

Genesis Early Learning Academy

“Where Great Beginnings Last a Lifetime”

Parent Handbook

Address: 1293 Mt. Nebo Rd. Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Phone: (412)418-1546

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PURPOSE What is the purpose of Genesis Early Learning Academy?

To provide a safe and nurturing learning environment for preschool aged children of the community. The preschool will provide a warm, loving environment in which each child can learn and grow at a developmentally appropriate pace.

MISSION STATEMENT

The staff will facilitate education in a way that reflects the love of God and respects the educational, social, and emotional needs of each child.

Genesis Early Learning Academy seeks to reflect God's love and the welcoming grace of Jesus Christ in its ministry and mission. Rooted in faith, our mission is lived out in our love for one another and in the closeness of our fellowship. It is our desire that each person discovers the good news of Jesus Christ. As a family in Christ, we invite you to share this joy through blended worship with all throughout the community.

PHILOSOPHY

The preschool believes that a developmentally appropriate program provides children with educational experiences which enhance their growth and abilities. It is our goal to provide activities and materials designed to promote "hands on" learning. The preschool staff functions as facilitators who promote the skills and self-confidence each child needs to succeed through the following goals:

1. Foster positive self-concept and self-understanding
2. Develop social skills and abilities to participate in large and small groups
3. Encourage language development
4. Encourage physical development/small and large motor skills
5. Encourage sound health, safety, and nutritional practices
6. Teach children how to think, question, experiment, and reason
7. Gain a meaningful educational foundation in the context of Christian values
8. Respect a cultural diversity
9. Gain understanding and appreciation of the world we live in
10. Engage in age appropriate readiness activities
11. Encourage creative expression through art and music

We believe the parents are a vital part of our preschool program. Parents and caregivers are their child's first and most important teachers. We value their input and suggestions and encourage parental involvement in the classroom.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

| Program: | Age: | Days of the Week: | Arrival Time: | Departure Time: |
|------------------------|---|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 4-Day Pre-Kindergarten | 4-5 Year Olds | Monday-Thursday | 9:00am | 11:30am |
| | | | | |
| Lunch Bunch | 4-5 Year Olds *for enrolled students | Tuesday-Thursday | 11:30am | 2:30pm |
| | | | | |

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

When you enter the Triumph Church parking lot, please proceed to the right and drive around the perimeter until you reach the door. Line up in front of the building so that your passenger door is closest to the building. If you are not first in line upon arrival, please form a line and proceed slowly until you reach the building.

Our staff will assist in opening car doors and helping students out of each vehicle. After your child has exited your vehicle, slowly and carefully pull forward and proceed out of the parking lot. At the end of the day, our staff will assist in guiding the children to their cars as you line up in the same manner around the parking lot perimeter.

Please pull up all the way as space becomes available in front of the building. Please remain in your vehicle and allow us to assist.

Please make sure that the backpack tag provided in orientation is on your child's backpack and your **visor card is visible to those who are assisting children into the vehicles.**

Regular parking spaces will be available, as usual, in the middle of the lot. If you need to park, please be mindful to keep the perimeter lane open.

Children become anxious when parents do not show up punctually to pick them up. Our teachers also have other commitments. As a courtesy to our teachers and to avoid worrying for your child, we ask that you plan your day accordingly so that you can arrive on time to pick up your children from class.

If there is an unexpected delay, please call the school at (412) 418-1546 to let us know you are going to be late.

****We will not release a child to anyone other than the person/persons authorized in the Pick-Up Authorization Form.****

DRESS

Preschool is a busy place with a variety of activities each day. Children learn best when they are totally involved in a learning experience. Our art experiences include painting, finger painting, the use of markers, paste, scissors, play dough and sand and water play. Needless to say, we sometimes get messy. While we do protect the children with smocks and use “washable” paint and markers, paint still seems to escape and get on clothes. Since we also do a lot of physical activity and large motor play, we suggest comfortable, sturdy clothing and tennis shoes. Dress shoes slip when climbing and running.

As the weather begins to change, please send sweaters and sweatshirts to keep us warm on chilly days. We will go outside often so dress your child accordingly.

SNACK

Treat time is a time for goodies and fellowship. Children are assigned a treat time during the month. On your treat day, please provide drinks, treats, and napkins for that time. During snack, children pass out their own treats. It is even more special if they help to make the treat. We thank God for food and the opportunity to be together before eating. For nutritional reasons, we ask that only your child’s birthday be a sweet treat, if you so choose. Genesis Early Learning Academy is a “**nut free**” facility and we ask that you please check the labels on packaging.

For example, be on the lookout for text that says:

- × “May Contain Peanut or Tree Nuts”
- × “Processed on shared equipment with Peanuts or Tree Nuts”
- × “Manufactured in a plant with Peanut or Tree Nuts”
- × “Contains Peanut or Tree Nut Ingredients”

Some nutritious suggestions for treats are:

- Celery and carrot sticks and Cucumbers
- Cheese cubes/String Cheese
- Jell-O
- Pudding/Applesauce
- Fruit in a cup
- Pretzels
- Fresh fruit (apples, bananas, oranges, berries, melons, etc.)
- Raisins (plain)
- Animal crackers/WheatThins/Cheeze-Its/Nilla Wafers
- Cereal Bars (check labels)
- Yogurt/Go-Gurt
- Graham crackers

- Water, juice, and milk are all good drinks. **ABSOLUTELY NO CARBONATED DRINKS!**

SHOW AND SHARE

One of our most important tasks in preschool is to work on language development. Show and Share allows the children to bring something from home and share with the other children. This will be done once a week.

Guns or toys which depict violence are not permitted.

COMMUNICATION THROUGH EMAIL

Please make sure to frequently check the email addresses that you have provided in your registration and orientation forms. We will communicate important information relating to your child and the preschool through these email addresses. Please feel free to provide the preschool with any additional guardian or caregiver/babysitter email addresses so that everyone who is authorized to care for your child is informed of school information (i.e. School closings, field trip information, etc.)

SCHOOL CLOSING

All delays and closings will be communicated via the following:

*WPXI closings and delays

*the preschool website (<http://www.Genesisearlylearningacademy.com>)

*Group me text

*email when possible.

If your class has been cancelled more than 3 sessions during the year, make up days will be scheduled.

NOTES

Please check your child's take home folder each day for notes. A calendar of events will be sent home in your child's folder at the beginning of each month. This helps us to keep you informed.

Please feel free to call or email your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

PARENTS

Parents are an important part of our Preschool program. We are proud that you have chosen to share your children with us. We would like you and your child to have a successful year. We encourage you to participate as you wish and offer many opportunities for you to do so.

Parents are kept informed and entertained during the year with orientation, parent conferences, and special parent presentations.

You may come and visit your child's class. Please contact your child's teacher to set up a time.

Class Parties

Throughout the school year we have three class parties that are planned and run by the parents of each classroom. We ask for four volunteers from each class to help with each party. The parties are an hour and a half long and consist of a craft, game, book, and snack.

| Party: | Date: | Time: |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Halloween | Tuesday October 31st | 9:30am-11:00pm |
| Christmas | Thursday December 21 st | 9:30am-11:00pm |
| Valentine's Day | Wednesday February 14th | 9:30am-11:00pm |

SPECIAL PARENT PRESENTATIONS

We have a Halloween parade prior to our Halloween party. We also do presentations at Christmas and at the end of the year.

CONFERENCES

Conferences will be held two times during the school year. They are typically held in November and March.

CLEARANCES

Genesis Early Learning Academy has established a safe facility policy in accordance with the state of Pennsylvania clearance requirements. We are committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our church and preschool.

GELA requires all teachers, substitute teachers, and volunteers to submit clearances to the preschool director prior to working with the children.

The following information is being provided to you for obtaining the clearances required in order to be a volunteer at Genesis Early Learning Academy. You must present clearances which are valid within one year of the date of issuance.

1. Act 34 - Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Background Check
Visit <http://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
Complete and submit all required information
After payment, access the "Certification" link and print the clearance
2. Act 151 - Pennsylvania Child Abuse History
Visit <http://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>
You will be prompted to "Create an Account"
Complete and submit all required information
Select "Volunteer Having Contact with Children" as purpose for clearance
Select for Category "Other" and Genesis Early Learning Academy for Agency Name

As a volunteer applicant you are permitted to receive one certification free of charge every 57 months. In order to submit a volunteer application without a payment, you are required to affirm that you have not already received a paper or electronic volunteer certification free of charge within the previous 57 months.

If information obtained through these clearances reveal that you are disqualified, you will not be able to be a volunteer. Any applicable fees will be paid by each individual seeking clearances.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION – Tuition shall be paid in any of the following schedules:

1. One payment – Those paying the total tuition by the first day of class.
2. Nine payment plan – Nine payments beginning **September 2023** and running through **May 2024**.
3. **Monthly tuition payments are due on the fifth day of the month.**

HEALTH RULES

Please see that your child has a complete physical before the first day of school. The state requires that all shots must be up to date. All children must be properly immunized for their own protection. A physical exam is required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for all preschools. Please make sure to submit your “Child Health Report” form to the church office no later than the first day of school.

To prevent the spread of disease, please keep your child at home when he/she does not feel well. Children with elevated temperatures, bad colds or coughs, unusual/excessive mucus or colored mucus, and upset stomachs/vomiting should not be in school. We have found that children who are not feeling well or who are overtired experience difficulties keeping up with the program and may feel that school is the cause of their unhappiness.

If your child has a communicable disease, such as pink eye, chicken pox, etc., please notify the school and call the doctor to see when he/she can return.

Please notify us if the child will be out for a prolonged period of time. Please make sure you talk with your child’s teacher about any special health problems, needs, or allergies. If a child’s health needs change during the school year, please tell the teacher and submit a new “Consent for Emergency Treatment” form to the preschool director.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

1. If an accident should occur at school that requires emergency medical attention, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. The staff will pull the child's Permanent Record from the child's file and will begin to call the child's home number, then parent/guardian's work number, and will then proceed to the three emergency names and numbers given on the form. The staff member will continue to call all numbers given until someone is reached.
 - b. If it is a dire emergency, the classroom teacher/aide will pull the child's Consent for Emergency Treatment form from the child's folder and proceed to the hospital. An ambulance will be called if the child cannot be removed and taken to the closest medical facility, Heritage Valley Hospital, unless the driver feels it is necessary to go to a trauma center.
 - c. The staff member will inform the parent or emergency person as to what happened and where the child has been taken and who has accompanied the child to the hospital.
 - d. An Accident Report will be filled out, and a copy will be placed in the child's folder.

2. In cases of minor accidents which don't require emergency procedures, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. A member of the class teaching staff will administer the necessary first aid.
 - b. If it is felt that the accident warrants, a call will be made to the parent to let them know what has happened. If no call is needed, the parent is to be notified immediately upon arrival of picking the child up that an accident involving their child has taken place and inform the parent of what happened. An Accident Report will be filled out and placed in the child's folder.