Parent Handbook

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

-Proverbs 22:6

EVERGREEN LEARNING CENTER

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1. Vision & Mission Statements

We will come alongside parents to build a faith foundation in their children while preparing them for a lifetime of learning. Our vision is to develop students who are spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially equipped. Our mission is to provide a safe environment where children can learn academic skills with a biblical worldview. We also provide a healthy work environment for teachers and serve as a resource center for families to improve their biblical parenting skills.

Due to Evergreen Learning Center's operating hours being 15 hours a week, an exemption from the Oklahoma Child Care Facilities Licensing Act (Section 403-Exemptions A. 10 a.) states we do not have to be licensed. However, the ELC is committed to providing children with excellent care and education in a safe environment. We understand children learn best when they feel safe, loved, and supported. Our students will be cared for and nurtured, as well as educated in all areas of development.

2. Educational Philosophy and Curriculum

At Evergreen Learning Center, we believe children learn best by actively doing. Therefore, teachers will plan hands-on activities and encourage learning through playtime. We know young children are learning about themselves and how to relate to others. Therefore, our teachers will be focusing on social skills as well as academic skills. Our classrooms are filled with developmentally appropriate materials and equipment. Our teachers will encourage children to learn at their own pace while recognizing children's different learning styles and stages of development. ELC teachers implement activities using multiple teaching styles to encourage all learners, including small groups, large groups, and individual one-on-one learning. Lessons are designed to include all developmental areas and meet children's spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs. Thematic units will be used to incite a love for learning and appeal to children's interests. Biblical stories and scriptures will be taught in each classroom. The Oklahoma Academic Standards will be utilized in writing lesson plans. Babies through 2 year old classes use Play and Worship Curriculum and thematic units. The 3 and 4 year old classes use Bob Jones curriculum, Abeka Bible or Play and Worship Bible Curriculum, as well as thematic units. In addition, the 4 year old classes use Saxon Phonics for Kindergarten readiness.

3. Center Operation

We will hold classes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Please see attached calendar for a complete list of class days, holidays, closings, and special events. There may need to be changes to the calendar. Those changes will be communicated to all parents in a timely manner.

4. Tuition Payments, Scheduling, Security Guard Fee and Late Fees

Infant: 6 weeks to 12 months: $400 per month

Preschool: 13 months through four year olds: $375 per month

Registration/application fee of $75 is due at the time of registration. This is a non-refundable fee.

An annual fee of $100 per family will be charged on July 1st to help cover the cost of a professional security guard.

Tuition is due the first of every month August through May. There will be a late fee of $20 if tuition is still unpaid after the 10th of the month. You will be contacted by the director at that time. Delinquent accounts of more than 60 days will require withdrawal from program, unless appropriate arrangements have been made with the director.

There is an option to make a one-time tuition payment of $3,800 for 6 weeks to 12 months old (savings of $200) and $3,562.50 for 13 months to 4 years old (savings of $187.50). This will need to be paid by August 1st.

Tuition payments can be made directly through the Procare app. You can also choose to pay by check made out to Evergreen Baptist Church and drop it off at the church office or hand it to the director.

We understand plans change. We will gladly issue a full refund of any tuition paid for the current school year if the cancellation request is received by July 15th. No refunds will be given on cancellation notices received after July 15th. A 30 day written notice is required in the event you need to withdraw your child. A full month's tuition is still due the first of the month and no refunds will be issued for partial months.

5. Behavior and Discipline Policies

A. PURPOSE

Our teachers hold an appropriate level of authority in our classrooms. In order to maintain a productive, loving and safe environment for all of the children and volunteers, we have established preschool behavior policies.

B. DEFINITIONS

For clarity's sake, we will define the following terms:

Authority: *"One with the power to enforce rules and exact obedience."* We are to raise up children who fear and respect authority figures, including parents and teachers. We believe it is important for *young children to learn to respect the authority that is placed over them*. Proverbs 1:7 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Obedience: *"The act of obeying. Following directions from an authority figure."*

Discipline: *"To train by instruction and exercise."* The word discipline comes from the word disciple, which means "one who is a learner". "Discipline" is a positive word, not a punitive action. We do not consider this word to have a negative connotation. Discipline is the responsibility of the teacher or person responsible for the safety of the children at that time. As the Lord disciplines His children, *we understand the need to use discipline as a tool in raising up godly children*. Proverbs 29:17 Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart.

