

Lehigh Christian Academy



Play • Learn • Grow



Pre-Kindergarten Handbook

2016-2017

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." Matthew 19:14

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LCA PRE-KINDERGARTEN PARENT HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION

Lehigh Christian Academy's Pre-Kindergarten, located at Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church, 1151 S. Cedar Crest Boulevard, Allentown, Pennsylvania, is a ministry for children who will be 4 years old by September 1st; students also must be fully potty trained to enter the Pre-K program. A full-day program is available during the school year running from 8:30am-3:15pm, as well as a half-day program running from 8:30am-11:30am. Both the full and half-day programs run Monday-Friday.

For more information about the program you can contact LCA's office at 610-776-7301 or visit our website at www.lcamustangs.org.

This handbook was created to acquaint you with the policies and procedures of our Pre-K program. These policies and procedures are established to assure your child's safety and to allow teachers to work with your student most effectively. This is one tool of many to keep you informed. We will also provide you with monthly calendars of important events and dates, emails, and individual notes. While these written forms of communication are important and convenient, personal communication is vital. Please do not hesitate to contact us by phone (610-776-3301 ext 230) or email (lmertus@lcamustangs.org). While a quick question is appropriate when dropping your child off, arrangements should be made to conference with deeper questions or concerns.

THE PROGRAM

What is a Christian Pre-Kindergarten? It is a special place where the values of Christian parenting and Christian church are continued and supported; a place where the child is known as an important and valuable creation of God as the staff is deeply committed to his/her spiritual development; and finally, a place where the child learns and grows. We strive to help your child develop in these areas:

SPIRITUAL - Bible content is taught as well as practical application of biblical principles. Showing love, kindness and sharing are integrated with all activities to encourage your child to center their life around God and to build Christian character.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL - This area fosters the development of a child's positive self-image as God's unique creation, builds feelings of security when away from home, and promotes positive attitudes toward others, family, authority, self, and even toward learning.

COGNITIVELY - An early love of learning and a sound foundation in academic skills are fostered through activities in lessons in all subject areas designed to promote critical thinking through discovery.

CREATIVITY - Discovery play, art, block building, and field trips are provided to expand and give expression to the child's native creativity and enhance his/her awareness of God's world.

SENSORY MOTOR - Large motor skills are developed through activities such as running, jumping, and climbing, along with fine motor skills through activities such as doing puzzles, painting, cutting, drawing and stringing beads. All of these activities promote overall physical development important for proper health and learning.

SELF DISCIPLINE - Discipline is a biblical mandate. The young child needs to be taught and guided to live in godly ways. The child also needs to be shepherded by his/her parents and caregivers. Because behavior flows from the thoughts and attitudes of the heart, inappropriate behavior and their underlying motivations will be addressed in the classroom. We will endeavor to work closely with the home to develop and encourage appropriate, godly character. Corrective discipline will be given in a godly way with the goal of leading the child toward repentance, which is a change of heart and behavior. Respect and obedience are also basic biblical mandates. Our emphasis will be on developing these characteristics and encouraging love and kindness in the life of each young student.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL/PICK-UP

When dropping off your child, or picking them up, please note that the speed limit in the parking lot is 5 mph. This is for everyone's safety. The parking lot is also where students have recess time so proceed cautiously.

Arrival: 8:15am - 8:25am

After entering driveway, bear left, circle around building and park in front lot. Enter through the Ramp Door, door #2 by the flag pole. Be sure to hold your child's hand when crossing the parking lot. Doors lock promptly at 8:30am. All entrances and exits need to be through the Office Door, marked LCA entrance, (immediately to the left of door #3) after 8:30am. If you arrive late or come to help in the class during school hours, you must enter through the office door and get a visitor's badge. If you arrive prior to 8:15am, please wait in the ramp door hallway until the appropriate time.

Half-Day Dismissal: 11:30am

After entering driveway, bear left and circle around building. As you come around to the front of the building, form line in front of door #3, by the pillars. Half-day Kindergarten dismisses at the same time and will also be using this lane. We will bring your child out to you.

