

THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AT

CASTLE HILLS
Operational Policies

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THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AT CASTLE HILLS

PRESCHOOL OPERATIONAL POLICIES

CASTLE HILLS PRESCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool program has served the San Antonio community for more than 57 years. The Preschool program is designed to nurture children spiritually and academically at a developmentally appropriate level. At The Christian School at Castle Hills, our mission is to lead children to know Christ and make Him known! We have a team of approximately 32 teachers and staff who love, instruct, and serve our preschool children, ages 18 months through 5 years (PreK4). We are accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International and licensed by the State of Texas, ensuring that our staff and programs meet the highest standards of excellence!

PRESCHOOL HOURS & SERVICES

Full-time care is offered Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. Half day preschool hours are 7:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Families with more than one child receive a monthly discount if the children are enrolled full time. Before and after school care for our Elementary and Intermediate School-aged children (up to the age of 12) is available, along with a fun-filled Summer Program for children ages 18 months—12 years.

PRESCHOOL TEACHERS AND STAFF

Perhaps one of our greatest strengths as a premier, early childhood learning center is the passion and dedication of our teachers and staff members. Many of our teachers have taught for more than a decade on campus. Some of our older students have literally “grown up” on the Castle Hills campus. Often these students come back to hug or thank their preschool teachers for the godly influence they had in their lives! Our staff are CPR and First Aid certified and receive 24 service training hours per year.

CURRICULUM

Our approach to curriculum and instruction is developmental, play-based, appropriately academic and based on active and child-centered learning. One of our goals is to maintain a well-balanced curriculum for each of our classes that includes hands-on learning and an academic foundation critical for school readiness. The preschool curriculum is designed to develop each child’s social, physical, emotional, and cognitive skills. Our curriculum stimulates thinking, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving. Each day, school begins in circle time with songs, prayer, pledges and Bible verses. Love and laughter, along with a Christ-centered, warm and nurturing environment, are evident in each of our classrooms. Taught from a Christian worldview, we use Abeka curriculum for letters, phonics, reading, numbers and writing, while Scripture Bites curriculum is used for additional math lessons, science activities, and sensory experiences. In the toddler curriculum, we use Mother Goose Time, Tender Time, and Cuddle Bugs to teach nursery rhymes, vocabulary words, shapes, colors and numbers.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND BIBLE

As a Christian preschool, we teach each child they are special to God, teaching each one the worth of others as well as the concept of giving and serving others. We talk in our classes and chapel about how God loves each of us and we share with the children stories of God’s love and great work in our lives through His Word. Children will learn Bible verses or Bible concepts each month. Our teachers will teach and encourage children to pray each day during Bible time. Preschool teachers also help children understand that the Bible is God’s word and will help grow each child’s knowledge of Jesus Christ!

ACTIVE AND CHILD-CENTERED LEARNING

The children will grow by exploring on their own and playing with peers. Our teachers pour their hearts into creating this learning environment. Each class is organized around centers with activities for age-appropriate learning. Learning centers include home living, drama, blocks and sensory learning, library, puzzles and problem solving, art and creativity, science and exploration, and math and writing. PreK4 classes also attend Spanish classes twice a week.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

These classes are offered once a week for an additional fee.

A. The B3-Bricks, Bots & Beakers

B3 is an exciting education company that creates meaningful opportunities for children to experience a full range of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) classes at the preschool level!

B. Tot Teams of Tomorrow

Tot Teams of Tomorrow teaches fundamental and creative basketball skills. The classes are focused around improving the child's physical and mental growth through movement and music. TOT uses the perfect mixture of physical movement, hand-eye coordination, and brain use to maximize the growth of your preschooler. Every week a TOT instructor will teach your child athletics, academics, and agility.

C. Webby Dance with Us!

Webby dance introduces children to tap, pre-ballet, creative movement and tumbling. They provide age-appropriate music, fun props and an action-packed class! Children will benefit by building their memory, concentration, coordination, creativity and self-confidence, all in a positive and fun atmosphere.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

For large motor development, preschoolers need lots of opportunities to develop their kinesthetic intelligence. Our preschoolers engage in kinesthetic movement through outside play time, games, movement exercises, and parachute play. Outside playgrounds are spacious with shade trees to help maximize outdoor fun throughout the year. The school also offers two gymnasiums for indoor fun when weather prohibits outdoor activities.

