

Parents Handbook



**Mt. Washington Christian Preschool
Mt. Washington VB Church
710 Copenhaffer Road, York, PA 17404
717-266-8411**

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL?

An environment of planned experiences to meet the needs of the young child.

- The need for enlarging concepts
- The need for companionship
- The need for physical activity and competence
- The need for autonomy
- The need for new experiences and understanding

OUR ORGAIZATION

Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool is sponsored by Mount Washington U.B. Church. As such it is our intention to reflect the attitudes and principles of the Christian faith in all aspects of this ministry. We count it an honor and a privilege to be entrusted each day with your precious children. However, our commitment to your family doesn't end there. We sincerely hope that you will find us to be a compassionate resource of help and encouragement in any of life's challenges that you may face. Our pastor is available to aid you in times of emergency or crisis and any staff member will happily furnish you with his contact information. In addition, we extend to you an invitation to visit our Sunday Morning worship service at your convenience. Numerous preschool families have found the Mount Washington Church family to be a warm, friendly and supportive people and are now actively involved in areas of ministry with us. To learn more about our church check out our web site at www.mountwashingtonchurch.org. To learn more about the United Brethren denomination go to www.ub.org.

Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool is governed by Gabriel's Place Christian School Board. This board is elected annually and their names are duly announced. A director gives overall immediate supervision and qualified teachers and aides staff the daily operation.

Gabriel's Place uses Christian material throughout the curriculum to help teach academic skills. Teachings about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible and Bible stories will be incorporated. We also have Chapel time with Biblical instruction, and praise and worship of our Savior.

All our staff has obtained the necessary Pennsylvania and FBI clearances for working with children.

Our Preschool hours are 9:30am - 12:00pm.

Our program is designed for children age 2 to 4.

SPECIAL SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONS

CLOTHING - Children should wear washable play clothes to school. Clothing that can be easily handled by the children is recommended.

Sneakers are preferred. Overshoes should be at least one size larger than is necessary so they can be easily slipped on and off the child.

NAME TAGS - Please have your child wear a name tag for the first 2 weeks of school. This will help staff members know your child's name and class. You will receive a white sign, which is to be placed inside your car windshield during drop-off and pick-up. Please boldly print your child's name and class on this sign.

BACKPACKS - Each child will need a backpack large enough to bring home lessons, crafts, flyers, etc. Backpack use is restricted to communication between Preschool parents and staff for Preschool purposes only. Your cooperation in this regard would be most helpful.

PERSONAL ITEMS - Please label all personal items with your child's name and class. Backpacks, hats, coats, gloves, etc. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. The 2's must have their items labeled in their backpacks - diapers, wipes, pacifiers, blankets, etc. Please keep all favorite toys at home, unless it is show-n-tell day.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL - You may begin lining up in the parking lot at 9:20am, however, doors will not open until 9:30am. Your cooperation with this process is extremely important for safety reasons and to avoid congestion on Copenhaffer Road. Drop-off involves driving around the church in a horseshoe pattern. Enter the parking lot at the "enter" sign and form 3 lines between the orange cones. Then proceed to the gate area. Ultimately 3 lines will form behind the 3 painted white lines that are located near the lower double glass doors. Parents or guardians need to remove their child from their car seat. A staff member will escort each child into the school through the double glass doors.

SCHOOL DISMISSAL - Follow the above lining up directions as at arrival time. Children are dismissed at 12:00pm. Parents are to wait beside their car until a staff member brings your child to you. It is then your responsibility to buckle them into their car seat. All children should be picked up no later than 12:15pm. A \$5.00 fee will be charged for excessive lateness. Parents will need to complete a form with names of people who have permission to pick-up their child. Most important, parents will be issued a password for security reasons. Please use extreme caution while exiting.

If a child is late coming to preschool, a parent must bring their child to the double glass door and ring the bell.

SNACKS/BEVERAGE DONATION – Snacks will be provided by Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool. Do not send food items with your child without prior permission.

ALLERGIES - If your child has any allergies to food or the environment, it is the responsibility of the parent to request an Allergy form from the Director. It must be signed by the parent and returned to the Director.

TOYS – No home toys are permitted to be brought to school. Exception: Many classes have Show 'N Tell days. Your child may bring his or her favorite toy on those days (if directed by the teacher). Please be sure to clearly mark your child's name on these items. Children should NOT bring in toys representing violence. We are not responsible for lost toys.

INCLEMENT WEATHER - If Northeastern School District is on a one hour delay, Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool is on a one hour delay. If NSD is on a two hour delay or cancelled Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool is cancelled. For days missed due to inclement weather, we will make every attempt to make them up.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE - We follow Northeastern School District's calendar regarding days off for holidays. For NSD's in-service days, the Preschool will remain open.

APPOINTMENTS AND PRESCHOOL VISITATION - Appointments with staff should be made after 12:20pm on the days that school is in session. Preschool visitation throughout the year should be arranged through the Director. Please bear in mind that the staff's day ends at 1:00 pm.

FIELD TRIPS - In order for your child to attend field trips, a permission slip must be signed and returned to school. Parent volunteers are needed to help transport and chaperone children. We appreciate your willingness to help in this area.

OPEN HOUSE - Newly enrolled students and parents will be invited to an Open House. They will meet the staff and Director and view their child's classroom. They will also be apprised of rules and regulations and be briefed on some of the exciting things happening at Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool.

DIAPERS AND WIPES – Diapers and wipes must be provided by parents of toddlers. Please check with your child's teacher to make sure there is an adequate supply.

GRADUATION - A graduation ceremony is held at the end of the school year. Families are invited to attend.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS - Twice yearly evaluations are to be completed for all students and provided to the parents. These evaluations will be completed on forms approved for the process. In cases of joint custody a duplicate of the evaluation form may be requested at no cost.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE - A parent teacher conference will be offered to each family near the middle of the school year. Additional conferences may be requested by a teacher or parent if deemed necessary.

HEALTH

Children must be kept home when there is suspicion of illness. If illness arises at school the parent will be called to take the child home. No medications will be administered by the staff to any child.

We're always concerned about communicable diseases in preschool. We ask that the listed restrictions be followed carefully. These guidelines apply to children who appear ill, particularly on the day or night before attending preschool.

1. Fever – Children must remain at home for at least 24 hours even if Tylenol has been administered.

2. Vomiting – Children must remain at home for 24 hours.
3. Antibiotic Treatment – Children must remain at home for 24 hours starting from the time an antibiotic has been administered.

The preschool must be notified immediately if a child has contracted a communicable disease. He or she must not return to school until a clean bill of health has been received from a doctor.

The preschool staff reserves the right to send a child home if symptomatic and or is deemed to be contagious.

Our goal and intent is to protect the medical health and physical well-being of all those involved with preschool, as much as possible.

In the event of an emergency, the child's parents will be contacted if possible. If neither parents nor the emergency contact persons can be contacted, the child will be taken to your preferred hospital by an authorized person. For this reason, **all emergency information must be kept current** by checking for accuracy, signing and dating the contact form. Please inform the Director if there is a change of address, telephone numbers or emergency contact persons.

Neither Gabriel's Place nor Mt. Washington U.B. Church will be held liable for medical expenses incurred at preschool for any injury or illness involving your child or children.

OUR PROGRAM

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT - Proper social adjustment is extremely important in the early years of childhood. Included in our program is the initiation of experience, which will constructively aid each child in adjusting socially to those around him. The experiences will include planned physical activities, creative play, music, stories, art projects and personal counsel. They are both group and individual in nature.

SKILL - It is our goal to develop within each child the basic skills required for normal living and for school preparation. Such activities as painting, playing with clay, and using crayons provide young children with a challenge to investigate these materials and to explore their uses. At the same time they learn to express their ideas and feelings about the world around them. For these reasons, creative materials have endless value.

The different phases of expression revealed in children's use of creative materials are illustrated under the following stages of development: (1) manipulative (muscle coordination) - (2) Symbolic (meanings to drawings) - (3) realistic (identifiable art).

DISCIPLINE - In order to provide the proper atmosphere for child development and learning, classroom control must be maintained. Discipline is handled with kindness and understanding. Attention is given to specific needs of each child, but at the same time the welfare of the entire class must be taken into consideration. We reserve the right to speak to parents about their child if we are having severe discipline problems with him or her.

STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR POLICY

Recognition of Responsible Behavior

Teachers will use a variety of ways to acknowledge and encourage positive student behavior. The following are a few examples to be used both individually and corporately:

Orally commend the student.

Send affirming notes home.

Awarding the student with extra outdoor time, bonus activity, special treats at snack time, etc.

Receiving special privileges/recognition from the Director.

Receiving a class reward in response to positive behavior.

Introduction of Disciplinary Policy

When children come together in groups, there is always the possibility that negative behavior could occur. We believe that the correct response to this behavior is of extreme importance. Discipline means direction and guidance with necessary restrictions. It is essential to have discipline in the training of children. Using the Scriptures as a basis, our goal is to teach children about the love of God and show them how He taught us to love one another.

God has also given to parents the responsibility to “bring up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4 NAS)

Since Gabriel’s Place Christian Preschool is an extension of the home, we want to share the responsibility for training during the time your child is in our care. This training is motivated by a genuine love and concern for each child. The child is also encouraged to respect the authority of the teacher, director and staff.

In every area of discipline, we want to be sensitive to the individual student’s development and to give consideration to the growing process. We will also examine the nature of the behavior problem. Matters of discipline are conducted in a discretionary manner. Cooperation is needed between the parent and the school in order to understand the student’s ability to practice self-discipline. Communication is a key factor.

The following policy has been formulated to provide a school atmosphere in which character is nurtured and personal responsibility is developed.

Disciplinary Policy

Teachers will work with their children (when age-appropriate) to discuss and create guidelines for classroom conduct. In doing so, specific negative behaviors will be defined to assure that each child fully understands what is expected of them.

Appropriate consequences for negative behavior will also be established. The teacher will see that the rules of the classroom are clearly defined and consistently followed.

The teacher will maintain open communication with parents and discuss possible ways to deal with the situation.

OPTION #1 - Effort to right the problem can be attempted by making eye contact, verbal reminder, teacher presence in disturbance locale, etc.

OPTION #2 - The child may be asked to take a "time-out" for the appropriate number of minutes (one minute per the number of years of age).

OPTION #3 - The negative behavior may be recorded in their student file.

OPTION #4 - The student may be asked to miss part of outdoor/indoor play.

OPTION #5 - If a student does not seem to respond to disciplinary action within the classroom, they may be sent to the Director until the teacher can pursue the matter.

OPTION #6 - Parents will be called and notified about the incident. In the case of severe and repeated negative behavior a disciplinary report will be issued to parents stipulating the course of action.

Other creative options may be developed at the discretion of the Director. Some examples of this might be:

Tigerrific Program - When a behavior is being repeated consistently the teacher may want to begin such a program. Daily certificates (using stickers or stars) which report on the isolated behavior(s) are sent home. Parents respond by giving praise or encouragement. In doing so, the child becomes aware that the school and home are working together.

Graduated Point Systems - This is a systematic way in which children accumulate points or strikes when negative behavior occurs. With the first point they might receive a verbal warning. Upon receiving the second point they may lose a portion of their outdoor play time. If a third point is received the parents are contacted. This point system can be set up in a variety of ways. Student conduct reports will be filed with the Director and also kept in the student's file.

BULLYING - Bullying may involve physical aggression, verbal intimidation, social/emotional exclusion or threats. When a child is unable to defend themselves, bullying has occurred.

In our school in an effort to deter bullying we will issue an incident report when there is an occurrence.

Upon receiving a 2nd incident report parents may be called and notified about the incident.

Upon receiving a 3rd incident report the student may be suspended from school for 1 to 3 days, to be determined by the Director and teacher.

Upon receiving a 4th incident report the student may be considered for disenrollment. Staff involved with the student and the Director will make such a recommendation to be acted upon by Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool Board.

Incident reports will be kept and filed in the student's file.

All discipline will be fair and preserve the dignity and well being of each child. Our goal is to encourage children to take personal responsibility for their actions and to understand that their behavior (positive or negative), will affect the people around them. Discipline will be used to help maintain a safe and productive environment in which all children can be loved and nurtured.

OUR PROGRAM

It is our purpose to help each child know that God made and cares for everyone. We attempt to provide happy experiences for the children through which they can learn about the love of God for them.

A Bible story is presented one day each week, along with a follow-up activity. No attempt is made to prejudice a child against the faith of his or her parents.

OUR OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool are:

- 1.) To provide an exceptionally high quality initial educational experience for young children.
- 2.) To create a wholesome environment and provide stimulating relationships for the social development of emerging personalities.
- 3.) To provide, along with educational experiences, a spiritual atmosphere in which children may early come to realize and relate to God and things sacred.

POLICY REGARDING TUITION AND ENROLLMENT

- 1.) We ask that you send your child's monthly tuition check to the preschool in their backpack enclosed in an envelope. Monthly tuition must be paid by the first preschool day of each month. September's tuition must be paid prior to the first day of pre-school or on that day in order for your child to begin. Bounced checks will require a \$25 cash processing fee. The explanation for this policy is merely that the school is a non-profit organization, therefore operated on the funds that are paid into the school by tuitions. There are payrolls to be met and supplies to be purchased. In order that the school may serve you, it is necessary that we have your most sincere cooperation concerning this very important matter.
- 2.) A registration fee is charged upon initial enrollment or re-enrollment of a child after a discharge and every September thereafter if a child continues enrollment. Registration fees are used for insurance and supplies.
- 3.) Rate adjustments cannot be made by the Director, who is obligated to Gabriel's Place Christian Preschool Board to carry out this policy.

- 4.) When a part-time student is absent for one day, requests may be made to allow the student to attend school on another unscheduled day. It is up to the discretion of the Director contingent upon available openings.
- 5.) A year end statement for tax purposes will be issued to parents of children currently enrolled. A fee of \$5.00 will be charged when additional statements of accounts are requested.
- 6.) The Preschool is to be advised immediately of any change in residence, phone number, employment, or name of person calling for children. It is required that every child's file be updated whenever there is a change.
- 7.) If problems or questions arise regarding school policies, please be sure to contact the Director.
- 8.) Parents are responsible for contacting the Preschool if they decide at any time to withdraw their child from the Preschool.

Parents Group

GPCP Parents Group is an independent organization and is not sponsored by or under the supervision of Mt. Washington Church. However, we support and encourage their participation in the school. Please contact them for further information.

Any funds raised by the Parents Group are the property of the Parents Group and will be maintained by them. GPCP will accept donations to the general operating fund, from the Parents Group, if offered. Any purchases by the Parents Group, of equipment or items for the students, must be approved by the Director and the Preschool Board. Any use of Church property by the Parents Group must be approved by the Mt. Washington Church Board.

Parents Handbook Agreement

Condition of Enrollment

Signing for this Parents Handbook means you understand and are willing to comply with the policies and procedures contained herein.

This agreement must be signed and turned in prior to the first day of your child's class.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Parents Handbook, dated June 4th, 2010, and I have read and understand it. I further understand that I will comply with GPCP policies and procedures as contained herein.

Child's Name _____

Relationship to Child _____

Signed _____

Parents Printed Name _____

Date _____