevent drainage while at school, he or she will be allowed to remain.

***Rashes or Open Lesions** -Suspicious rashes are considered contagious until a physician indicates, in writing, otherwise.

***Severe coughing or Sore Throat**

***Head Lice** -This condition requires immediate attention considering how quickly it spreads. If it is determined that your child is infected, he or she will be removed from the group and you will be contacted to come for him or her right away. Treatment will be required and all eggs ("Nits") will have to be removed from the hair before your child will be allowed to return to school.

If your child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the drug for at least 24 hours and not exhibit any symptoms before returning to preschool. We realize that some symptoms hang on long after the child is not contagious and, in that case, your child may return to preschool. We want all of our children and their families, as well as our teachers, to remain healthy and happy.

Discipline Policy

The least favorite part of teaching is discipline. Yet we all know the importance of it. The key to successful behavior is planning. The staff at Columbus Christian Preschool strives to offer a loving, fun and safe learning environment for every child. Positive reinforcement is used to encourage good behavior. We base our plan for discipline on a 4-step system.

1. Each teacher determines general rules for her classroom. We do this by choosing rules that are observable and age appropriate and that apply throughout the day. General classroom rules are rules that apply all day, no matter what activity is taking place. These are rules that children are expected to follow at all times.

Example:

- *Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- *Do not leave the room unattended or without permission.
- *Follow the directions of the teachers.
- *No yelling or screaming.
- *No running or throwing toys in the classroom.

2. Each teacher determines a positive reinforcement system for her classroom. Once we have chosen the classroom rules appropriate for the age level of each class, we decide how we will positively recognize children for following them. We try to focus on the child's appropriate behavior and acknowledge it.

Example:

- *The most effective reinforcer is frequent praise. Words of praise remind a child what we want them to do and inspires them to repeat it.
- *Treats or privileges for individual children as well as the entire class.

3. Each teacher determines the disciplinary consequences for her classroom. Consequences must be something that children do not like, but never physically or psychologically harmful. Never will any form of corporal punishment be used. Consequences must be presented to children as a choice. When a teacher gives a student a choice, the responsibility is placed where it belongs, with the student. Consequences for inappropriate behaviors are adjusted for each age level. Consequences do not have to be severe to be effective.

Example:

- *Verbal redirection or distracting the child's attention to more positive activities.
- *A hand on the shoulder or eye contact and communicating expectations clearly so the child understands the situation at hand.
- *Verbal warnings.
- *Time out away from the group until the child agrees to acceptable behavior, (no more than one minute for each year of age.)
- *Trip to director's office.
- **If inappropriate behavior persists parents will be notified.

4. If all else fails, we use the "Your Own Child" Test. The staff at Columbus Christian Preschool will make every effort to help nurture the children in our care, just as we want our own children nurtured. When behavior problems arise, the staff will handle the situation as positively as possible and ask, "If this were my child how would I want them treated?"

**If you have questions about individual classroom discipline, please speak with your child's teacher.

****Columbus Christian Preschool reserves the right to deny admission of any student based on specific, nondiscriminatory reasons of the preschool council. CCP reserves the right to dismiss a current registered child if behavior becomes a problem.*

If it is determined that a child is having difficulty adjusting to preschool, is frustrated with the learning environment, shows abusive tendencies toward the teacher or other children, or is a disruption to the entire class due to personal or medical reasons, the director will be asked to observe the classroom. A conference will be scheduled with the parents, teacher and director. If determined necessary by the preschool council, CCP reserves the right to require, at the child's family's expense, a qualified aide to accompany the child daily.

The staff is not trained to teach children with special needs, special learning or behavioral difficulties and if it is determined that the child is not able to adjust and behavior is extreme, it may become necessary to ask the parents to withdraw the child from preschool.

Biting

Biting can be a form of aggression expressed by infants and toddlers. Biting in late infancy and during the second year of life is pretty universal according to the experts. Dr. T. Berry Brazelton assures us that hitting, biting and scratching will happen. For most children, biting is a way to show dissatisfaction with the way things are going around them. However, we cannot allow biting at the preschool.

Prevention is very important with biting. The teachers will try to recognize when a child reaches "emotional overload" and monitor closely for situational triggers (frustration, fatigue, possessiveness, etc.) They will redirect the child and try to divert their attention to other things. The teachers are instructed to do the following when biting occurs:

* Gather up the biter and calmly say "You cannot be around your friends if you bite." Then gently relocate the biter to another part of the room in "time out" and say calmly, "I don't like that and neither does anyone else. You don't bite your friends."

* Let the biter know that their actions caused pain to someone by saying "it hurts when you bite your friend" and say "NO" in a firm, no-nonsense voice.

*Wash the bite area with soap and water.

*Inform the parents of both children involved at pick up time WITHOUT referring to names.

