

2019-2020
Parent Handbook



Good News Preschool
1610 E. New Hope
Leander, Texas 78641
(512) 535-8090

preschool@goodnewsunc.org

Receipt Acknowledgement

I hereby acknowledge receiving the 2019-2020 Good News Preschool Parent Handbook. I will also share it with individuals I authorize to drop off or pick up my child. I have read it in its entirety and agree to abide by all policies contained herein.

Parent Signature_____

Child's Name (please print)_____

Welcome to Good News Preschool!

In early childhood children learn best by using all of their senses to experience the world around them. Our program is designed to promote cognitive, emotional, physical and social growth with an emphasis on Kindergarten readiness. We are excited and grateful that your family has chosen our school for your child's preschool years!

CURRICULUM

Good News Preschool uses a Bible based curriculum designed by our highly trained staff which incorporates developmentally appropriate activities into thematic, weekly units. Our preschoolers experience a wide range of activities designed to stretch their imaginations.

Centers in each classroom promote individual and cooperative play, imagination and creativity, constructive ideas and self-expression. A wide range of centers such as literacy, music, math, science, blocks, manipulatives, dramatic play, art and sensory are offered on a rotating basis to enhance the weekly units. We have a word of prayer before meal time and a children's chapel is offered twice weekly.

Good News Preschool classrooms facilitate play-based learning, where through play children develop socially and cognitively to better understand the world around them. Through natural discovery they build self-confidence, negotiation and problem solving skills which form the basis for academic learning.

The pre-kinder curriculum is designed to provide children with all the necessary skills needed for Kindergarten readiness.

We will spend time outside daily, weather permitting. Active time outside allows for socialization, release of energy, and enhances large muscle development. Access to daily outdoor play is required by state licensing.

TUITION AND FEES

Registration and supply fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. Registration will not be accepted without the registration fee. The first supply fee is due in full on or before "Meet the Teacher" Orientation which will be held the week before school starts. The second supply fee is due by the first day in January that school resumes after the winter holiday.

Registration Fee:

Current Members: \$100 by 2/3/19
 \$110 by 2/28/19
 \$125 **after** 2/28/19

New Members: \$110 by 2/28/19
 \$125 **after** 2/28/19

Supply Fee: 2 days per week: Two payments of \$50 (due August and January)
 3 days per week: Two payments of \$55 (due August and January)
 5 days per week: Two payments of \$65 (due August and January)

Tuition amounts are based on the total number of days offered for each program and averaged into a monthly rate; therefore the amount is not flexible.

The last month's tuition may be paid either along with the first month's tuition for a 10% discount, or the last month's tuition can be evenly divided and added to 8 tuition payments made throughout the year.

Absence from school due to illness or holiday is not a cause for reduction in monthly tuition. Full tuition is due on the 1st of each month, September through April. A late fee of \$20 will be charged if tuition is not paid by the 7th of each month.

Tuition: \$210 per month for 2 days per week (Mon/Wed or Tue/Thurs*)
 \$275 per month for 3 days per week (Mon/Wed/Fri* or Tues/Thurs/Fri)
 \$400 per month for 5 days per week (Monday-Friday)

*please note, in our Pre-K room, there is only one 2-day option of Tue/Thurs and one 3-day option of Mon/Wed/Fri, or a 5-day option.

Sibling discounts: \$15 off tuition for each additional child.

Withdrawl: If for any reason you need to withdraw your child from Good News Preschool, written notice must be submitted to the Director one month in advance of your departure. Please see the Director or Office Manager to obtain a withdrawl form.

HOURS OF OPERATION

At Good News Preschool, our school day begins at 9:00 am and concludes at 1:00 pm. Our school year calendar, which runs for 9 months, is decided using the Leander ISD calendar as a guide. We typically start school 1 to 2 weeks after LISD begins, and we end 1 to 2 weeks before they end. During the school year, we will follow the Leander ISD calendar for holidays, teacher workdays, and school closures due to inclement weather. In cases where Leander ISD delays the start of the school day Good News Preschool will not be open. Please refer to local media for inclement weather updates. If LISD has an early release day, the preschool day will run as normal.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Children should arrive and depart each day through the front entrance to the church. Arrival time is at 9:00 am. We ask that you not drop your child off prior to 9:00 am as teachers are preparing their rooms for the day and are unable to adequately supervise children during this time. Children must be signed in by an adult each day and must be left in the care of a staff member.

Dismissal time is 1:00 pm. Children must be signed out of their classrooms by an adult, making sure that the staff is aware of each child's departure. Children will only be released to a person whose name appears on the child's authorization form, or whose name has been given prior approval by the parent or guardian. Please notify the Director immediately if there are any changes. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 17 even if it is a sibling. For safety reasons, persons unknown to Good News Preschool staff will be required to present identification. When a child is picked up for the day, the child is then to be supervised by the adult who is picking him/her up. The child is to remain with this person and will not be allowed to roam the facilities unsupervised.