Disobedience: *"Refusal or failure to obey which includes not following directions, breaking rules, not meeting expectations. Violation of a command or disregard for authority."*

Defiance: *"Bold resistance or opposition to authority."*

Violence: *"Behavior in which physical force is used and causes damage or injury."*

C. BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:

- Children will honor and respect their teachers by following directions.
- Children will honor and respect others by keeping their hands and feet to themselves.
- Children will honor and respect the resources God has given us.

D. STEPS OF CORRECTION:

Disobedience

If a child is disobedient, the teacher will provide correction and instruction in the desired behavior. This is an effort to discipline (train by instruction) the child. This could include stern verbal instruction or may require a gentle time out away from the group. Short and clear commands are best.

Examples: (Refusing to follow these directions escalates the behavior to defiance.)
"You aren't keeping your hands to yourself. You'll need to sit over here."
"We don't stand on the table. Please get down."
"It's time to listen to the lesson. Let's sit on the rug now."

If after the child is disciplined, the child does not receive the correction, according to our definition, the action has now escalated to defiance. With defiant or violent behavior, the teacher will remove the child from the classroom. (Staff will complete an incident report.)

Outside the classroom, a Director will take over and attempt to offer correction and resolve the issue. The intention is to reunite the child to the classroom. Upon return, the child will be instructed in offering an apology to the teacher and the classroom for the disruption.

If the child continues to refuse correction, he/she will be removed from the classroom and will be sent home for the remainder of the day.

D. STEPS OF CORRECTION: (cont'd)

Violence

1st Offense: if a child is violent (harms others), the teacher will provide correction and instruction. The Director will remove the child from the classroom. (Staff will complete an incident report.)

Outside the classroom, the Director will take over and attempt to offer correction and resolve the issue. The intention is to reunite the child to the classroom. Upon return, the child will be instructed in offering an apology to the teacher and the classroom for the disruption.

2nd Offense: when/if the child becomes violent a second time, he/she will be removed from the preschool and his/her parent will be called to take them home for the remainder of the day. (Staff will complete an incident report).

After a 2nd day of early dismissal, the child will receive a 3 day suspension with a parent conference. Enrollment is reevaluated by staff at that time.

E. BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

Our desire is to come alongside parents as they build a foundation of faith for their children. We want each child to be successful in the classroom so they can learn. Parents will be notified of any behavior issue by the teacher and the Director as soon as possible. If the behavior persists, a conference will be set up to discuss the problem. If significant improvement is not observed, or if a child has recurring incidents of being removed from the classroom, we will schedule a conference to discuss the behavior and whether the child can remain enrolled in our program.

F. REMOVAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Evergreen Learning Center reserves the right to terminate any child's enrollment/involvement if any further incident occurs, or if leadership feels that any of the following conditions exist:

- Evergreen Learning Center cannot meet the child's needs. If the child is not yet ready for the group experience or whose needs cannot be met in a group setting (for example, child cannot get along with other children, unable to follow class rules and teacher instructions, requires more one-on-one attention from teachers for the majority of the day).
- The parents are not willing or able to work with the preschool to find an acceptable solution.
- The behavior endangers the well-being of other children, staff or volunteers.
- An excessive amount of the team's time and resources is needed to attend to a particular child's behavior modification, to the extent that it is depriving other children in the preschool.
- Repeated uncontrollable behavior without evidence of progress after steps of correction are taken.
- A child with behavior problems so severe they cannot be accommodated within the scope of the regular program and regular staff-child ratios.

G. INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Incident/Accident Reports are a means to gain insight on the severity and frequency of problem behavior so that children can be supported. It also serves as a tool to communicate incidents to the Director who can in turn, keep the parents informed.

Staff/volunteers will complete an Incident/Accident Report for the following:

- An accident that caused physical harm to the child/children.
- Consistent problematic behavior that disrupts the classroom.
- Violent behavior toward a teacher or child. (Can include biting, kicking, head-butting, choke holds, etc.)

Upon the receipt of the report, the director will notify the parent of the situation by email or phone call.

6. Illness, Medication, & Allergy Policies

The ELC will not accept children who are showing signs of illness, not only for the protection of your child, but also for the protection of the other children and teachers. Please inform the teacher at drop off of any medication the child was given prior to drop off (including cold or cough medicine, Tylenol, Ibuprofen).