*Biting is not something to blame on children, parents or teachers. A child who bites is not on the way to being a discipline problem. It is not an anti-social act, but an act of an individual who is not yet ready to be fully social.

***If biting occurs, the child will be counseled by the teacher and redirected. Recurrent biting will require removal from the environment for further counseling in the office. Depending on frequency and/or severity in one given day, the parents will be asked to pick up the child early. If the child is picked up early for biting on numerous occasions the CCP Council may determine that the child's biting has become a habit and excessive and the parents will be asked to withdraw the child from the program for the remainder of the school year.**

Emergency Notification

A parent is notified immediately of any illness or injury requiring professional medical attention for their child. In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, the emergency contact person is notified. If none of these are available, the child's physician may be contacted. 911 will be called if an illness or injury requires immediate professional medical attention.

Non-Emergency Notification

A parent is notified upon arrival at pick-up time if their child has become moderately ill or has an injury that does not require professional medical attention. When an accident or injury occurs to a child, an Accident Report Form is filled out by the teacher and signed by the director. The parents may or may not be notified, depending upon the severity and time of the accident or injury. Parents will receive a copy of this report.

Calendars and Reminders

A calendar of significant dates will be available at the beginning of the school year. Monthly reminders are e-mailed or sent home with the children. Current updates on class news, unique events and activities, permission slips and important dates will be sent or e-mailed as needed.

Child Abuse / Neglect

By State Law, Columbus Christian Preschool, Inc., its directors and employees are *mandated reporters*, and as such are required to report any indication of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

Confidentiality

Employees of Columbus Christian Preschool are required to maintain strict confidentiality in regards to information about all children and families that we serve.

Baby Requirements

Parents are asked to furnish all food, milk and juice needed for infants. These must be in plastic bottles labeled with the child's name. Disposable diapers, baby wipes, powder and ointment are also the parents' responsibility.

Potty Training

If your child is "potty training" we will be glad to help all that we can, BUT we are not able to handle a lot of "accidents." If your child is having a little trouble, we ask that you send them in pull ups, with easy open pants and shoes appropriate for changing due to the fact that it is hard for teachers to spend the time needed to clean up and change a child with a classroom full of other children.

Playground

The children will participate in outdoor activities year-round, every day when the weather permits. On days where the temperature is near freezing the director will make a school-wide decision about outside playground time. If the decision is made to stay inside a movie may be shown on the TV. **All movies will be age appropriate and approved by the director.**

Clothing and Shoes

Dress your child in comfortable clothes that they may play and paint in without worry. We will be playing outside (weather permitting) on a daily basis and the children will get dirty, so keep this in mind as you dress your child. **All coats, sweaters, etc. should be plainly labeled with your child's name.**

For safety reasons shoes must be worn, tennis shoes are preferred. If the shoe is not a tennis shoe it must have a strap or back to ensure a secure fit. **Backless shoes of any kind are prohibited.** Disposable diapers are required for babies.

We ask that you send a complete change of clothing, underpants, socks and shoes, to be kept at school for your child. Remember to label each item. Place clothing in a gallon zip-lock bag with your child's name on it.

Toys and Pets

Please **do not allow** your child to bring toys or books to school unless they are on "Show and Tell" days and approved by the classroom teacher. It is too easy for these items to be misplaced or broken. Each classroom teacher may incorporate a show-and-tell time in the class schedule where personal items may be brought for Circle Time. We ask for your cooperation in this matter. Please do not bring live pets without making arrangements with your child's teacher in advance.

Field Trip Guidelines

The older classes may attend several field trips during the school year. Each child must have a signed permission form to be allowed to attend the trip. If there is no signed form the child will remain at the preschool under the care of the director while the rest of the class attends the scheduled trip.

Out of courtesy to the staff/employees of the participating companies, and to ensure quality one-on-one time with your child, we respectfully ask that siblings of any age do not attend field trips.

The younger classes may attend an end-of-the-year field trip if approved by the director.

Parties and Celebrations

Parties are held in the classrooms throughout the year. The teacher will post a list of party items needed so that you may sign up for the items you wish to contribute. Homemade goodies are welcome. **Due to the risk of allergic reactions, items containing nuts (i.e. peanut butter) may not be brought into the classroom to share with everyone.** Birthday celebrations are welcome and very much enjoyed by the birthday child. Please make all arrangements with your child's teacher ahead of time so she can work around your plans. **Invitations to parties away from the preschool are not to be distributed at school unless ALL children in the class are invited.**

Volunteers

Parents are asked to help in several ways at different times during the school year. These include a variety of fund raisers, Fall Festival, Thanksgiving Program, Christmas Program, Field Day, Teacher Appreciation, etc. We welcome parent help in the classroom as needed for crafts, parties and guest readers. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher if you are available to help out as a room parent.

Volunteers may also be asked to help by substituting in the classroom but will need a background check submitted before their first substituting opportunity.

***When you have God's Vision,
He will make provision.***