

Pungo Christian Academy

Preschool and Childcare

Parent Handbook

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## Purpose and Goals

The purpose of Pungo Christian Academy Preschool and Childcare Center is to provide an enriching learning experience to individual children within a group setting while serving as a resource to working parents. The Preschool program will serve children three years of age through age five and operates from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Childcare is available for children between the hours of 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

### Program Goals:

*Physical:* Children will acquire basic gross motor and fine motor skills.

\*Children will enhance physical skills suitable for their age level.

*Cognitive:* Children will acquire cognitive skills that lead to lifelong learning.

\*Children will reach their full potential in age-appropriate learning skills.

*Intellectual:* Children will acquire skills to improve their ability to reason.

\*Children will become competent individuals.

*Social/emotional:* Children will develop a positive self-concept and concern for others.

\*Children will learn their unique place in the world around them.

*Creative:* Children will develop an appreciation for cultural differences.

\*Children will develop an appreciation for artistic differences.

Children will experience learning as fun as they seek to satisfy their natural curiosity.

Children will form relationships with caring adults in a setting, which fosters respect, not fear.

## Philosophy

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. It provides experiences that enrich and enhance each child's cognitive, social, emotional, physical and creative development. Within the preschool and childcare daily schedule, each child has opportunities to create, explore the environment, learn problem solving, personal interaction skills, and learn concepts through firsthand experiences. Children develop a positive self-concept through a balance of self and teacher directed activities both indoors and outdoors. The staff serves as a positive role model and provides care that is supportive, nurturing, warm, and responsive to each child's individual needs. We respect parents as the primary and most important provider of care and nurturing. We believe parents and teachers are partners in children's care and education. Our program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or other school administered programs. Children with physical handicaps or special needs will be admitted into our program providing our facility can meet their needs and our staff has adequate training to administer the best possible care. This decision is at the sole discretion of the childcare center.

## Operational Policies and Procedures

### Open House

We have Open House in March for the upcoming school year. This is an opportunity for families to visit the center, meet the teachers, pay the \$100 non-refundable registration fee, complete the enrollment contract, and receive their Pre-K packet. All paperwork must be completed before the first day of school. Tuition rates are included in the Pre-K packet.

Paperwork to be completed before the child's first day of school:

- Application for enrollment
- Medical report/immunization record
- Documentation of receipt of discipline policy
- PCA questionnaire
- Pickup list
- Authorization for use of sunscreen/insect repellent
- Authorization for transportation (bus/van riders)
- Documentation of receipt of center operational policies, summary of childcare laws
- Emergency medical care authorization
- Off premises activities authorization
- Permission to transport/participate in off premise activities
- Authorization for photo use
- Documentation of receipt: prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma policies
- Supervision of children
- Notification of smoking and tobacco restriction

### Enrollment

To provide the highest quality of care given to all children, the center will accept enrollment within the confinements of a student to teacher ratio of no more than 10 to 1 for 3-year olds and no more than 13 to 1 for 4-year olds.

### Absences/Withdrawal Policy

Absences due to illness, vacation trips, etc. will not be excluded from tuition charges. Written notification for withdrawal of a child must be given no fewer than two weeks

prior to the child's last day of school. If your child misses two weeks of school and the Center is not notified, the child will be automatically withdrawn.

#### Hours of Service

Our program accommodates children three to five years of age and who are fully potty trained. Our school day is 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with the exception of PCA's scheduled holiday and teacher workday closings. We offer before school from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and after school from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for an additional fee. Please refer to the Calendar of Events for the yearly schedule.

Parents/authorized adults must pick up their child by 5:00 p.m. or a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each minute after 5:05 p.m. If the Center is not contacted by the parent/authorized adult or is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. the child will be considered abandoned. A protected services worker will be notified to pick up your child.

#### Safe Arrival/Departure/Transportation

A parent or other authorized adult must drop off & pick up the child at the Pre-K door each day. A staff member will meet the parent or authorized adult outside the door. The child must be checked in and out daily through the Brightwheel App. The Center's responsibility does not begin until the child and adult have been recognized by a teacher as being present. If you have access to an established bus/van route, transportation can be provided at an additional fee, if there is availability. Parents must provide a car seat to stay on the bus/van throughout the school year.

#### Dietary/Nutritional Policies

The cost of lunch and snacks are included in the tuition payment. Daily lunches and snacks meet the requirements as prescribed under the nutritional requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Meals are prepared on site in the school cafeteria. Family style meals consisting of a meat or meat substitute, vegetable, fruit, bread, and milk are served. Juice is served with snacks. Staff must be notified of any special diets or restrictions with a doctor's note.

#### Outdoor Play

The outdoor learning environment is an essential extension to the classroom. Active play is important for the well-being of young children. Children should be dressed appropriately for outdoor play. When outdoor play is not possible due to inclement weather, children will play in the gym, if possible.

#### Rest Time

The Center provides each child with a cot and cot sheet. Rest time last approximately 1 ½

to 2 hours. Parents must provide a beach towel or small blanket which is to be taken home weekly, washed, dried, and returned to school.

#### Family/Parent Involvement

The day-to-day operations of our Center could not continue without the support and involvement of our families. Many areas need volunteers, and we encourage you to fill a need. We invite you to be a guest speaker, share special music or reading, eat lunch with us, share a craft project with the children, participate in field trips or volunteer for special activities. If a parent has a complaint, they must follow the correct chain of command: first, the teacher, secondly, the Head of School and finally, the Board of Directors as a final resort.

#### Supplies and Personal Belongings

Parents are asked to provide an extra set of clothes for the child with the child's name clearly written on them and placed in a clear plastic sealable bag. All shoes must have backs on them. Children are expected to dress appropriately for the season. Pre-K students are to follow the dress code found in the PCA student handbook. The Center provides adequate toys for all children, therefore, please do not allow your child to bring toys from home. We are not responsible for the loss or damage of personal items brought to the Center.

#### Discipline Policy

We have rules that must be followed for the safety and health of the children in our care. Notes to parents, time out and parent conferences are steps taken following disciplinary concerns. Biting is a very serious offense, and one not easily corrected. Therefore, we need total parent cooperation in our effort to eliminate this undesirable behavior. Through our combined efforts, we can assist your child through a potentially unhappy experience.

Policy (Yearly) Offense Number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5:

1. Time Out-Parent notified.
2. Time Out-Parent notified and reminded of step three.
3. Time Out-Parent will be notified, pick up child immediately for rest of day.
4. Time Out-Parent will be notified, and conference will take place. An immediate leave of absence for a full paid week will follow (ex. Thursday to Thursday). The child will then return. However, if there is another biting incident, step 5 will follow.
5. Upon their 5<sup>th</sup> bite, a child will be dismissed for the rest of the school year. If your child is dismissed from the Center, you may re-enroll the child in the following fall program.

### Reporting Accidents/Child Maltreatment

In the event of a serious accident or injury, the parent will be notified immediately. If they cannot be reached, the Center will attempt to notify the physician listed on the emergency information form. In the event the physician cannot be reached, an assigned member of the staff will secure the medical attention they deem necessary in accordance with the Pungo Christian Academy Preschool and Childcare Emergency Medical Care Plan.

### Inclement Weather

When planning on opening or closing the Center during inclement weather, our primary concern is the safety and welfare of our children. We ask that parents cooperate and assist us by following these suggestions:

- When a decision has been made you will receive a notification via FACTS.
- The absence of an announcement means school will open as usual and at normal hours.

### Lock Down Drill Protocol/Lock Down Procedures

## **Lock Down Drill Protocol Pungo Christian Academy Revised: 08/12/24**

#### Requirements:

PCA will hold a minimum of one (1) lock down drill per semester.

#### Preparation:

The Administrator may request the assistance of local law enforcement to audit drills in the attempt of improving conditions and security on campus.

The administrator will plan the lock down drill dates, informing as few people as necessary to execute the event. Great discretion should be used in deciding which staff will be aware of the date and time of the drill. The drill should always be a surprise to staff and students to best prepare them for potential events.

#### Before the Lock Down Drill:

Window coverings should not be red or green in color. This can be distracting for the responding officers.



All classrooms should have stapled on the back of the classroom door or by the window, an envelope with a red sheet of paper to be used in lock down situations.

Doors should never be left open for any reason. Students are not to let people in any doors of the school.

Substitute Teachers:

Each substitute teacher should be provided with the Lock Down Drill Protocol.

When a Lock Down is Announced:

All codes will no longer be used to begin a lock down. The administrator should simply and clearly announce “We are now in Lock Down. Get to a safe place.”. This phrase should be repeated as necessary.

- Staff members should follow the instructions of the administrator
- Clear students from the hallways immediately and direct them to the nearest available classroom
- If a student is in the lunchroom, direct them to the locker rooms in the gym
- If anyone is outside on the playground direct them to the woods
- Do not send any text messages
- Close and lock all doors and windows
- Students should be moved away from the doors and windows, out of view of the outside
- Use class role to account for students
- Turn off all lights
- Use red cards to communicate with law enforcement and emergency responders. Red cards= emergency assistance is needed
- Teachers should not open locked doors for anyone except the administrator and **ONLY** when the predetermined phrase is used. **“Check your Sycamore.”**

Note: You should NOT utilize a red card if you are missing a student. The red card is **ONLY** to signify you need immediate assistance, medical or otherwise. Acceptable uses of the red card include: injured students or staff members in that room or the threat has entered the room.

- Cards should be placed in exterior window. PLEASE WRITE YOUR ROOM NUMBER ON BOTH SIDES OF THE CARD (LARGE ENOUGH IT CAN BE READ FROM A DISTANCE) TO HELP OFFICERS IDENTIFY THE ORIGIN OF THE CARD.
- In the event an intruder enters the classroom and takes hostages, the teacher should use a pre-determined phrase to answer the administrator when contacted.
- In the event an intruder enters the classroom and begins shooting, instruct the students to leave the classroom as quickly and safely as possible.

\*\*The administrator will notify parents after a lock down drill, via FACTS. The administrator will remind the parents of the purpose and need for such drills.

## Administrative Policies

### Policies for Sick Children

We do not administer medication for temporary conditions. We administer medicine for chronic illnesses, mental or physical disabilities. The Center should be notified if a child is diagnosed as having a communicable disease. To avoid the spread of a communicable disease, children should be excluded from care until the following conditions are present:

- Chicken Pox- until all sores are scabbed over, dry or crusted
- Measles- the week after the rash began, providing all cough and cold symptoms are gone
- Mumps- until all swelling is gone
- German Measles- after the rash and fever are gone
- Roseola- after the rash and fever are gone
- Pink Eye- when there is not any discharge from the eye and 24 hours after medication was first given
- Impetigo- 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Diarrhea- until no more diarrhea stools are present for a 24-hour period
- Head Lice- 24 hours after treatment is begun and without signs of head lice. Second occurrence exclude until physician recommended treatment.
- Ringworm- must be on antibiotics for 24 hours
- Fever- (anything above 100.0) child should be fever free for 24 hours
- Scabies- 24 hours after one treatment with prescription cream
- Strep Throat- until antibiotics have been administered for at least 24 hours
- Vomiting- cannot return until free of vomiting for 24 hours

### Curriculum

Our Center uses ABEKA, a Bible-based curriculum, which has proven to be quite a successful and enjoyable learning tool for the Pre-K children. The classrooms are set up in learning centers, which include blocks, sensory, science, puzzles, art, dramatic play, books and manipulatives. Activities of the Center are designed to foster each child's physical, social, emotional, and creative growth. The daily schedule is planned to include active and quiet times, large and small muscle activities, and child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities.

### Guidance

The staff uses positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, modeling, and encouragement. The staff provides verbal guidance by giving positive directions and instructions. They provide guidance by their actions, giving help when needed, being alert to children's needs and being able to "hear and see" children at all times.

### Dress and Grooming

The Center abides by the rules in the PCA school handbook. Generally, a good rule of thumb is not to wear anything you might question whether it will comply with the PCA dress code.

## Personnel Policies

Our staff is comprised of people trained in the development and education of young children. All teachers are certified in Early Childhood Credentials I and II, and are trained in adult, child and infant CPR and First Aid. The staff of the Center consists of the Administrator, Director, Centers Coordinator and Lead Teachers. The Administrator and Director are responsible for the operations and administration of the Center. The Center's Coordinator is responsible for planning and implementing the daily program of activities. Lead Teachers are responsible for the daily planning and implementation to a group of children in their care.

Minimum qualifications for each position include reference checks, employment application, medical report, TB test, health questionnaire, documentation of orientation, documentation of health and safety training, documentation of on-going training, CPR and First Aid certification, playground safety training, documentation of emergency medical care plan, EPR plan review, child maltreatment training, abusive head trauma policy, professional development plan, works qualification information, staff evaluation, job description, operational and personnel policies and CBC qualifications letter.

### Provisions for Leave/Absences

A teacher must complete a "Request for Leave" form when there is a need for time off and give it to the Head of School for approval. If an emergency arises, a teacher must notify the school secretary and/or Head of School as soon as he/she realizes there is a need and no later than 7:00 a.m. on the day of the absence in order that a substitute can be called. Full-time employees are allowed 7 days of leave time with pay and part time employees are allowed 5 days of leave with pay.

### On-Going Classes

Each staff member is required to take on-going childcare classes. The director monitors the hours acquired by each staff member. The director also keeps record of staff CPR and first aid training and renewal dates. Staff will review emergency medical care plans, EPR plans, head trauma policies, and operations and personnel policies annually. Documentation of staff job description, professional development and staff evaluations are completed annually.

### Resignation and Termination Procedures

The teacher, as a condition of fulfilling the requirements of their contract, is expected to

conduct him/herself in keeping with a standard of moral and ethical values that are expected from one who is to be in authority over and set an example for others. The teacher is expected to demonstrate a course of conduct in both personal and professional activities in keeping the highest moral and ethical standards. In the sole opinion of the Board of Directors of the Academy, should the teacher fail to meet those standards, the Board of Directors may terminate the teacher who will have no further rights within.