RESOLVING CONFLICT ACCORDING TO THE MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE

Castle Hills Preschool is a learning center for children of parents who desire an educational environment for their children where JESUS IS LORD. We desire to partner with parents to help children grow spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially at a developmentally appropriate level. We are intentional about focusing on Jesus Christ and His teachings as part of our program and follow the Matthew 18 principle if conflict arises.

If a problem arises or if a parent becomes dissatisfied with CHS Staff, policies or decisions in any respect, we ask that the parent or parents resolve the matter with the person or persons involved according to the Matthew 18 Principle by going directly to that person rather than spread criticism and encourage dissention/disaccord.

How to resolve a conflict according to the Matthew 18 Principle

If you have concerns about your child's performance in a certain class or with a specific teacher, you should discuss the matter with the teacher first. Unless it is an emergency, please make an appointment to speak with the teacher first before visiting the school.

If you have spoken to the teacher and continue to have concerns about your child's performance in a certain class or with a specific teacher, then you should discuss the concerns with the Assistant Director.

If you continue to have problems with a teacher, school staff, school or the child's overall performance that cannot be resolved by the teacher or Assistant Director then please contact the Preschool Director. Concerns unresolved at the school level will be referred to the school Superintendent.

In the case of an unresolved conflict and/or frequent conflicts that are unable to be resolved, the center reserves the right to request that services be terminated so that you and your child could be better served at another center. Termination is decided by the Director and the school Superintendent.

PARENT CONFERENCES

It is our desire that parents be involved in the activities of the center. We wish to create a circle of unity for your child, one in which good communication exists and cooperation between staff and parents are evident. This

cooperation is essential. Our Preschool teachers will be available for conferences by appointment. If you would like to visit with your child's teacher, please contact the Preschool Office to schedule an appointment.

DISCIPLINE

Our goal in discipline is to provide positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction while using praise and encouragement to remind the children of behavior expectations.

Children need to know the limit of acceptable behavior. This gives them a sense of security. With this in mind, discipline shall be based on an understanding of individual needs. Teachers will seek to re-channel aggressive-problem behavior and will teach the child to respect the rights of others and to respect the property of others.

EXPULSION POLICY

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must suspend or expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We will do everything possible to work with each family. Prior to expulsion, a parent will be contacted, and correspondence will be sent home indicating the nature of the problem. Every effort will be made by both the center and the parent to correct the problem. If, after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's welfare and safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. The parent will be given a minimum of two weeks' notice to find another center to provide care for this child.

Immediate cause for expulsion

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.

Parents actions resulting in a child's expulsion

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to submit required forms including the child's updated immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Parents exhibit verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.
- Parents threaten physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.

Children's actions for expulsion

- Child is not able to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Incontrollable tantrums (angry outbursts).
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or to other children.
- Excessive biting.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of any emergency the parent/guardian will be called. If we cannot reach either parent, then we will try to reach the individual listed on the child's Medical Emergency Form. The parent/guardian must complete and sign an authorization for emergency medical treatment. Of course, we hope we will never need this authorization, but we want to be sure your child receives the attention he/she needs should such an emergency arise.

If a child is injured while in our care, our first step is to administer First Aid, as necessary. In the event we cannot contact the parent/guardian or doctor designated on the application, we will see that your child receives the emergency medical treatment he/she needs from a doctor or hospital. The parent/guardian will be expected to assume the responsibility for any resulting expense.

EMERGENCY RELOCATION FACILITY

In the event of a bomb threat the following procedures will be followed. If the building cannot be re-entered, the preschool students will be relocated to the Jewish Community Center at 2500 N.W. Military Hwy., San Antonio Texas 78231 using school shuttles. JCC phone number is 210-302-6846.

In the event relocation of students is required, parents will be notified via the FACTS online system which will send information by email, voicemail and text message alerts to the parents/guardians in The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool database. This notification will contain instruction pertaining to the specific location for picking up students.

ENROLLMENT

Every student enrolled in our preschool must fill out an online enrollment packet each year to register for the upcoming school year and provide an updated immunization record and signed Health Care Professional Statement.

