



PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

2023-2024 School Year

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"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."
Matthew 19:14



Dear Parents,

As director of Cornerstone Preschool, I wish to welcome you into our program and our school family. We are happy to have this opportunity to care for, teach, and love your child. We consider it a great responsibility and privilege to do so and look forward to working closely with you to make your child's preschool experience a positive and enriching one.

This handbook was prepared to acquaint you with our policies and procedures and to give insight into our goals for your child. Our preschool operates under an exemption status from the Georgia Department of Human Resources and is a fully insured program. We hope that it will promote a partnership and understanding between our school and your family.

The first five years of a child's life are the most valuable on the learning scale. At Cornerstone, we are blessed with a skilled and well-trained staff who will strive to provide the loving and stimulating environment where this learning will flourish. We will offer a variety of experiences within a nurturing Christian environment where they can reach their fullest potential for learning. We will encourage each child to form a positive self-image, develop communication skills, create friendships, and learn to trust others.

We hope that you will go wholeheartedly into this experience with us and that you will join in whenever and however your time allows. Please let us know if we can be of help to your family in any way. It is my strongest wish that our staff, along with you, will make these preschool years memorable and educational for your child. Thank you for entrusting your child to us at Cornerstone.

Sincerely,

Jan Tamucci
Director
Cornerstone Preschool

ABSENCES

If your child is absent from preschool, please contact the preschool office so their teacher may be notified. If your child is absent because of a contagious illness, please let us know so that we can be aware of possible symptoms in other students.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a very special and important time in a child's life. We love to celebrate your child's special day and encourage you to make it festive by sending in a special treat. If you choose to do so, we ask that you contact their teacher for ideas on what works best and is enjoyed most by the students. We've found that cookies are a great idea and are less messy than cupcakes with a lot of icing. Also, please do not send in balloons since they are a choking hazard for the students.

BRINGING ITEMS FROM HOME

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, candy, or money to school. We can only allow toys to be brought on specific "Show and Tell" days. When your child does bring in an item from home, please make sure it is clearly marked with their name.

CARPOOL

As a courtesy to our families, we offer curbside drop-off and pick-up for all our students, ages one-year through four-year, and highly recommend you use this helpful carpool service. Our assistant teachers will receive your child from your car and walk them inside each morning and our lead teachers will walk them to your car at the conclusion of the school day. While we encourage you to use carpool, you are always welcome to walk your child into his or her classroom up until 9:45 am when the outside doors will be locked for safety. With safety being our main concern, we ask all those who participate in carpool to adhere to the following policies:

- Morning carpool drop-off begins at 9:25 a.m.
- Please pull up as far as possible in the circle in front of the building.
- Please no parking in or around the driveway.
- Your child/children must be received from the passenger side only.
- Please have your child ready to go (backpacks, shoes, etc.).

- Please stay in your car and remain in line - this will help us move cars through more efficiently.
- If you arrive after the carpool has ended, please park in a parking space and walk your child in.
- Afternoon carpool pickup begins at 1:25 p.m.
- Please pull forward into the parking lot area to properly secure your child's seat belt and not attempt to do it while still in the carpool line, as it delays the carpool process. Preschool employees are not allowed to buckle your child in for legal reasons, so we appreciate your help at pickup time.
- If your child is going home with another child, please call or send a note to their teacher.
- Please practice patience and courtesy with our staff and each other. Our goal is to make this system as efficient as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our Cornerstone Preschool community safe!

CLOTHING

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing that is suitable for play and the hands-on activities of preschool. We will provide smocks for the students when they are painting, but inevitably accidents and spills do happen. Also, please make sure your child's shoes are comfortable and appropriate for the playground. Tennis shoes are recommended since open-toed shoes tend to collect the mulch on our playground and can be uncomfortable.

We play outside whenever weather permits, so please provide suitable outdoor clothing and clearly label every item such as coats, hats, mittens, sweaters, etc. We also ask that you always keep a weather appropriate change of clothes in your child's backpack in case of accidents.

DISCIPLINE

Our children are the most important part of our preschool. It is our goal to foster positive behavior in a warm, nurturing, and safe environment. We will offer loving encouragement in times of difficulty and offer positive guidance in decision-making skills. We have found that the best way to handle a disruptive child is by removing that child from the situation. This is usually handled by simply redirecting the child in a positive manner by giving him another alternative. If this technique is not successful, or if a child has physically hurt another child, we may suggest that the

child sit down for a few minutes until they are ready to play appropriately. The length of time will be appropriate to the child's age (one minute per year) and the child will never be facing away from the group.

As a final measure, if the inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be taken to talk with the director for a short time. In this case, the parent will be notified so that strategies between home and school may be discussed. If the behavior continues, we will schedule a conference with the parents, teacher, and director in which we will decide together a plan that is best for the child and the preschool. The child's behavior will be documented for 10 days. As a last resort, the child may be suspended or removed from the program.

Support and communication between parent, teacher, and child is vital to the success of our students. We ask that you always keep the lines of communication open and feel free to come to both your child's teacher and the director with any problems or questions that you may have.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Cornerstone is proud to offer opportunities for enrichment in addition to our regular curriculum. Each class, ages two-year through four-year, enjoys a thirty minute music class every week with a professional music instructor. Parents are invited to see the children perform the songs they learn in music class at both our annual Christmas Program and Spring Musical. Chapel time is another way we enrich the lives of our students through learning about God and His love and care for us. Chapel will be led by either our director or a trusted teacher each week on Monday mornings. Fun and laughter abound during all three of these special programs and the students look forward to them all!

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our staff is certified in CPR and First Aid Training so we can take the best possible care of your child in the event of an emergency.

Child Abuse: Cornerstone Preschool will comply with the Georgia law requiring schools to report all suspected cases of child abuse/neglect/deprivation to the Department of Family and Children Services.

Communicable Diseases: Please notify the teacher or director when your child has developed or has been exposed to communicable diseases (such as COVID, flu, strep, pink eye, croup, etc.). This will alert us to watch for symptoms, sanitize rooms, and allow for notification of all preschool parents of the illness. Your confidentiality in this, as in all matters, will be maintained.

Emergency Medical Care: In the event of a true emergency, the preschool staff will immediately call emergency services (911). Parents will then be notified and informed of the hospital location used by the emergency service. Parents will be required to complete an Emergency Medical Treatment Form to be kept on file for each child outlining specific emergency contacts and instructions.

Illness: Please notify the preschool of any allergies or medical conditions your child may have or if your child is on any medication. If it is essential for the child's well-being that medication be on hand at school, such as an EpiPen or inhaler, the parent must complete an Authorization to Administer Medication Form which will be kept on file in the office.

We must stress that you keep your child home if he has any contagious illness such as nausea, diarrhea, sore throat, rash, or skin eruptions. We often hear, "My child was vomiting during the night, but seems fine this morning." This is not in the best interest of the child. Please make sure that your child is symptom free for 24 hours before allowing them to return to school. This also applies to fever. A child must remain at home until they are fever free for 24 hours. No child will be allowed to attend who is running a fever. We will call you to come and pick up your child if their temperature is 100 degrees or higher. Diarrhea can be very unpleasant for any child. After the second incident during the day, we will notify you to come and pick up your child. These policies are for the well-being of both your child and their classmates.

Immunization: We require a certificate of immunization from your child's doctor or local health department. These must be on the Georgia Health Department Form #3231 and must be on file at the preschool within 30 days of a child starting school. These may be mailed or emailed directly to us by your doctor's office.

Other Emergency Procedures: Plans for weather, fire, utilities, and structure emergencies are in place for our preschool and all staff members have been trained in these procedures. Fire drills are conducted with the students once per month.

Outside Play: We play outside on a daily basis unless the weather prohibits it. Please do not send your child to school if they are not well enough to play outside. We do not have the staff available to look after students staying inside while the rest of the class goes outside. Also, if your child requires sunscreen, please apply it at home.

School Injury: If your child receives an injury while at school, every effort will be made to contact you. If you are unavailable, an accident report will be placed in your child's bag and you will be notified during afternoon carpool. If the injury is of a serious nature, we will first call emergency services (911) and then make every effort to contact you.

Special Needs: Cornerstone Preschool is an equal opportunity provider. Special needs for children will be mutually agreed upon by parents and the administration prior to enrollment. Needs developing after admission will be discussed as they occur. The best interest of the special needs child, as well as all other students in the class, will be considered when making such decisions.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

We follow Fulton County School for school related weather closings. In an effort to keep our families and employees prepared and safe during forecasted and unexpected weather events, the Fulton County School Communications Department has created the following page to help gather important information and resources: <https://www.fultonschools.org/weather>.

MEETINGS / SPECIAL EVENTS

A "Meet and Greet" back to school event will be held on a morning during the week before school starts. This is a special time designed to give you and your child the opportunity to meet their teachers, get familiar with the classroom, and ask any questions that you may have.

Throughout the year, we will hold special events and programs to involve you in the preschool life of your child. Please make every effort to attend these events. It makes such a difference in your child's life when you show an interest in what they are doing and how they spend their days. We have an open-door policy and welcome parents at all times.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Cornerstone Preschool Group, Inc. (dba as Cornerstone Preschool) admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of our school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the new school year begins in January for the upcoming fall. Current students are given the opportunity to register first and then registration is opened to the community. Registration must be completed online via our website and a non-refundable registration fee paid to secure a place for your child. This fee is due at the time of registration and is used to purchase supplies, maintain equipment, and to provide activities for the students during the school year.

SCHOOL BAGS

We ask that you provide your child with a standard size backpack in which to carry daily supplies and artwork. We prefer this size because it is convenient for placing and removing papers and crafts. Please empty your child's backpack each day and return it the following school day. This is our primary means of communication between home and school, so we ask that you check it daily. Always remove your child's artwork and praise his or her efforts. Remember it is the process, not the product that is most important, and nothing does more for a child's self-esteem than to see it displayed proudly on your wall or fridge! Also, if you have notes for the school, it is helpful if you attach them to the outside of your child's bag with a paper clip or safety pin to aid us in finding your note quickly.

SCHOOL HOURS

Preschool hours are from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and the doors open at 9:25 a.m. We ask that you please not bring your child into the classroom before this time, as teachers will be busy setting up their rooms and preparing for the day's activities. We also ask that you have your child at school on time so that they do not miss any of the activities scheduled for that day. Late arriving students and parents often disrupt the other students and distract the teacher from their scheduled activities. We appreciate your understanding and help in this important beginning of your child's school day.

If you are going to arrive late to pick up your child, please call the preschool cell phone at (678) 642-7986 to let us know. This will relieve your child's anxiety and will also notify their teacher of your anticipated arrival time. Your child will be kept in the classroom with their teacher or in the preschool office. A \$5.00 late fee will be charged for the first 10 minutes and \$1.00 per minute thereafter beginning at 1:45 p.m.

SCHOOL PICTURES

We are pleased to provide an opportunity for school pictures for our children each year. Both individual and class pictures are taken in the spring and are a wonderful way to commemorate your child's year at Cornerstone. Purchasing your child's pictures is completely optional, but the preschool does receive a percentage of the profit to use toward the purchase of classroom materials each year.

TUITION

Cornerstone Preschool strives to maintain a quality preschool education and environment for your child while keeping tuition to a minimum. We are self-supporting and non-profit, operating solely on funds provided by preschool tuition and fees which are used to provide the most professional teachers and the best supplies and equipment when possible.

Tuition is a monthly fee based on your child's age and the number of days they attend. We offer a sibling discount for two or more students of 10% off the total monthly tuition amount. Your tuition is due on the first school day of each month and we ask that you use the special payment envelope provided to pay by check, money order, or cash. The envelopes will be sent home in your child's backpack just before the beginning of each month and should be returned on the next school day that your child attends. Checks are to be made payable to **Cornerstone Preschool**. A late fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged after the 5th of the month and a bank service charge of \$30.00 will be charged for all returned checks. After receiving two returned checks, we must ask that you pay in cash only. We now accept Visa and Mastercard when paying online using the Parent Portal. A 4% convenience fee will be added separately to your family's account.

If you find it necessary to withdraw your child from our program, we require a one-month advance notice or one month's tuition. We regret that we are unable to make refunds or allowances for absences due to illness or vacations. We will not be able to pro-rate for scheduled days out nor will we make up missed days.

MISSION STATEMENT

Cornerstone Preschool is called by God to provide a welcoming and nurturing environment in which young children feel loved, valued, respected, and safe. Our preschool provides a developmentally appropriate program for children ages one to six years, which focuses on the development of each child emotionally, mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. We seek to foster a positive self-image, a love of learning, and a love of God and others in every child. We commit ourselves to order our lives after the example of Christ so that your child will be surrounded by steadfast love.

OUR VISION

- Being a reflection of God's love to the children in our care
- Educating and enriching the life of each child using our faith-based curriculum
- Committing to a small teacher/student ratio
- Using developmentally appropriate practices in each class
- Providing nurturing and loving teachers
- Developing close child-teacher bonds of trust and respect
- Encouraging active learning through hands-on experiences
- Valuing the uniqueness and individuality of each child
- Partnering with parents to build a strong God-centered foundation for our children
- Providing support and outreach to our community

GOALS

- An understanding of God's love for all people
- An acceptance of all children and their cultural diversities
- A positive self-image
- Respect for the rights of others
- Growth in self control
- A method of engaging happily in work and play with others in a group
- The ability to express ideas by using speech
- The ability to express feelings and creative ideas
- Opportunities to enjoy and appreciate music and art
- The ability to work to his or her greatest potential
- The chance for every child to discover the gifts and talents that God gave them