Full-Day Dismissal: 3:15pm

After entering driveway, bear left and circle around building. As you come around to the front of the building, keep to the left side of the islands. A line will form in front of door #3, by the pillars. You may stay in this line or park and come to the doors. An LCA staff member will greet you with instructions at this point. Please note that busses use the "driveway" between the building and the parking lot, so this lane must stay clear of cars and people.

Parking - Parking for all activities such as field trips, class help, or programs will be in the front parking lot. Please do not park in the area marked with cones as this is the playground area for elementary students.

Entrance - If you need to come into the building during the school day for any reason, enter through the LCA entrance door (left of door #3). You must check in at the office to obtain a visitor's tag.

Authorized Pick-ups - No child will be released to a person not authorized by the parent. Therefore, it is imperative that you send in a note or call the office if other arrangements have been made for picking up your child.

HEALTH/ILLNESS/EMERGENCIES

Health - Be sure your child gets adequate sleep and a nutritious breakfast prior to the start of each day. During cold and flu seasons, we will ask that children wash their hands upon arrival.

Illness - Your child's physical health is important to all, so please do not send your child to school if he/she has vomited and/or has had a fever or diarrhea within 24 hours of the school day. If your child contracts anything contagious, please notify the school promptly. The child may return to school when cleared by a doctor. If necessary, you will be called should your child develop or exhibit symptoms of illness during the school day.

Emergencies - An emergency contact form must be filled out before the start of school. The forms are done within the online Enrollment/Re-enrollment packets in RenWeb, our school data system. The office staff is available to help you with this if you have not already completed the Enrollment packet. It is very important to update this information with the office when changes occur. Should a serious injury or an emergency occur, an immediate attempt will be made to contact the parent, then the emergency contact, or if they are unavailable, the child's physician. If necessary, an ambulance will be called and the school nurse or a staff member will remain with your child until you or your emergency contact can be reached.

CLOTHING/REST TIME/MISC.

Clothing - Label all removable clothing clearly to avoid losses or mix-ups. This includes hats, mittens, boots, sweaters, and such. Please dress your child for the weather.

Please dress your child in sturdy, wash and wear play clothes with fasteners your child can manage. Play can be hard on clothing, and painting can be messy and may stain. LCA's prekindergarten guidelines also ask that clothes are neat, clean, and modest; girls should wear shorts or leggings under dresses. Shorts are acceptable in warm weather.

Accidents happen so we do keep extra clothes in Pre-K classroom. If your child should happen to come home in clothing that is not his/hers, please wash it and return to school ASAP. You may also choose to keep an extra set of clothing in your child's tote bag.

For safety, footwear should be "stay-on" shoes with non-slip soles. Because we will be using the gym and going outside, sneakers are preferred. Crocks and sandals have proven to be dangerous.

Please provide sweatshirts or jackets even on the sunny days to be prepared for the sudden changes in weather or air-conditioning.

Full-day Rest Time- Rest time will follow lunch each day. Rest mats are ordered through the school. They will be sent home at the end of each week to be laundered and must be returned at the beginning of the week; usually mats will be sent home on Fridays and will need to return on Mondays. Feel free to send in a small cover and/or stuffed animal for rest time. The length of rest time will be determined by the children's needs and may change throughout the year.

Tote Bag- No backpacks please. Children will have projects, papers, and "treasures" to bring home almost daily. It is important that each child have a tote bag and folder every day in which to carry the items home. Be sure that the bag is large enough to easily accommodate a 9-1/2 x 12 folder and lunch box if you are full day. We ask that totes are checked by you daily and that it only contains items needed for the school.

SNACKS/LUNCH/WATER

Snack Leader - Parents will be asked to provide a morning snack on assigned days for the entire class. This will be your child's *Snack Leader* day. Please send in healthy snacks and save sweets for birthdays and other special days. This will help your child develop better eating habits. Suggestions for snacks include apple wedges, orange slices, raisins, watermelon, muffins, carrot sticks, cheese and crackers, cheese chunks, pretzels and things of that nature. We ask that all snacks be nut free. We will make you aware of any other allergies as soon as possible. Leftover, nonperishable snacks are often kept at school and used at later dates. Please let us know if you would prefer to have leftovers sent home.

Full-Day Lunch and Afternoon Snack - Please provide your child with a healthy lunch and afternoon snack each day. Include needed utensils and place items in bags or containers that the children are capable of opening. We will send home any uneaten portions in order for you to judge what your child will eat. We will be eating lunch in our classroom, but because afternoon snack will sometimes be eaten outside, we ask that it is in a container or bag that they can manage.

Water - Please provide an easy open, leak free, water bottle every day. Your child will be encouraged to drink plenty of water throughout the day as well as at snack and lunch time.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthday Celebrations - A date close to your child's birthday will be reserved for you to bring a special birthday snack and will be indicated on the snack calendar. The birthday child may also bring a small birthday favor for all of his/her classmates to give out at dismissal time. If your child's birthday falls in the summer, he/she will be assigned a school birthday that occurs near the end of the year in May or June.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

All major and some minor holidays are a part of the Pre-K program. The emphasis will be appropriately biblical as well as fun. Ghosts, witches, and that which emphasize violence are excluded.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences - Time is set aside in January for the Pre-K teacher to meet individually with all parents. This is an important conference as we will discuss your child's readiness for Kindergarten. However, please feel free to contact your teacher if a conference is needed before then.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips - Pre-K will go on several field trips as an extension of the curriculum. These trips may include the fire department, a farm, nature walks, and the fish hatchery, to name a few. A form for each trip must be completed and returned in a timely matter so appropriate arrangements can be made. While some field trips involve a cost, some are free. As bussing is not available for this age group and the law requires car seats, we will need your labeled car seat for each trip you are not attending. Volunteers will be needed and appreciated to help transport and care for the children on these field trips. If your child is unable to come on a field trip due to illness or other reasons, please call ASAP.

PARENT HELP/VOLUNTEER CLEARANCES

Please feel free to volunteer prayers, time, talents, materials, constructive ideas, suggestions, and yourself at LCA. We need each other and God's help as we mutually bring our children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." To stay in accordance with the state laws, police clearances are needed in order to help in the classroom, go on field trips, and to volunteer within the school. They only need to be done once every three years. It is recommended that you fill these out as soon as possible since you will be unable to volunteer at LCA until we receive your clearances. To fill out the clearances, please visit www.lcamustangs.org, "Parent News," and "Volunteer Clearances." Feel free to contact the school office if you have any questions.

SHOW AND TELL

Show and Tell - We will have various scheduled Show and Tell days throughout the year relating to the topics discussed during that month. Please keep these days as a special time to bring items from home. Please keep toys at home on regular classroom days.

SNOW DAYS

Snow days - Whenever LCA is closed, the Pre-K will also be closed. On days where there is a two-hour delay, the pre-k schedule will be as follows: Half-Day will be from 10:30am-12:30pm and Full-Day will be from 10:30am-3:15pm. LCA school closing information is aired over stations WAEB AM790, B-104FM, WFMZ-69 TV, WLEV-100.7FM, and our website: www.lcamustangs.org under the "School Closings" tab. Voice messages are also sent out to the phone number you indicated in RenWeb, which is usually the home phone although you may select both the home and cell phone options if desired.

SCHOOL-WIDE GUIDELINES

1. Please do not bring toy weapons or any sharp objects including things like pointed umbrellas or plastic knives to school.
2. The LCA policy permits no studs or earrings to be worn by boys. Due to safety concerns, girls may wear studs or close-fitting earrings, no loops or dangling types, please.
3. No gum at school, please, so it will not end up embedded in the carpet. Candy and such treats are best at home or after class.
4. Children will not be allowed to deliberately hurt themselves or others as well as they are not to damage or destroy property. They will be helped to care for things and respect oneself and each other as valued creations of God.
5. Running and loud voices will generally be saved for the outdoors where there is more space. Please remind children to walk to classroom when arriving.
6. Please do not allow your child to bring money to school unless requested by the teachers for field trips or projects to avoid any chance of choking incidents, loss, etc.