*****Please note the State of Texas requires the Health Care Professional Signed Statement and date of your child's last "well check", along with all updated immunization records.***

DAILY HEALTH INSPECTIONS

For the safety and protection of the children, each classroom will follow the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) by providing each child with a health check prior to his/her entering the group. Each child will be checked for the following:

- Severe coughing
- Breathing difficulties
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pinkeye (tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, swelling, discharge, etc.)
- Infected skin patches or a rash accompanied by a fever
- Feverish appearance
- Unusual behavior such as crying more than usual, lethargy, generally feeling unwell

Parents are expected to have an alternative child care arrangement in place when children are ill. Parents are also expected to promptly (within one hour) pick up their children from the center when any of the conditions above exist. When a child becomes ill during the school day, we make every effort to reach parents. If after 30 minutes we have not been able to contact a parent, we will call the emergency contact listed in the child's file.

MEDICATION PROCEDURE

Medicine is dispensed at the school subject to the following conditions:

- A Medication form must be signed by the parent authorizing us to dispense medicine.
- A doctor has prescribed the medicine for the child to whom the medication is to be given.
- The medicine is provided in its original container that clearly states the prescribed dosage.
- All medicines are kept in a secure place.
- Medicine is only dispensed by a teacher, office staff, or school nurse
- Medicine may not be kept in a student's lunch box.

ADMINISTERING OF MEDICATION PROCEDURE STATE REQUIREMENTS

- Collect the medication form & medication.
- Check that the parent listed on the child's enrollment form has signed the medication form.
- Check the name of the medication against the medication form and expiration date or used by date and document.
- Check the name of the child is it consistent with the name on the medication container.
- Check dosage is consistent with what is on the container – (If a parent has indicated a different dosage in the medication form than what has been labelled on the medication, the teacher will contact the parent to clarify what is the correct dosage before administering medication to the child.)
- After washing hands, pour liquid away from the label and complete the medication form with the teacher's name and signature.
- Return medication to storage area and wash out the medication utensil immediately.
- At the end of the day ensure medication goes home with the parent.

ILLNESS

If your child has been ill, please keep him at home until he/she is well. Fever, extreme congestion and vomiting are signs that your child should be home where he/she can receive extra rest.

- **Your child should be free of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for a full 24 hours prior to returning to school without the assistance of any medication.**

When your child is ready to return, if he/she needs to take medication, that medication needs to be clearly marked with his/her name on the bottle, and it **MUST** be in the original container. If your child experienced a communicable illness, we will need a note from his/her pediatrician stating your child is able to return to school. (Pills in envelopes, wrapped in napkins, etc. are not permitted.) **Note: Please do not leave medication in your child's backpack!**

Communicable Diseases

If your child has symptoms of a possible communicable disease, please do not bring them to the preschool. These symptoms include: sniffles, red or bloodshot eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pain, fever. Communicable diseases include: chicken pox, measles, German measles, mumps, whooping cough, infectious hepatitis, polio, ringworm, scabies, lice, scarlet fever, diphtheria, meningitis, and pink eye. Please notify the school at once if your child does have a communicable disease.

Head Lice

Head lice are not a respecter of persons and can easily spread from one child to another. For this reason, if head lice are found on your child, you will be called to pick up your child. Do not return your child to school until he/she has been treated and there are no nits in the hair. Once all nits are removed, your child may return to school, but you will need to bring him/her to the school office before returning to class. The school does retain the right to periodically check your child for head lice. If you have any questions about head lice or are not sure how to properly check your child for head lice, please contact the school office, your pharmacist, or your family doctor.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY:

The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool is required by the Texas Department of State Health Services to keep an up-to-date copy of each child's immunization record on file. Prior to enrollment the preschool staff will ask for a current immunization record for each child. **All immunizations required for the child's age must be completed before the child may begin school and a copy must be on file in the Preschool office.**

State Exemptions: The parent will provide a signed and dated State Exemption Certificate and a signed statement stating that they have chosen not to immunize their child and that they understand the importance of immunizations, side effects and dangers of not being immunized. The State Exemption is good for two years from the date indicated on the exemption. If an outbreak occurs, the parent will be asked to remove the non-immunized child from the center until it has been determined that the child's health is no longer at risk.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Children will only be released to people authorized on the application and enrollment forms submitted by the parents. For the safety of the children anyone picking up your child will be required to show his/her picture ID, otherwise, we will not release your child. You may add people to your pick-up list throughout the year. If you are not able to pick up your child, you may let your child's teacher and the office staff know who will be picking up for that day. Also, be sure that you sign your child in and out on the Brightwheel app.

