

Elfers Christian Preschool Parent Handbook



Parent Handbook

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“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”

III John 1:4

1. Welcome

Welcome to Elfers Christian Preschool. We sincerely hope this will be the beginning of a rewarding and trusting relationship between your family and us. This handbook is meant to serve as a guide to what you should expect from us as well as what your responsibilities are. The teachers and staff are carefully screened and prayerfully chosen through a thorough interview process and then undergo a FDLE (Florida Department Law Enforcement) Electronic background check. They also are checked through the local law enforcement agency, and are all certified in First Aid and CPR. Our preschool is accredited with FACCS (Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools). As you are reading this handbook, if you have any questions or concerns about these policies and procedures, please feel free to visit with us. We have an open door policy and would love to hear from you.



ACCREDITED

Statement of Basic Beliefs

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis of our belief. This Preschool subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in the year 2000. Additionally the following sets forth a number of the teachings of the scripture as interpreted by the Church:

Section A. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It has God as its Author, and Truth, without any mixture of error for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us: and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world. The Bible is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and religious opinions should be tried and tested. The Bible is to be interpreted through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth.

(II Timothy 3:16-17) The Church reserves to itself the sole right and authority to interpret the Scriptures, and whether any person or member is acting in conformity with them.

Section B. Holy God

There is one and only one Living, True and Sovereign God. He is an intelligent, spiritual and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature or being. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

1. God the Father

God as our Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all believers.

(II Corinthians 6:18)

2. God the Son

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, is the divine appointed Mediator between God and man. Totally, without sin, Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law, suffered, and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was entombed, arose on the third day and ascended into heaven to be at the right hand of His Father, where He now resides making intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest, Head of the Church and Sovereign of the Universe.

(Luke 1:35, Isaiah 9:6, Ephesians 5:23, II Corinthians 5:21)

3. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enabled men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts man of sin. He calls men to the Savior, and provides regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through the body of His church. His presence in the Christian is the assurance of the unbreakable oneness with God to bring the believer into the fullness of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

(John 4:24)

Section C. The Trinity

God is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each with distinct attributes, but without division of nature or being: One God. (I John 4:5:7-9)

Section D. Mankind

God created man in His own image, free of sin. Man transgressed against the command of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness. Therefore man inherits a corrupt nature, wholly opposed to God, His Law and is under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of mankind is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man: therefore every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. (Genesis 1:26-28, Acts 17:26)

Section E. Salvation

Salvation is the redemption of man, not through any merit of his own, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ, by His own Blood, obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its entirety, salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 8:30)

1. Regeneration, the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Jesus Christ. Regeneration is a change of heart, produced by the Holy Spirit through the conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of Grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin towards God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the whole person to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is God's gracious acquittal that transforms sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.
3. Sanctification is the experience, beginning with regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes and is enabled to progress toward spiritual perfection through the presence, power and enabling of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the believer.
4. Glorification is the culmination of the redemptive process and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

2. Purpose Statement

The purpose of the preschool is to extend the ministry of and help accomplish the purposes of our church, by providing tender loving care, safety, education and development for each child enrolled to attain his/her greatest potential spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally and socially. This is to be accomplished by providing developmentally appropriate activities, guidance and a program of ministry and outreach to the families of the children enrolled.

3. Mission Statement

The mission of the center is to extend the ministry of and help accomplish the purpose of the church, which is to guide families to see and know the love of Christ and accept His free gift of

salvation. We will provide tender loving care, safety, education and early childhood development for each child enrolled to attain his/her greatest potential spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally and socially. This is to be accomplished by providing developmentally appropriate activities, guidance and a program of ministry and outreach to the families of the children enrolled.

4. Goals for Children

Children enrolled in Elfers Christian Preschool will:

- Develop a positive self-concept and attitude towards learning, self-control, and a sense of belonging
- Develop curiosity about the world, confidence as a learner, creativity and imagination, and personal initiative
- Develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with adults and other children
- Understand and respect social and cultural diversity
- Use language to communicate effectively and to facilitate thinking and learning skills
- Represent ideas and feelings through pretend play, drama, movement, music, art and construction
- Think critically, reason, and solve problems
- Gain knowledge about the care of their bodies and maintain a desirable level of health and fitness
- Our curriculum is biblically based to guide each child in character building skills and on how to treat others, guiding them in their Social/Emotional development
- To learn at a young age that God loves them and wants a relationship with them
- Refer to the “Statement of Basic Beliefs” on the previous page

5. Security Procedures

You’ll notice our commitment to your child’s safety begins the moment you step in our front door. As you enter the center you will be asked to sign in your child, we will then open the door to allow entrance into the preschool. The same will happen in the afternoon; you will come to the front door and sign out your child.

We will need to see proper identification when someone besides you, the parent, is picking up. Please help us when you first start by showing ID until the office staff gets to know you. Only you and the people you authorize to pick up your child will be allowed into the interior classroom area while children are in school.

6. Your Child’s First Day

You have probably visited us on one or more occasions and our intent is for you to have a smooth and informative enrollment process. In addition, we want you and your child to feel as comfortable and welcomed on your first day at Elfers Christian Preschool as possible. Sometimes saying goodbye isn’t easy. We recommend you keep it reassuring, short and sweet.

We don’t consider any questions or concerns you may have as unimportant.

7. Parent/Teacher Communication

We understand that an important part of your life is learning about your child’s day and progress at Elfers Christian Preschool. We are happy to have short conversations when you drop off or pick up your child. However, if more time is needed we ask that you schedule an appointment outside of class time.

8. Open Door Policy

At Elfers Christian Preschool we welcome parents to come and visit their child during class time or to sit down and eat lunch together with them. Please bring a lunch for your child. We do supply am and pm snacks. You can purchase lunch a week ahead from Public Elementary for \$3.00 per day. Menus are available at the front office.

If you would like to come in to read a story or help with an art project, simply stop by the office and we will schedule a time for you to do this. We want you as a parent to be involved in your child's education.

9. Discipline and Guidance Policy

We believe the best way to prepare children for future success is to help them develop self-control, resolve conflicts and become increasingly responsible for their actions and behaviors. If we see a potential situation developing, the teacher will:

- a. Give a verbal warning.
- b. The next step would be to redirect the child or children to another area in the room that offers developmentally appropriate choices and the teacher would guide them in an area that they can succeed.
- c. Sometimes a "Quiet time" is needed to calm down and think about how they are to act when they join the group for the next activity.
- d. Sent to office for corrective action by talking to the Director or a phone call to the parent.
- e. Continued visits to the office, or calls to the parent with no visual signs of behavior change will result in a parent/teacher conference or dismissal. (At the discretion of the Director on duty)

The children must be involved and learn to work with each other, with teachers, and with material and equipment to learn how to work and play together.

Physical, verbal, or emotional punishment or abuse is never allowed. If we have concerns about a child's behavior, we will inform his/her parents/guardians as soon as possible and collaborate on a plan of action for positive change.



10. Health and Immunizations Records

Physical and Immunization information is to be on file for each child within one week of enrollment. These forms can be acquired at their doctor's office; the forms needed are:

- a. Immunization Card
- b. 3040 Physical Form

c. Birth certificate

Please bring us any documentation when your child receives an immunization so we can keep their records up to date.

It is important to us to keep proactive steps to protect your child's well-being at all times, but from time to time, accidents do occur. All injuries will be documented carefully and you will be given an accident form to sign that is kept in your child's file explaining the incident. In the case of an emergency we will call 911 and then immediately call the parent/guardian and advise them of the situation.

Please make sure your child's registration information is up to date at all times.

11. When your child is sick or needs medication

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will notify you immediately so you can make arrangements for pick up. A child who becomes ill will be separated from the other children and we will do our best to comfort him/her. We will record the name of the child affected, the time we contacted the parent, time they were picked up, date, symptoms and if they were notified on our policy (24 hour fever free to return to school). If your child needs a prescribed medicine during the day it will need a doctor label on it to be given and a signed medication form by the parent with the appropriate dosages and times to be given written on it.

To attend school your child needs to be well enough to function in a group. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she must be excluded from attendance.

- a. Has or has had a fever at or above 100.5F within the past 24 hours
- b. Is vomiting or has had at least 2 cases of diarrhea
- c. Shows evidence of a communicable disease, such as chicken pox or pink eye
- d. Has an undiagnosed rash
- e. Has any discharge from the eyes, ears, and or profuse colored nasal discharge

In order to return to school, your child needs to be free of all symptoms for 24 hours.