Please do not bring your child to school when any of the following symptoms exist. Also, children must be symptom free for at least 24 hours if they display:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or more. Children must be fever free without the aid of fever-reducing medication.
2. Vomiting.
3. Diarrhea. Must be free of vomiting and/or diarrhea for 24 hours.
4. Heavy nasal discharge requiring frequent wiping.
5. Persistent, non-productive cough.
6. Sore throat.
7. Child has a cold or flu that is less than 4 days old.
8. Child, or sibling, has symptoms of a possible communicable disease (such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, strep throat, hand foot mouth, pink eye).
9. Child has a rash, not diagnosed as being non-contagious (must provide a doctor's note).
10. Child shows symptoms of having pink eye or other eye discharge.
11. Difficult or rapid breathing.
12. Head lice.

If child becomes ill during school hours, parent will be notified and will need to immediately pick up their child. **The child cannot return to the ELC until they have been symptom free for a full 24 hours.**

6. Illness, Medication, & Allergy Policies (cont'd)

We also ask that open wounds, large scrapes or cuts be properly bandaged. We may find it necessary to modify illness policies

It is our policy that NO medication will be administered by the staff. Please do not send any medication in backpacks, etc. This is a safety matter as children could have access to the bags. If your child does need medication during school hours (inhaler, epi-pen, insulin), please speak directly to the director about the situation.

If your child has a severe food allergy, ELC must be notified in written form to the director, giving a complete listing of known allergies. Also, written permission is required to post the known allergies in the classroom. If your child has severe allergies which would result in receiving life-saving medications, the ELC must be provided with an Allergy Action Plan. The Allergy Action Plan, will permit the staff to administer an epi-pen or other necessary medications and it must be completed and signed by the child's physician.

The ELC teachers will not administer sunscreen. If you wish for your child to use sunscreen, please apply prior to dropping them off.

7. Safety/Security

The security of your child is very important to us. Therefore, we take every precaution to provide a safe environment. Doors will be kept locked throughout the day. Late arrivals and early departures will have to be admitted only upon the discretion of the director and/or security staff. ***Doors are unlocked for drop off from 9:25-9:40 and for pick up from 2:20-2:35**. Children will not be allowed to be picked up by anyone except for the person(s) given permission by you on your enrollment form. If you need to change who can pick up your child, please notify the director in writing. Also, please let the person know we will be asking for photo identification. For security reasons, we will not dismiss a student to an older sibling. Siblings must be at least 16 years old to pick up the student. Each child must be signed out by the parent/guardian.

We have cameras in every room. We staff the rooms to always have 2 adults present. We also have a security guard who will be monitoring the doors and patrolling the area.

8. Emergency Plans

- In the event of a **tornado**, teachers will take the children to the safe room. The teachers and students will stay together in the safe room, until it is deemed safe to exit.
- In the event of a **fire**, the teachers and students will exit the building and go to the safe spot. They will stay together and will not return to the building. Parents will be notified and teachers will follow dismissal procedures.
- If we have an **intruder on campus** and need to lockdown, the teachers will follow protocols to turn off lights, lock the doors, and hide the children. All doors will be locked and no one will be allowed to enter. Lockdown will continue until the proper authorities give permission to resume normal activity.
- In the event of a **natural gas leak**-we will follow the same procedure as if there was a fire. We will go to the safe place outside of the building and wait until the proper authorities release us to enter the building again. If it is unsafe to enter the building, parents will be notified and we will follow dismissal procedures.
- In the event of a **missing child**: upon noticing a child is missing, the teacher will begin to search the room, the bathroom, etc. When the child hasn't been found within 10 minutes or less, the teacher will notify the director. At that time, the director will notify the parents and the church staff. Searching will spread out to the entire campus. If the child is still missing within 20 minutes or less, the police will be called. We will continue to search after calling parents and police and notify them if we were able to find the child. Once the police arrive, they will take over the search and all authority will be transferred to them. Within 90 days of the event, staff evaluations, policy evaluation, and the police report will be reviewed, as to prevent another incident.
- In the event of an **abducted child**: if any information reasonably indicates a child abduction has occurred, lockdown of the facility will be initiated immediately. The police will be notified as well as the parents. The church staff will also be made aware of the situation.

9. Accidents and Injuries

The health and safety of children, teachers, and staff are of upmost importance and are a high priority. Teachers are trained in CPR/First Aid. All teachers are responsible for preventing and controlling injuries and accidents to ensure compliance with all laws and regulations as they pertain to the safe operation of the center. If an injury occurs at the center, all information concerning the injury will be documented and reported to the Director and will be communicated to the parent. Children can be administered basic first aid when necessary. In a serious, life-threatening emergency, the director and/or teachers will call 911. In addition, the parent will be contacted and kept abreast of the situation. If the parent is unable to make it to the school in time to accompany child to the hospital, the director will stay with the child until the parent arrives. Upon enrollment you have the option to opt out of us taking your child to the emergency room or urgent care facility.

10. Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

The State of Oklahoma recognizes everyone over the age of 18 as a mandated reporter. If there is suspicion of abuse or neglect it must be reported. Those who in good faith report a suspicion of abuse or neglect by a family member, teacher, or staff are immune from any retaliation or other disciplinary actions for making the report. The teachers and teaching assistants will adhere to staff policies and procedures and at all times will place the safety of the children as their top priority. If there is any suspicion of abuse or neglect by one of the teachers, the incident will be investigated. If, after investigation, abuse or neglect occurred, termination will be immediate.

11. Safe Sleep Procedures

Safe Sleep

Providing a safe environment for the infants includes a safe sleep policy. We follow the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Consumer Safety Commission recommendations for safe sleep practices to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Therefore, our policy is as follows:

1. Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep. If they are able to roll over themselves there is no need to correct them. If there is a medical reason for an infant to sleep in an alternative position, the documentation must be written from the child's health provider and kept in the children's file. The written documentation must include the change in sleep position and the reason for the change listing all specific directions.
2. Nothing is in the infant's sleep environment (crib) except a fitted sheet. No soft items, pillows, blankets, etc. will be allowed.
3. Infants up to 3 months of age may be swaddled with written permission from the parent. However, the swaddling blanket will be removed when they are placed into the sleep environment.
4. If infants arrive at the center asleep, or have fallen asleep in equipment not intended for sleep (car seat carrier, stroller) they will be removed and placed in the appropriate sleep equipment.

12. Inclement Weather

In case of weather events, we will cancel classes when the area school districts deem it unsafe to have school. Please watch the local news stations for Bixby, Broken Arrow, and Union School district closings. If we need to cancel school for any other reason (power outage, no water, etc.), parents will be notified. We are unable to make up any days we are out for inclement weather. Due to licensing restrictions, we are unable to operate more than 15 hours a week.

13. Open Door Policy

As the director of the ELC, I value your opinions and your involvement in your child's life. If you have a concern or question, you can email me at agamble@evergreenbc.org, or call my cell number 918-813-6436. I can also be reached by calling the church office number, 918-369-6400 and leaving a message. I will return messages in a timely manner. You may also schedule a time to meet with me.

14. Communication Methods

We will use several different forms of communication to relay important information. First, please make sure we have updated email addresses, home addresses, and phone numbers. If you make any changes, please notify the director so we can update the records.

1. Each teacher will choose which app they prefer to use. Choices will be Band, Procare or Facebook. Each teacher will have a private group where you are able to obtain information regarding class events, if something special is happening, ask questions, etc. Teachers also send photos of the daily activities via their chosen messaging app.
2. The Director and your child's teachers can communicate with you individually by the phone number you provide and by email. If we need to get a hold of you for emergency reasons, or if your child becomes ill, we will use the phone numbers you listed for emergency contact.
3. When you sign in and sign out your child, there may be notes posted or given to you. Please read the information posted. In addition, notes may be sent home with your child in their folders/bags. Infant and toddler students will have daily notes sent home communicating with you as to their feeding, diapering, and sleeping times.
4. Teachers may send by email a monthly newsletter communicating with you on classroom events and what they are learning that month.

15. Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

All children must be dropped off and picked up at their classroom door. Each child will need to be signed in and signed out.

ARRIVAL:

- Parents may park in the lot behind the preschool building. **We will use the East entrance near the Preschool playground.** Parents must walk their child to the classroom and sign them in each morning. Students can begin entering the classroom at 9:25 a.m. The preschool entrance doors as well as the outside entrance doors will be locked beginning at 9:40. If you arrive after 9:40, you will need to use the entrance between the buildings and ring the doorbell to be allowed to enter.

DISMISSAL:

- Children must be picked up by 2:30. Parents will need to go to the classroom and sign their child out each class day. Children can be dismissed as early as 2:20.
- If you need to sign your child out earlier than 2:20, if possible, notify the teacher and/or director prior to the day. You will need to use the entrance between the buildings and ring the doorbell to be allowed entrance. After entering the building you will turn to the right and proceed to the Preschool Kiosk area. The receptionist there will notify us you are here.
- Children are only allowed to be picked up by the person(s) designated on the enrollment forms. Anyone picking up your child will need to show photo identification.
- Beginning at 2:40, if children are not picked up late fees will be charged at $1.00 per minute.

Teachers are busy engaging with the children during drop off and pick up times. Please do not enter the classrooms but drop off at the door. Also, please do not allow your child to run ahead to their classrooms. We are encouraging the children to use their walking feet in the church building, we appreciate your help in this.

Arrival & Dismissal

16. Items to Bring

1. **Backpack**-Each child will need a backpack to carry items back and forth. Make sure your child's bag is clearly labeled with his/her name.
2. **Lunch**-Please pack a lunch each day. We will provide a snack later in the day (graham cracker, animal crackers, or goldfish). We will not be providing a lunch. Please limit food to what does not have to be heated up as the teachers will not have a microwave inside their rooms. Also, label your child's lunchbox with their name. ***If your child has a food allergy and cannot have the snack we will serve, please pack a snack for your child as well as their lunch.
3. **Water bottle**-Each student will need a labeled water bottle; younger children and babies need bottles and sippy cups. For bottles, please provide formula and instructions on when your baby usually eats and how many ounces at one feeding. If you are breastfeeding, please either send breastmilk in a cold storage pack or plan on being here to feed your baby at the necessary feeding times.
4. **Change of clothing**-Please pack a complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, shirt, and pants) seasonally/weather appropriate. Even older children occasionally have accidents or liquids are spilled, messy art projects, etc. Please pack all the clothing in a gallon sized Ziploc bag. The soiled items will be placed in the bag and then returned to your child's backpack.
5. **Folder** to allow teachers to send home papers/notes in. You can send items back in folders to teachers as well.
6. Infants & Toddlers will need **diapers and/or pull-ups** in their backpack. Please, provide wipes as well.
7. **Nap mat** for ages 13 months and up. We will offer rest/quiet time. Small blanket for them to cover up with and, if needed, a special stuffed animal
8. Pacifiers, if your infant uses one.
9. Please leave all other toys at home as it is a distraction. Also, we won't be responsible for any lost or damaged property.

Please label the above items with your child's name. **

Items Needed

17. Potty-Training

Children must be potty-trained to be enrolled in the 3 year old classrooms. They must be fully independent, which includes:

- Your child must be able to recognize and verbally tell the teacher that he/she needs to use the bathroom before he/she needs to go.
- He/she must be able to independently get on and off the toilet.
- He/she must be able to pull down his/her pants and underwear, and get dressed without assistance.
- He/she must be able to wipe/cleanse without assistance. No one is permitted to touch your child.
- Teachers and assistants are permitted to remind the child to take care of cleaning himself or herself the best he/she can. Teachers and assistants can remind children to wipe, pull up clothing, flush, and wash hands.

Please send your child with an extra set of clothing in a gallon Ziploc bag to be kept in their backpack in case of an accident. Clothing that is easy to get on and off helps immensely.

Potty Training

18. Rest Time

Rest/Quiet Time will be offered and children will be encouraged to rest. The duration of the rest time depends upon the child and their age. The infants will be using cribs. The 1 year olds and up will need to bring a rest mat. The vinyl mats will stay here for the duration of the school year. We will be placing their name on their mat. They will be sanitized on a regular schedule. The Threads Ministry have made nap mat covers for us to use. These covers and crib sheets will be laundered each week. The sheets are washed on Thursdays. Cloth rolled up nap mats and blankets you send with your child will be sent home on Thursdays to be washed and returned on Mondays.

19. Daily Schedules

The four year old classes will attend chapel with the Evergreen Academy students on Thursdays. We have special classes for each day of the week. These classes are Music, Motor Lab, and Spanish. Motor Lab is only for ages 2 and up. The one year old through four year old classes participate in music and Spanish classes. The classroom teacher will maintain a schedule including academic time, center play time, outside (weather permitting) play time or play in one of the inside playrooms, meal and snack time, as well as rest/quiet time.

Special Occassions

20. Classroom Visitors

We respect the parental role and influence of the parent in young children's lives. We value your input and encourage parental involvement. However, our teachers and staff undergo background checks to be allowed in the classroom. Therefore, for safety reasons, we aren't allowing parents to serve in the rooms. We have other ways for parents to volunteer which may include preparing crafts, making copies, special events, etc. There will be special events, for example holiday parties, where parents will be encouraged to attend.

21. Birthday Celebrations

If you would like to drop off treats for your child's class for their birthdays, we ask that it be commercially prepared and unopened. We aren't allowed to serve home-made items. Also, for allergy related issues, please notify the child's teacher at least 2 days in advance, so an arrangement of a treat for those children can be made.