MEALS AND FOOD SERVICE PRACTICES

A Matter of Taste is a company that prepares our meals so that your children will be supplied with one-half of their recommended daily requirements in each food group. The lunch program is optional if parents prefer to supply lunch instead. For parents who want lunch provided through A Matter of Taste, parents may set up an account for their child for an additional cost. Great time and care are spent in the planning of the menus to select foods that are nutritious and that the children will enjoy. Our schedule includes morning snack, hot lunch and

afternoon snack. If your child has allergies and needs a special diet, you must provide the special foods. In addition, written instructions by a physician or licensed dietician are required.

Milk Allergy

For those that have a dairy allergy you are welcome to provide a milk alternative to keep in the preschool refrigerator. We must have a note from the doctor stating that your child has an allergy to dairy.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We want our parents to feel welcome. You may drop by any time. Please check into the preschool office before going to your child's classroom. You are invited to observe your child's class through the classroom door window. Please be sensitive about the length of time you visit as it can be disruptive for a child and his/her classmates to have a parent observing for a long period of time. We realize you want to see your child involved in the classroom activity, but children remain better focused if the parent is a distance away. We believe that your help with parties, special events, etc. is a very positive experience for you, your child, and his/her classmates, and provides everyone with a sense of family and community.

We encourage parental participation with class parties. Your child's teacher will need your help a few times throughout the year with special class party and celebration days. This is a time of parental fellowship, but parents are also necessary to help with the details of the day so that your child's teacher can focus on your children. Please, no siblings on any of the special activity days!

Special events and parties may include Grandparents Day, Donuts for Dads, Art Works, Petting Zoo, Cowboy Roper, Spring Musical, Muffins with Moms and Fun Day. Other terrific events include: Noah's Ark Day, Thanksgiving Feast, Birthday Parties for Jesus, Pajama Day, Valentine Parties, Fire Trucks, Police Officer, Career Day, Tooth Fairy, Shoe Box Parade (2's) and Fiesta Parade (3's & 4's). Parents who volunteer on a regular basis need to complete a background check before they volunteer in the classroom.

NAP TIME

A supervised nap and rest period are provided for all children each day after the noon meal.

- Each child needs a light blanket (48"X18") marked with his or her name that the parent will need to take home periodically for washing.
- A small pillow (12"X10") is also recommended for the comfort of the child.
- Your child will also need a foam filled, plastic covered rest mat (48"X18"). This type of mat can be purchased from Target or Wal-Mart stores. If your child's mat becomes torn or badly worn, we will advise the parent so another one may be purchased.

Texas Health and Human Services/Childcare Licensing checks the condition of our mats. Security items such as a favorite blanket or stuffed animal may be brought to school if needed for comfort, but your child needs to understand that these items need to be left in their cubby except during nap time.

BREASTFEEDING POLICY

Because breastfeeding has been shown to be the ideal form of infant nutrition, providing a multitude of health benefits to both infant and mother, and because breastfeeding mothers need ongoing support from child care providers to provide their milk for their babies, The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool adheres to the following policy. This policy is required to be stated by State Licensing.

- Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed or express their milk. This area provides an electrical outlet and a comfortable chair, etc.
- Refrigerator/Freezer space will be made available for storage of expressed breast milk. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with the name and date. The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control in ensuring that breast milk is properly treated to avoid waste.

- The Preschool director and all employees shall be trained in proper storage and handling of human milk. This policy will be communicated with all employees, expectant mothers, families, and visitors.
- Breastfeeding employees of The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool shall be offered the same provisions as mothers of enrolled children. Employees will be provided flexible breaks to accommodate breastfeeding or milk expression.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

We can provide Hearing and Vision Screenings on campus, if your child has not previously been screened. You will receive a note if your child's medical records to indicate that this needs to be completed. The screenings are conducted during the fall of each year and apply to students who are enrolled in our 4-year-old program. State law requires all children be tested at regular intervals. You must also sign a form provided to you to verify Hearing and Vision screening.