We ask that Elfers Christian Preschool be notified with a diagnosis so that if necessary a notification can be sent out to our families if the children have been exposed to a contagious illness.

12. When your child is absent

If your child will be absent due to vacation or illness, please notify the school as soon as possible so we can plan for his/her absence. Two weeks' vacation fee is waived after one year enrollment. Any other weeks during the year will require a payment to hold your child's placement in their class.

13. Severe Weather

If the Pasco County School District is closed due to unsafe weather conditions, Elfers Christian Preschool will also be closed. Watch your local weather channel for information on Pasco County.

Monthly fire drills are conducted to help the children know what to do in case of an emergency. Hurricane and tornado preparedness is taught in the classroom by their teacher.

14. Registration and Tuition

A \$75.00 non-refundable registration fee is due at the time that your child's application is submitted. A \$50.00 renewal fee is due every year after the onset of the new school year in August.

Tuition is due at the beginning of each week. **If payments are not made by Tuesday night at 6:00pm a late fee of \$20.00 will be charged to your account.**

A \$40.00 fee will be charged for any returned checks. If we receive 2 NSF checks you will need to make your payments in cash for the remainder of the year. We do not take debit or credit cards at this time.

Tuition must be paid in full, without deduction for absences of any duration or for any cause other than pre authorized vacation time.

Hours of care are 6:30am-6:00pm Monday-Friday

In an emergency, care will be given in addition to the hours indicated, additional pay at a set hourly rate will need to be paid the day of service.

Late pick up charge is \$15 every ten minutes.

15. Confidentiality Policy

All personal records of children and families are kept in the strictest confidence. Information pertaining to admissions, progress, health or discharge of a child shall be confidential, unless we have written permission for disclosure from the parent or guardian who signed the child's registration form.

16. Statement of Non-Discrimination

Elfers Christian Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnicity

17. Supplemental Information

Elfers Christian Preschool reserves the right to exclude the new enrollment of or terminate the existing enrollment of a child at any time, including, but not limited to, children whose behavioral and educational needs cannot be met by Elfers Christian Preschool, and or children whose fees and or tuition payments are in arrears.

Children are not allowed to come to school with unnatural hair color (red, blue, green etc.) or odd shavings. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings or other piercing. Girls only one set of earrings, no other piercing. No tattoos please.

18. Withdrawal Policy

A courtesy of at least 2 weeks' notice is requested upon withdrawal of a student in the care of Elfers Christian Preschool. If you have a concern about a teacher or staff member or are upset for any reason please stop by or call the office and let us know about the situation so we can resolve the issue before a withdrawal occurs.

19. Days that our Preschool is closed

New Year's Eve/New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving and Friday After
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Last day of Summer	

If the holiday occurs on the weekend we will be closed the following Monday in observance of that Holiday.

20. Dress Code

Clothing should be neat, clean and modest. The children should be able to go to the bathroom with little or no assistance.

Shoes should be closed toe with a back strap. **Tennis shoes are recommended.**

21. Lunch Policy

At Elfers Christian Preschool, we want to ensure that the foods and drinks your preschooler has throughout the day are important for his or her health. Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy are a part of a healthy eating style and together provide the nutrients their bodies need. Please limit the amount of added sugars, sodium, and saturated fat in your preschooler's meals, drinks, and snacks.

We also want to ensure the safety of our students' lunches and snacks by adhering to the Florida Department of Children and Families' guidelines for children under the age of four which states:

"Foods that are associated with young children's choking incidents must not be served to children *under 4 years of age*, such as, but not limited to, whole/round hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, cheese cubes/sticks and any food that is of similar shape and size of the trachea/windpipe. Food for infants must be cut into pieces $\frac{1}{4}$ inch or smaller, food for toddlers must be cut into pieces $\frac{1}{2}$ inch or smaller to prevent choking. This applies to all food, even food provided by parents/guardians." (Florida Department of Children and Families Child Care Handbook, page 13)

This parent handbook contains general information concerning the policies and procedures of Elfers Christian Preschool and is subject to change.

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Elfers Christian Preschool is an Accredited Preschool and a participant of the Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools; we are also under religious exemption from state regulations with FACCS but follow as good or better standards.