Please be considerate of our teachers by picking up your child on time. A late fee of \$2 per minute will be assessed for late pickup of children after 1:05 p.m. We realize emergencies arise when you least expect them. If such an emergency should occur, please contact the Director immediately by calling 512-535-8090.

Persons delivering and picking up children are advised that it is unlawful to leave young children unattended in a motor vehicle.

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Teachers and children will have lunch together at a designated time each day. Please send your child with a lunch from home that he/she can easily eat without assistance. Because lunches are provided for each child by their parent, Good News Preschool will not be held responsible for the nutritional value of each child's lunch. Lunches must also include a drink. Please do not send foods that need to be refrigerated or heated. Lunch boxes and individual containers, including sippy cups, must be labeled with your child's name. We welcome all nursing mothers at any time during preschool hours and we will provide a comfortable place for you.

We also ask that you provide your child with a snack and drink each day. We encourage dry snacks that are nutritious in nature.

According to the *Texas State Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers*, research has shown that 90% of choking deaths occur in children younger than four years of age. Examples of foods that present a risk of choking include, but are not limited to:

- Hot dogs sliced into rounds
- Whole grapes
- Hard candy
- String cheese
- Raw peas
- Dried fruit
- Pretzels
- Chips
- Popcorn
- Marshmallows
- Chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole

If your child's lunch contains any of these items, please make sure they are cut accordingly, especially grapes, hot dogs, and string cheese.

CLOTHING/DIAPERS/PERSONAL ITEMS

Children should be dressed in comfortable, easily managed play clothes. We ask that you avoid anything the child cannot personally manipulate when going to the bathroom and anything the child (or parent) fears getting dirty. We also request that children come to school with closed-toed shoes so that they may play safely on the playground.

Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for outdoor play in cool weather. Remember to label all jackets, hats, gloves, etc.

For those not yet potty trained... Due to our limited storage space, we are unable to keep entire packs of diapers/pull ups for each child. Instead, we ask that you please fill a large zip lock bag with

diapers or pull ups individually labeled with the child's name. This bag will remain at school and will be sent home to be refilled when it is empty.

Please send your child with a backpack or small tote bag each day. This bag should be labeled clearly with the child's name and should contain the following:

- 2 extra diapers or pull ups, individually labeled with the child's name (for those not yet potty trained).
- A package of wipes
- A complete seasonally appropriate change of clothes including underwear, socks, shirt, and shorts or pants. Each item should be individually labeled with your child's name.

Children should leave personal items such as candy, gum, money, jewelry, or toys (except for show-and-tell items) at home.

DISCIPLINE

When necessary, children will be disciplined in a considerate, quiet manner so that they may learn from the situation. Children are taught what is expected of them, and good behavior is recognized and encouraged. As much as possible, children are guided to assure their appropriate participation in every activity. If a child persists in inappropriate behavior after reminders and redirection, the child may receive a brief, supervised separation either near or away from the group. Children will be sent to the Director's office only as a last resort. At this point, a parent may be called to discuss the next appropriate action. The staff will monitor behavior and inform parents of significant difficulties or changes in behavior patterns. A complete discipline and guidance policy is attached.

If a child displays physical harm or other aggressive behavior, the following procedure will be followed:

- 1st incident—child will be given a warning and put in supervised separation at an age appropriate amount of time (not to exceed 5 minutes).
- 2nd incident—child will be put in supervised separation with the Director.
- 3rd incident—parent will be called to pick up their child from the school.

Parents will be notified after each incident.

Biting: The Preschool Director will personally communicate with parents concerning the issue. Biting issues, as well as aggressive behavior, will need support from home to help end the situation. If the situation does not improve, a parent conference will be scheduled with the Director and a plan of action will be formed. If biting or aggressive behavior continues, a child may be subject to dismissal from the program. All decisions will be made on an individual basis.

Policy for the biter—

- First time a child bites— child will firmly be told 'no biting' along with a conversation on making a better choice, and the child will be separated from the other children but still stay in the room. The sit out times will be based upon the age of the child. Parents will be notified verbally at pick up and via a Behavior Management form.
- The second time and thereafter when a child bites the child will be told 'no biting' and will be separated from the other children outside of the room with another caregiver (teacher, aide or

Director). The sit out time will be based on the child's age. Parents will be called and the incident will be documented on a Behavior Management form.

- o If a child has bitten 2 times in one day, the parents will be notified to pick up the child from preschool.

Policy for bitten child-

- o Love the child, hold them, hug them and calm them.
- o The bite will be washed with soap and water and ice will be applied if needed. Parents will be notified verbally and via a Behavior Management form the day the bite occurs.

When a biting situation occurs, parents of both the biter and the child bitten will be notified in writing but the identity of each child will be kept confidential for the sake of the child. This can be an emotional time for both children and parents, so all measures are taken by the school to diffuse ill feelings.

HEALTH

Children enrolled in Good News Preschool must have on file evidence of an annual physical examination and current immunization record. A health form signed by your doctor and immunization records must be submitted to Good News Preschool before the child may attend class. A TB test is not required for your child to attend. At Good News Preschool we do not require our students or teachers to be vaccinated. If you choose not to vaccinate you must provide the State Issued Notarized Affidavit. All children ages 4 and older are required to submit a Vision and Hearing Screening conducted by their doctor.

A child who exhibits the following may NOT come to school:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher within the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea (even because of medicine) within the past 24 hours
- Discharge from the eyes
- Nasal discharge that is not clear
- Spots, bumps or rash of unknown origin

Children becoming ill after arrival at school will be placed in an area away from the other children and the child's parent will be called immediately to pick up the child. If you are not available, the person listed on your emergency contact information form will be notified. Please make sure that your contact information is kept up to date.

After an illness, a child should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to preschool. In accordance with state regulations, the preschool office must be notified when a child has had any communicable disease such as mumps, measles, chicken pox, or pink eye. Parents will be notified if there is such an illness in the school. For the protection of all children, a doctor's statement may be required following an illness.

Medications: The preschool office will need medication instructions in writing from the parent and doctor prior to administering **any** medications. We will document each dose of medication given. Please stop by the preschool office to pick up a form that will provide us information required under our state license.

In the case of LICE: If your child should become infected, please notify the teacher or Director as soon as possible so that the classroom can be treated and other parents notified. The child will remain anonymous in these notifications. If nits or lice are found on your child, you will be notified for immediate pick-up. He/she may return to school following proper treatment.

All Good News Preschool employees are trained in first aid and CPR. In the event of a medical emergency, the staff will call 911 to report the emergency and request aid. The staff will then notify the parent or emergency contact, and a member of the staff will ride with the child to the designated emergency room.

A copy of the illness and exclusion criteria from the Minimum Standard Rules for the State of Texas from the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is available upon request.

BIRTHDAYS/SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Parents may provide a treat for the class on their child's birthday. Please notify the teacher of your plans in advance. Party invitations may be distributed in class only if ALL children in the class are invited to the party. Classroom treats should be items that do not need to be cut or sliced and is not overly messy (cookies, lightly frosted cupcakes or donut holes work well).

Please be aware of any known food allergies in the classroom before bringing in birthday treats so that all children may eat them and be safe.

Classes will hold seasonal parties and special events throughout the school year. Parents will be asked to sign up for items to bring to each party as well as occasional requests for parental help during these activities.

Field Trips: Several times throughout the year the preschool will walk across the parking lot to visit the Cottonwood Creek Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. All students will be invited to participate as long as a parent has completed the required Field Trip Permission Form. Parents are always welcome to join us on these field trips!

SAFETY

Parents should report any unsafe conditions or concerns to the Director. If the condition is under our control, we will attempt to correct the situation as quickly as possible. If the condition is the responsibility of a parent, the Director will notify the parent of the concern and work with the parent to correct the condition.

Good News Preschool has emergency procedures in place in the event of fire, tornado, etc. All staff members are trained in these procedures to insure your child's safety. Practice drills will be staged throughout the year. Evacuation routes are posted in each room.

-Off site Relocation: In the event that we are required to evacuate the property the staff will escort all classes out the safest doors, through the shared parking lot to Cottonwood Creek Nursing Home located at 1500 Cottonwood Creek Trail, Cedar Park, TX 78613. (512) 259-4259.

CHANGES AT HOME

Sometimes things happen at home that can cause changes in a child's behavior at school. It is helpful if the teacher knows when something out of the ordinary is going on so that we may understand the reasons for the child's behavior and accommodate them through the transition. We want to be in close communication with all of our families, so please keep us informed. We care deeply about the welfare of your children and will help you in any way we can.

Please inform the Director immediately if your home address or phone numbers change. This applies to work numbers and numbers/names of emergency contacts or persons you have approved to pick up/drop off your child.

GENERAL

Children ages 18 months-5 years are eligible for enrollment. Children must be able to walk on their own to begin attending. Good News Preschool does not discriminate against any race, color, national or ethnic origin. Registration begins each spring for the next school year beginning in the fall and continues until classes are full. Children are placed on waiting lists for full classes. Parents will be notified of space availability as soon as possible. Payment of the registration fee assures your child's spot in the class.

Parents will be notified in writing of any policy or tuition changes before the change is to take place.

If you have any questions or concerns about our policies, procedures or program activities, please feel free to call and make an appointment with the Director. For problems in the classroom, parents should schedule an appointment to speak with the teacher. For unresolved conflicts, please make an appointment with the Director.

Parents are welcome to visit our facility at any time during hours of operation to observe our program activities without having to secure prior approval. We encourage parents to volunteer by participating in special activities. Parents will be notified in advance of those activities and appropriate times to volunteer.

Copies of the State Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers, as well as our most recent licensing inspection report and contact information for the local licensing office are available in the preschool office. You can also visit the Texas Department of Family and Protective services website at www.dfps.state.tx.us. The child abuse hotline may be reached at 1-800-252-5400.

Please be aware that under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Good News Preschool is a gun free zone.