If you prefer to consult your own physician for a screening, **please forward a copy of the results for our records by November.** Unfortunately, absence of screening documentation results in exclusion until provided.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING SUNSCREEN AND INSECT REPELLANT

Teachers will implement the following procedures to ensure sun safety for themselves and the children under their supervision:

- Wear a hat or cap with a brim that faces forward to shield the face.
- Limit sun exposure between 10 AM and 4 PM, when UV rays are strongest.
- Apply sunscreen thirty minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or sooner if waterplay is involved.

Over-the-counter ointments and creams, such as sunscreens that are used for preventive purposes do not require a written authorization from a primary care provider with prescriptive authority. However, parent/guardian written permission is required and all label instructions must be followed. If the skin is broken or an allergic reaction is observed, teachers will discontinue use and notify the parent/guardian. Sunscreen should be applied to the child at least once by the parents/guardians and the child observed for a reaction to the sunscreen prior to its use in preschool.

If parents/guardians give permission, sunscreen should be applied on all exposed areas, especially the face (avoiding the eye area), nose, ears, feet, and hands and rubbed in well especially between May through September. Children should also be protected from the sun by using shade and sun protective clothing.

General Guidelines for Use of Insect Repellents with Children

Insect repellent requires the written permission of parents/guardians and label instructions must be followed. It does not require written permission from a primary care provider. With a parent's permission, insect repellents may be applied to children 18 months and older. In addition to consulting label instructions, teachers must follow these guidelines:

- Apply insect repellent to the teacher's hands first.
- When applying insect repellent on a child, use just enough to cover exposed skin.
- Do not apply under clothing.
- Do not use on children's hands.
- Avoid applying to areas around the eyes and mouth.
- Do not use over cuts or irritated skin.
- Do not use near food.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin immediately with soap and water.
- Teachers should wash their hands after applying insect repellent to the children in the group.
- If the child gets a rash or other skin reaction from an insect repellent, stop using the repellent, wash the repellent off with mild soap and water, and call a local poison center (1-800-222-1222) for further

guidance. If repellent is used on broken skin or an allergic reaction is observed, discontinue use and notify the parent/guardian.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In accordance with state statutes, The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool is required to report all suspected cases of neglect, physical, and sexual abuse to the Texas Health and Human Services/Childcare Licensing and the police.

In addition, employees are required to obtain a minimum of 24 clock hours of training each year relevant to the age of the children for whom the caregiver provides care. At the beginning of each school year, our staff receives one clock hour of annual training on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, in accordance with Texas State Licensing, Rule §746.1309 of Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers.

Resources are available at <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Reporting/resources.asp> for employees and parents on increasing awareness and prevention of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect. The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool will work with community organizations to provide guidance and contact information for parents/caregivers on preventing and reporting abuse or neglect.

The staff will use methods for increasing employee and parent awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect; ongoing training through staff meetings, discussion, and updating resources as they become available. This information will be available on our parent board. Included will be information and strategies from local resources such as a children's advocacy center or campus programs. Phone numbers for local assistance for parents of children who are victims of abuse will be included as well. This information may include contacts to doctors or medical clinics.

Abuse and Neglect Hotline number: 1-800-252-5400

STATE LICENSED PRESCHOOL

As per licensing mandate #746.501(20) we want to be sure that all parents are aware that we maintain a Minimum Standard Book for Texas Child Care Centers in our office; available at your request for any questions you may have or for your review.

In addition, regarding mandate #746.501(21) we maintain information on our bulletin board in our office regarding the way you may contact child care licensing, view our last licensing inspection, the DFPS child abuse hotline, and the DFPS website. However, as an additional convenience we are also listing the information for you below:

Child Care Licensing 210-337-3399
DFPS 1-800-252-5400
DFPS website www.dfps.state.tx.us

Under the Texas Penal Code any area within 1000 feet of The Christian School at Castle Hills Preschool is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty.