



2024-2025 PARENT HANDBOOK

Philosophy

The WCS Preschool believes that “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;” (Psalm 24:1). Our youngest students enjoy an environment of fun, warmth, security, exploration, and discovery. We’re teaching our students that their wider world is filled with God’s amazing handiwork and is a place where they can be confident of his unfailing love.

Statement of Purpose

The preschool’s purpose is to provide an atmosphere that encourages social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth and development of the child in a calm, fun, relaxed atmosphere of Christian nurturing.

Goals

WCS Preschool strives to meet the following objectives for children in the daily program:

1. make a successful transition to school
2. inspire confidence in a group setting
3. encourage joy and wonderment in learning
4. develop security and a feeling of success in activities
5. foster self-expression and creativity
6. cultivate self-control and responsibility
7. provide small group programs for optimal learning
8. provide a kindergarten readiness educational experience

Hours and Admission Policies

WCS Preschool holds full day (8:30-2:30pm) classes Monday through Friday. The class schedule is as follows:

- 3-year old classes:**
 - o Tuesday/Thursday
 - o Monday/Wednesday/Friday
 - o Monday-Friday
- 4-year old classes:**
 - o Monday/Wednesday/Friday
 - o Monday-Friday

Early drop off is available to you beginning at 7:30am. Children will be encouraged to sign in and play until the rest of their friends arrive. Children must be accompanied into the building by an adult and “signed-in” for the session on the daily attendance Google sheet. We cannot be responsible for children who are dropped off at the door or in the parking lot to enter on their own.

Aftercare is available Monday-Friday until 5:45pm. Information and registration will be shared prior to the start of the school year.

Daily Program and Routines

Description of Daily Schedule:

- Students may be dropped off between 7:30 and 8:30. During this time we offer the children a time of **“free play,”** which is important for helping the children transition daily from home to the preschool setting. “Free play” offers general playtime with toys in addition to table top activities related to our theme of the week. These options include: fine motor activities to help develop the muscles used for writing, drawing and other skills; crafts; literacy and numeracy activities.
- We end “free play” at approximately 8:40 with a time of clean-up and then spend a few minutes in our **“morning meeting”** where we talk together about our day and share thoughts and ideas.
- The remainder of the morning is spent with the children participating in various activities such as **circle time, focused centers, whole group activities,** and **small and large group activities.**
- **Music, Library, Bible and PE** are offered as “specials” on either a weekly or bi-weekly schedule.
- The children have a **snack time** during the morning.
- We end the morning with **outdoor recess,** weather permitting, followed by **lunch.**
- Afternoons include more time for **free play, outdoor play, quiet time** activities, **rest time** for P3 students, exposure to our **Suzuki violin program** for P4 students, and **closing circle time.** .

A. Arrival and Dismissal – You are welcome to drive to the parking area at the rear of the building and enter through the rear doors. Children must be accompanied into the building by an adult and “signed-in” for the session on the daily attendance sheet.

B. Drop Off and Pick Up with Little Sibs - To keep drop off and pick up running smoothly please make sure that all little siblings stay with you at all times. This will eliminate the possibility of children being injured, getting lost in the crowd or leaving the classroom unnoticed. Our classroom is not baby-proofed - we can only guarantee that the items in it are appropriate for children ages 3 and older.

C. Field Trips - An important part of the preschool’s curriculum is to expose the children to many varied experiences within the community. Therefore, many walking field trips and nature walks are incorporated into all classes. Additional trips into the community will be announced in monthly newsletters.

D. Snacks and Lunches - Parents are responsible for supplying a daily snack and drink for their child(ren). There are two options for lunch – you may either pack your own or hot lunch may be purchased. The cost for preschool lunch is \$4.00 per lunch and may be paid using your FACTS Family Portal.

E. Food Allergies – Parents will be alerted if there is a child in the classroom with food allergies. The WCS Food Policy is posted on our website and outlines foods that may be brought for birthdays and other special occasions.

F. Authorization to Pick Up a Child – Children **will not** be released at **any time** to a person not authorized by the parent/guardian. **WE MUST HAVE WRITTEN**

AUTHORIZATION if anyone other than a person listed in the child's file will be picking him/her up.

- G. Snow and Cold Weather Policy** – We believe that fresh air and outdoor play are important for healthy childhood development. When cold weather and snow arrive, we **do** still go out for recess! (We go outside as long as the temperature is 17F or above with the windchill.) All students must have boots, snow pants, and a warm jacket, as well as hats and gloves. We ask that you send snow pants and boots in a separate bag - large reusable shopping bags are ideal. The bag, boots, snow pants, coats and all accessories **must be labeled with your child's name on them**. A spare pair of socks is always useful to keep in backpacks as well. If your child comes to school wearing snow boots, please be sure he/she also has a pair of shoes or sneakers to wear indoors as wet boots can be very slippery when worn indoors.
- H. Snow Days** – In the event of a snowstorm or slippery road conditions, school may be cancelled. WCS follows the Northbridge Public Schools cancellation schedule. If NPS is closed, WCS Preschool will not hold classes. In the event of a 2 hour school delay, classes will be held – dropoff will be between 9:30-10:00.
- I. Early Dismissal Days** – Occasionally, WCS schedules Professional Development ½ days with dismissal for K-12 students at 11:30. On these early dismissal days, preschool students will be ready for dismissal at 11:20 to help parents avoid additional traffic congestion in the parking lot. **Aftercare is available on early dismissal days.**

Parent Involvement

Children who are supported in educational programs by parents or guardians have statistically been successful when entering a regular school program. In view of this, as well as our own educational philosophy, we strongly encourage active parental participation in the program. All parents are encouraged to participate in areas such as field trips, and especially in performances and programs put on by the children.

- A. Parent-Teacher Conferences** – Teachers will make daily observations as to how individual children are progressing. Parent-teacher conferences are held once a year (in November) and are arranged through a sign-up procedure. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher directly, and at any time, should any concerns arise. Since a cooperative relationship between family and school is desired for the children, we suggest that any major changes or events in your child's life that may impact behavior at school, be shared with the Lead Teacher or Preschool Manager. Parents are encouraged to visit the preschool at any time, however, advance notice is recommended. If the teachers are not free to talk with you, please understand that your children come first during class time, and the teachers will be happy to talk with you after the children are dismissed.
- B. Parent Volunteer Opportunities** – During the school year, there are many ways for you to volunteer: laminating, cutting, copying, organizing Scholastic Book Orders, helping with special events and so on. At the beginning of August and at Back To School Night, you will have opportunities to sign up for ways that best fit your schedule.

Child's Personal Items

- A. Daily Clothing** – When dressing your child for preschool please think of your child's comfort, rather than fashion!
- Please provide simple clothing that is free from complicated fastenings as this helps to promote independence.
 - Children work with messy art materials so it is best to provide clothing that is washable.
 - We use the outdoor playground so please provide clothing and shoes that are sturdy. **Children will not be allowed on climbing structures if they are wearing Crocs, "Jelly Shoes," beach shoes or sandals, due to safety concerns.**
 - On PE days, children must have sneakers to wear in the gym.
 - Sweaters or jackets should be worn to school on cooler days; children may "shed layers" as the days warm up, if necessary.
 - In preschool we go outside for recess even on cold days unless the temperature is below 17F (including the wind chill). Please dress your child for outside play according to the day's weather.
 - To avoid tears and/or the constant need for clothes shopping, **PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING ITEMS, ESPECIALLY HATS, BOOTS AND MITTENS.** We try hard to make sure that everyone's clothing gets back home again safely!
- B. Extra Clothing** – In case of an accident, your child should always have a complete change of clothes - season and weather appropriate - in his/her backpack. (Shorts and a tee shirt are a bit chilly during the winter!) Please be sure to include socks!
- C. Backpacks** - All children need to bring a backpack (labeled with her/his name) to school daily. Even though it might seem big at first, please get your child a standard sized backpack without wheels. Parents should check backpacks daily for their child's "work" as well as for any important information coming home from the teachers.
- D. Toys From Home** - Toys may be brought into school for special days or in the Letter Bag and should be clearly marked with your child's name. We ask that you **leave all other toys at home or in your car.** If your child would like to keep a stuffed animal at school to cuddle with during rest time, please make sure you label it. Guns and other toys that promote aggression **are not** allowed within our school. Please check your child's backpack for stowaway toys before arriving at school.

Assessments

Teachers assess student progress twice each year - in October and in April. The October assessments give the teachers a benchmark as to where the children are academically, physically, and developmentally at the beginning of the year. The same assessments are conducted in April to reflect each student's areas of growth over the year. We do not compare any student's results with other students but, instead, focus on each child individually.

Discipline Policy

Clear limits shall be set to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. Discipline is consistent and is based on an understanding of the individual needs of each child.

Discipline is directed towards the goal of maximizing the growth, development and protection of the group and each individual in it.

1. No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse.
2. Corporal punishment shall not be used, including spanking.
3. No child shall be denied food as a form of punishment.
4. No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

When a child continually expresses inappropriate behavior, the following steps will be taken:

1. Eye-to-eye contact with the child, while explaining why his/her actions are not acceptable.
2. Diverting his/her attention to a different activity.
3. Removal from the group for a quiet time. A quiet time situation shall be used until the child is ready or able to return to the group activities. In such cases the child will be escorted to the quiet chair by a teacher. The teacher shall explain to the child the reason for the quiet time, and shall remain in the immediate area until the child is ready to come back to the group. Our quiet time chair is within the classroom and no child will ever be in an area by him/herself.

Transportation Policy

Parent volunteers may be asked to drive when a field trip is scheduled. All parents are responsible for providing a car/booster seat for the child/children. No child will be transported without a proper car/booster seat. All parents will sign a permission slip stating that their child has permission to attend the trip and that they understand children are being transported in private cars.

In an emergency when a child needs to be transported by an ambulance, if the parents are not available, the Preschool Manager or Lead Teacher will accompany the child in the ambulance. The WCS school nurse will contact the child's parents immediately to determine the appropriate medical facility to which the child should be transported. The parents will make arrangements to meet the child at the hospital.

Health Procedures

A copy of the complete Health Care Policy is available from the Preschool Manager upon request.

- A. **Requirements for Health History** – Under Dept. of Public Health requirements, a complete health history must be submitted at the beginning of the school year. This will include a physician's report from a physical exam, including up-to-date immunizations and the results of a lead screening test. All health forms will be kept on file in the WCS nurse's office.
- B. **Removal of a Sick Child From Class** - In those circumstances in which a child may need to be sent home due to illness, the child will be brought to the WCS nurse's clinic until the parent or emergency contact is able to pick up the child. This is done to minimize the spreading of a contagious illness.

- C. Emergency Procedures** – In case of accidental injury, we will immediately contact a parent. If we cannot reach a parent we will call the listed emergency contact person and the child’s physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance. Until the arrival of a parent, or an ambulance, the WCS school nurse will be in charge of the child’s care. Parents will assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by our insurance. The school keeps a parent/guardian signed medical form for each child, agreeing to this provision. It is to the child’s benefit that parents keep the school notified of any changes of phone numbers, emergency notification and other pertinent information.
- D. Medication** - If a child is taking regularly-scheduled medication, parents must administer it before school begins and/or after the school day ends. If emergency medication is necessary (i.e. for allergies to bee stings, asthma, etc.), parents must have completed the appropriate medical information for the WCS nurse who will advise and administer medication as necessary. **Preschool staff will not dispense medicine at any time.**
- E. Insurance** - WCS Preschool is insured through the Whitinsville Christian School’s general policy.

Plan for Emergency Situations

In the event of fire, loss of power, heat, water or any other reason that would call for evacuation of the building, the children will follow the emergency evacuation plan, exiting the building onto the playground until parents can be contacted to pick children up. In case of inclement weather, the children will proceed to the Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church.

In the event of a fire, the Emergency Evacuation Plan that is posted by all exits will be followed in order to evacuate the building. Once everyone has been safely evacuated, parents will be contacted to arrange for pick-up of the children at school. In case of inclement weather the children will proceed to the Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church to wait for parents to pick them up there.

Tuition

1. **Application Fee** - A non-refundable application fee of \$50.00 per child will be required along with your completed online application. This fee increases to \$75 after March 15.
2. **Enrollment Fee** - A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$300 per family will be required to officially enroll your child. An online “Invitation to Enroll” will be emailed to you upon completion and return of your registration form. This enrollment fee secures your child’s seat in the class option you select.
3. **Payment of Tuition** - Tuition may be paid in full before August 1st to receive a 2% discount, or in ten equal installments from August - May.

4. Monthly Fees

P3 Full Day (Tuesday/Thursday 8:30-2:30)	\$502.50/month*
P3 or P4 Full Day (Monday/Wednesday/Friday 8:30-2:30)	\$715/month*
P3 or P4 Full Day 5-Day (Monday-Friday 8:30-2:30)	\$1,100/month*

5. Tuition Reduction Incentive Program (TRIP) - TRIP is a way for parents to help reduce their family tuition costs. Get more information regarding TRIP by visiting www.whitinsvillechristian.org or by calling Dawn Lefrancois in the Elementary Office, 508-372-3246.

6. Credit Days - When a child is absent from school, financial credit cannot be given for missed days. Missed school days may not be made up.

Toileting Policy

Children are allowed to use the toilet at any time during class and are accompanied to the bathroom by a staff member, if needed. The following policies apply:

1. Children will be supervised during toileting.
2. No child will be punished, verbally abused or humiliated for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.
3. Children will wash their hands with soap and running water after toileting, before snacks and before handling food.
4. Staff members will also wash their hands with running water after assisting children with toileting.
5. Individual paper towels will be used to dry hands.
6. Clothing soiled at school will be placed in a plastic bag and stored apart from other items.
7. If a child is consistently having accidents at school, a meeting will be scheduled with parents to determine a plan of action.

Termination Policy

WCS Preschool will use the following procedure for terminating a child from the program. A child may be terminated under the following circumstances:

1. The health and safety of the child cannot be assured.
2. The child's developmental needs cannot be met. Parents will be notified in writing and at a conference, when possible, about the circumstances, including the reasons for termination. A copy of the letter will be placed in the child's file. The Preschool Manager will inform the parents of the availability of information and referral for other services.

When a child is terminated from the program, whether initiated by the school or the parent(s), the teachers will talk to the child and his/her classmates about the child leaving the program. The discussion will be done in an age appropriate manner and include simple reasons for the departure.

Affirmative Action Statement

It is the policy of WCS to maintain a school environment that is free from discrimination and to conduct its educational practices, admissions program, financial aid policies, hiring, and other school-administrative programs on the basis of an individual's qualifications and abilities. The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (unless it is required as a bona fide occupational qualification), sex, national origin, age, marital status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law, unless a particular status protected by federal, state, or local laws contradict the deeply held religious convictions of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC).