

Valley Christian Academy's PRE-KINDERGARTEN Parent Handbook 2016



Dear Parents,

Welcome to Valley Christian Academy's pre-kindergarten program! We look forward to working with you and your child. Our program is exceptional and will always keep Christ at the center of our focus. We will provide your child with a hands-on learning experience in a safe and enriching environment.

Within our care, your child will be nurtured and experience God's love through the staff. We desire to provide your child with a positive learning experience from the start, so that he/she will become a lifelong learner and enjoy coming to school. As parents ourselves, we understand what an honor it is that you have entrusted us with the care of your child. We hope both you and your child will experience an atmosphere where your child can begin their journey of learning and growth while starting his/her educational career. It is our hope that you will quickly become part of the VCA family and decide to stay here until your child graduates from eighth grade. We value you and your child's educational experience and look forward to building a partnership with you throughout this school year.

Please review the information in this handbook. We are available to you when you have a question or would like to discuss anything concerning your child.

God Bless You,

Joanna Underwood

Joanna Underwood, Assistant Director

Serving Christ at School,

Dale Moncrief

Dale Moncrief, Administrator

VALLEY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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Italicized portions in this handbook refer to items in the standard VCA Parent/Student Handbook.

Valley Christian Academy

Accreditation

VCA is chartered by the State of Ohio and in 2004 received an additional accreditation from ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International).

Our Mission

VCA exists to build a godly foundation in our students through Christ-centered education in cooperation with the Christian home and church so that our students know, love, and obey Jesus Christ.

We take very seriously that what differentiates us from other forms of schooling is that every area of VCA remains Christ-centered: our curriculum, our activities, our faculty and staff, our purpose and the atmosphere of the school.

Our Vision

Valley Christian Academy will:

- *provide excellence in academic training rooted in biblical principles and values*
- *encourage students to reach their fullest potential by maintaining a healthy spiritual, mental, physical, social, and emotional life*
- *provide the needed facilities, equipment, and technology necessary for carrying out the academic and extra-curricular programs*

Our Core Values

We have chosen six descriptors to guide all of our efforts at Valley Christian Academy. We use our school mascot, the eagle, to remember them:

- **E**xcellence
- **A**cademic Quality
- **G**od-honoring, Christ-centered, Spirit-driven
- **L**eadership
- **E**nriching Environment
- **S**erving Others

Our Statement of Faith

As a Christian school, we are unashamedly committed to the following:

1. *The Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative Word of God.*
2. *There is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.*
3. *We believe in the deity of the Lord, Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right-hand of the Father, in His personal bodily return to this earth in power and glory.*
4. *The only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ.*
5. *Regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for personal salvation.*
6. *We believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, whose indwelling in the Christian enables him to live a holy life. We are not perfect at this time, but we are set apart as children of God.*
7. *We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and lost, the one to everlasting life and the other to everlasting damnation.*

Admission to Valley Christian Academy requires a family's commitment and full support of our Statement of Faith.

History

In the spring of 1979, a group of dedicated Christians, under the leadership of New Life Assembly, began planning a Christ-centered Christian day school. In September of that year, Chagrin Valley Christian Academy opened with a faculty of five and a student enrollment of 48 in grades K-8. As the school grew, we moved to a larger, more centrally located, public school building known as Miller Elementary School.

By the end of the 1983-84 school year, enrollment reached 272, but the sponsoring church decided to close the school's doors. A group of concerned parents worked to insure the school's continuance by forming the Association of Concerned Parents (ACP). In the fall, the school opened with more students than there had been at the end of the school year. Valley Christian Academy emerged as a solid, parent-run, independent Christian day school with a 4K-10th grade program.

In 1985, steps were taken to consolidate the school to grades K-6. VCA moved to the Lake Elementary School building (where we are now) and in 1987, the first 5000-square foot classroom addition (modular style) was built. In 1990, VCA purchased Lake School from Aurora. Continued growth and program expansion brought about another wing, now housing the Middle School, in 1994. In 2005, we completed our third addition, providing new space for kindergarten classes, new offices, and a beautiful new gym.

In the spring of 2006, the School Board made the decision to grow a Middle School program to include grades 7 and 8. That fall, 2006-2007, a 7th grade was added. The following year, 2007-2008, was the first year there was a complete Middle School when 8th grade was added. Since then, the Middle School program has continued to grow and develop. We have been very blessed by the Lord with our building on our 46-acre property, which now houses both Elementary (PK-5) and Middle School (6-8).

Philosophy

Valley Christian Academy exists as an extension of the Christian home and of the church to fulfill God's commands to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4), and to teach His Word diligently unto our children (Deuteronomy 6:5-7). Our foundation rests upon acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and the Bible as the Word of God--the final authority in truth and practice. We strive to help each child grow spiritually, mentally, physically, socially and emotionally through the dedication of teachers, administrators, and staff who love the Lord and desire to serve Him through the educational process. We rely on parents to help us through their prayer, their cooperation, and their active involvement in the life of this school.

Therefore, we believe that the Bible clearly gives the responsibility of training children to parents. Valley Christian Academy exists to help parents fulfill this biblical responsibility. The school does not replace the home. The school attempts to support the home by reinforcing the biblical concepts and values taught at home and church. Christian education involves the whole person, so it is desirable that all elements which bear on the education of a child can be consistent and properly reinforce one another. In view of this, if the child's Christian school education is to be as effective as possible, it must be supported by a Christian home and a Christian church. All three should work together in a complementary fashion. Therefore, it is necessary that all the parents support the philosophy and academic program of the school. **VCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or national origin.**

Pre-Kindergarten Goals

Social Development:

- Help children feel comfortable in the school environment
- Encourage positive relationships with teachers and peers
- Build friendships and exercise acceptance
- Learn socially acceptable ways to interact with others
- Develop social skills (ex. sharing, using manners, being kind)

Emotional Development:

- Help children gain self-confidence
- Develop independence, responsibility, and self-control
- Learn to express feelings in an appropriate manner
- Cultivate self-worth, as one created in God's own image

Cognitive Development:

- Develop skills of a problem solver by asking questions and testing hypotheses
- Explore curriculum areas of literacy, pre-math, pre-writing, science, and social studies
- Encourage creative expression through music, art, building, role-playing, independent choice, etc.
- Learn new academic skills in preparation for Kindergarten in alignment with the Ohio Department of Education Early Learning Content Standards

Physical Development:

- Help children develop gross motor and fine motor skills
- Further develop perceptual skills and coordination through daily activities and play

Spiritual Development:

- Experience God's love through the staff
- Learn scripture and Bible stories
- Examine the things God has made and the world around us
- Worship God through singing and praying

Pre-Kindergarten Program Information

Hours and Days of Operation

Half-Day Program Monday-Friday 8:30am – 12:00pm

Intermediate Half-Day Program Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30am – 12:00pm

- Those enrolling in the Intermediate Half Day Program must follow this schedule and not change/increase days. Once the first semester is complete, the parents will have the option to change their child's enrollment to the full Half-Day Program for the second half of the school year (after Christmas break) or remain on the current schedule.
- The pre-kindergarten class will follow Valley Christian Academy's yearly school calendar with the exception of the start and end dates.

Staff/Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size

VCA will not exceed the following state required ratios:

- Teacher: Students will be 1:14
- 4-5 year olds (Child must be 4 by September 30th)

Daily Schedule

The pre-kindergarten schedule is flexible but structured to provide enough predictability for the children. The routine will be followed but not necessarily the times. The typical pre-kindergartener's day will include:

8:00-8:30	Sign-in/Handwashing
8:30-8:40	Fine Motor Activities
8:40-9:00	Morning Prayer and Opening Group Time
9:00-9:40	Center Time/Small Groups
9:40-10:00	Group Time (Literacy Emphasis)
10:00-10:25	Large Muscle Activities
10:25-10:40	Math/Science Circle
10:40-11:10	Independent Exploration
11:10-11:20	Clean-up/Handwashing
11:20-11:50	Lunch
11:50-12:00	Dismissal Preparations

Lunch Time

Pre-K Lunch period will take place in the classroom from 11:20-11:50 am. Each child is to bring in his/her own packed lunch and drink. All items must be brought from home as there will be no access to the cafeteria, cafeteria foods, or microwaves during our lunch period. Should any severe allergy concerns arise, you will be notified and asked to please refrain from sending in those particular items for the safety of all students.

Dress Code

Pre-Kindergarten students do not have to wear the same dress code as K-5 students, but should wear modest, comfortable play clothes and shoes that are free from complicated fasteners and decoration. All shoes should be closed toe and back. Please be aware that children may get messy and will need to participate in indoor and outdoor play (running, jumping), so we ask that you refrain from dressing your child in frilly, fancy, or uncomfortable clothing and shoes. We ask that all clothing adheres to Valley Christian Academy's dress code sheet. A copy of the dress code is available from the teacher.

Examples of acceptable clothing choices for boys and girls:

- Boys: Polos, short or long sleeved shirts, jeans, khakis, athletic pants or shorts, athletic shoes, etc.
- Girls: Casual dresses or skirts with shorts underneath, short or long-sleeved shirts, jeans, khakis, athletic pants or shorts (knee-length), tennis shoes, etc.

We will have daily gross motor play (indoor or outdoor), so please dress your child for the weather EVERY DAY. Your child may go outside unless the temperature is below 20 degrees. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that the child is adequately dressed for the cold weather. When snow boots are worn to school, please send in a pair of shoes for your child to change into while in the school building.

Specials Classes

Your child will have the luxury of experiencing Music, Library, and Physical Education classes through highly trained and certified professionals in their area. These opportunities expose them to and allow them to get to know these teachers in preparation for future years of schooling.

Class Parties and Birthdays

We will celebrate special holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter) and birthdays as a class. There will be sign-up sheets available for parent volunteers to help coordinate these events. For birthdays, you may bring in or send a special, peanut-free treat for your child and the class by contacting the teacher in advance to schedule a time. If your child has a birthday that does not fall on a school day or during the school year, the teacher would be happy to celebrate your child's birthday on a different day or even on a half birthday.

Field Trips

Due to seat belt and car seat laws for children under 40 pounds, we will not take any field trips where Valley Christian Academy transports the children. If a field trip is planned, the parents will be responsible for transporting their child to and from the event. All field trip information will be sent out early so that the parents have adequate time to plan and prepare.

Curriculum

The curriculum of Valley Christian Academy's pre-kindergarten is based on the understanding that children learn by doing, so we provide a hands-on approach to learning. It is guided by the Houghton Mifflin Pre-K curriculum to provide academic structure of reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. We aim to guide children through learning experiences where they will explore, observe, reflect, and problem solve. These learning experiences are guided by the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards for proper growth and development in

preparation for Kindergarten and lifelong learning. Some examples of content areas that we will be exploring are as follows:

- Literacy: Listening to stories, re-telling stories in dramatic play, shared reading and writing, phonemic awareness, auditory discrimination, auditory memory, pre-writing skills, writing his/her name, visual discrimination, visual memory, and letter/number recognition, etc.
- Math: Classifying, sorting, graphing, counting, simple addition and subtraction, pattern recognition, shapes and colors, sequencing, measurement, etc.
- Science: Comparing and contrasting, physical principles (balancing), chemical reactions (baking), cause and effect, natural surroundings, the five senses, tempo and pitch, etc.
- Social Studies: Cooperation, our community, history, etc.

Our Bible program (NIV) involves a Scripture of the Month, which provides a theme for weekly Bible stories. Biblical principles will be integrated into our daily practices, as the children are encouraged to exemplify and develop Christ-like character. We believe in the power of prayer and will open our day in prayer and continue to lift up your child and family as we go throughout this year.

- August/September: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." Acts 16:31
- October: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31
- November: "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever." 1 Chronicles 16:34
- December: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6
- January: "This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24
- February: "Let us love one another, for love comes from God." 1 John 4:7a
- March: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you." Ephesians 4:32
- April: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right." Ephesians 6:1
- May/June: "I can do all things through him (Christ) who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13

In the Pre-Kindergarten program, the grading system is:

S+ = Outstanding

S = Satisfactory

S- = Improvement Needed

General Guidelines

Absences

An absence is considered excused for reasons of: illness, medical appointments, death in the family, or if the absence is pre-arranged. An absence is considered unexcused for any other reason. Unexcused absences result in the student not being able to make up the work missed.

If a child must miss school due to illness or any other reason, parents are asked to phone attendance and report the absence by 10:00 am. For health and safety purposes, a reason

should be stated. If you will have a pre-planned absence, please communicate this with your child's teacher via a written request as soon as possible. Thank you.

If your child is enrolled in the intermediate program, your child may only attend on those days of the week. In the instance of an absence, you may not have your child attend another day of the week. This is necessary to assure that our student to teacher ratio is always correct and allows the teacher to be prepared for her class without constant changes. The only exceptions may be for party days or special events, such as picture day, when approved by the teacher.

Tardies

Students who are not in their classroom by 8:30 am must sign in at the Main Office.

Early Dismissal

If your child will need to be picked up before 12:00 pm, please call in/email/send a note for the transportation coordinator and let the teacher know. Parents must sign out their child at the Main Office.

School Cancellation

Occasionally an emergency situation arises which requires the administration to close school for a period of time. For snow days or other emergency days, VCA will follow this procedure:

- The decision will be made as early as possible to facilitate proper planning and organization.
- If Aurora City Schools close, VCA will automatically close.
- A phone call will be placed to all employees and parents in the event that school is closed.
- Special attention should be given to WCRF (103.3 FM) and the FISH (95.5 FM). Closing information will also be communicated through the major TV stations and on the VCA website.
- Depending on the type of closing and number of days missed, VCA may have to make up missed days according to the State of Ohio regulations.
- VCA will not dismiss school early unless an emergency warrants such action. Usually safety and general student welfare can be best maintained by keeping children in school once they have arrived.
- If local school districts delay their start, VCA will not delay and will start at its regular time.

Drop Off/Pick Up/Parking Procedures

For Pre-Kindergarten, your child must not be left unattended at any time. Please park in the main parking lot and walk your child to the classroom door where he/she will be received by the teacher (no earlier than 8 am). For pick-up, parents pull-up at 12 (noon) sharp at the end of the portico (where bus drop-off takes place) and form a line. Children are to stay behind the colored cones until dismissed by the teacher. As you pull up in your car, your child will be dismissed to you after you get out of your car. We will dismiss two cars at a time. Please keep pick-up safe, quick, and efficient, as this is a fire lane.

Admissions Procedures

A child is considered enrolled in our Pre-K only after the registration form and fee have been received, the director confirms the availability of space, the entrance interview has been conducted, and the required paperwork is received.

The following forms are needed by the time your child begins school:

- Child's Application Form
- Copy of Child's Birth Certificate
- Medical Record and Immunization Form (Signed by a physician. This form is required for admission and must be updated every 13 months).
- Transportation Form
- Picture Permission Form
- Release Form (a listing of people other than the parents who have permission to pick up the child from Pre-k).

Important: Anytime there is a change to this information, it must be communicated to the office immediately so that current information is always on file. This insures the security of your child.

VCA Biblical Morality Statement

Valley Christian Academy's biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to mold students to be Christ-like. Of necessity, this involves the school's understanding and belief of what qualities or characteristics exemplify a Christ-like life. The school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student if the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home or the activities of the students are counter to or are in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, participating in, supporting, or condoning sexual immorality, homosexual activity, or bisexual activity; promoting such practices; or being unable to support the moral principles of the school (See Leviticus 20:13 and Romans 1:17).

Admissions Policies

1. *Valley Christian Academy, although non-denominational, is evangelical in nature. The school's guiding principle is to glorify God in all areas of the school program and the basis for instruction and teaching values is the Bible, the Word of God. Our school believes that in order to become a born-again Christian and inherit eternal life, we must realize we are sinners (Romans 3:10, 23), believe that Jesus died for our sins (John 3:16, Romans 10:9,10), and ask Jesus Christ to come into our lives and take away our sins (John 1:12).*

The admission principles at Valley Christian Academy are designed to admit students from homes which intend to support Christian principles and which recognize biblical teachings. Realizing that Christian education comes from a Christ-centered, biblically integrated curriculum and godly teachers, VCA does admit students who have not yet accepted Christ as Savior, but at least one parent must be a born-again Christian.

2. *The following admission principles apply at VCA:*
 - a. *Valley Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or national origin in the administration of its admissions, policies, educational or other school-sponsored programs, or financial obligations or aid.*

- b. Prospective pre-kindergarten students must be four years old by September 30th of the school year. Prospective kindergarteners must be five years old by September 30th of the school year.
- c. *Families of prospective students must apply for admission and submit a registration fee in accordance with the procedures established by VCA. As a part of the application process, the parents of a prospective student must state in writing that they have read VCA's Statement of Faith and agree to have their children educated in accordance with it.*
- d. Each prospective student will be given an entrance interview to determine if Valley Christian Academy can meet the student's academic needs and/or to determine appropriate grade placement.
- e. *Each prospective family will be interviewed by Administration prior to consideration for admission.*
- f. *The decision whether or not to accept a prospective student will be made by Administration.*
- g. *In general, students who have been accepted will be admitted in the order VCA received the prospective students' applications and registration fees. In the event it is expected that a class may have a waiting list, accepted students of current school families, teachers and staff members will have priority over students of prospective school families on the waiting list. In addition, accepted students who have been on the waiting list for at least one year, will have the same priority as accepted students of current school families, teachers and staff members.*
- h. *Acceptance or denial of applicants, including notification that an accepted student may be on a waiting list, generally will be by written notification.*
3. *Following admission, and at the time prescribed by Administration:*
 - a. *VCA requires that students comply with the immunization requirements set forth in Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.67 and 671.*
 - b. *VCA requires that parents must state in writing (i) that they have read and agree to have their children educated in accordance with the Parent-Student Handbook, and (ii) have read and agree to follow the Parent's Code of Conduct.*
4. *Students must reapply annually for admission.*

Our Parents' Code

As part of VCA's admissions policy, parents are required to read and agree with the following guidelines:

1. *I will pray earnestly for Valley Christian Academy.*
2. *I will cooperate fully in the educational functions of VCA, doing my best to make Christian education effective in the life of each of my children, that he or she may love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ all of his or her life.*
3. *I will strive to make our home a Christian home. VCA believes that a Christian home is characterized by parents who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who endeavor to teach the principles of the Bible to their children at home, who pray and read the Bible with their children, and who attend a Bible-believing church at least once a week.*
4. *I will support fully the Statement of Faith.*
5. *I will cooperate to keep doctrinal controversy and denominationalism out of the school at all times.*
6. *I will pay all of my financial obligations to VCA according to the guidelines presented in the Payment Policy and Tuition and Fees Schedule.*
7. *I will undertake volunteer duties and responsibilities for VCA as opportunities arise and as*

God provides time and strength.

8. *I will attend meetings and parent functions of the school regularly, even though I may not be able to achieve perfect attendance.*
9. *I will support the discipline policies and procedures outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook, working with the teachers and administration to resolve any and all issues*
10. *If I become dissatisfied with the school in any respect, I will seek to resolve the matter with the person or persons involved, through proper communication channels and lines of authority, rather than begin to spread criticism, or hold a negative attitude in my heart.*
11. *I will understand that tuition does not cover the full cost of operating the school and thus participation is needed in giving financially, lending practical help, allowing students to participate in school fund-raisers, and/or supporting VCA in prayer.*
12. *I will seek the advancement of VCA in all areas: spiritually, academically, and physically.*
13. *I believe God calls each believer to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who do not know (Mark 16:15).*
14. *I believe that God calls each believer to belong to a local church for the purpose of spiritual growth through teaching, prayer, service, and fellowship. (Hebrews 10:24-25)*
15. *I believe God instituted marriage as a relationship between one man and one woman, united for the purpose of companionship, procreation, raising godly children, and to glorify God (Genesis 2:18, 22-24, 4:1, 25-26), that marriage should be honored by all.*

Tuition

Please refer to the current tuition schedule for rates.

Tuition payments are due in advance of services rendered.

- If paid annually, the payment is due August 1.
- If paid semi-annually, one payment is due in August; the other is due in January.
- If paid monthly, you can be set up on the 12-month plan (July through June) or the 10-month plan (September through June).
- Statements will be issued around the last Friday of each month and will be emailed to the person financially responsible for payment. Statements will include tuition for the subsequent month.
- Payments are made through the Direct Payment Plan (DPP) on the 16th of the month following the issuance of the statements.

Discipline Procedures

Positive Reinforcement

We encourage good behaviors in an effort to reinforce the children to make good choices. The teacher will verbally praise the child/children and have a system of both individual and group rewards.

Classroom Rules

- We listen and obey the teachers.
- We are nice to one another.
- We play safely.
- We help keep our classroom clean.

At the beginning of the year, the teacher will clearly discuss these rules and help the children to understand the proper behavioral expectations of the school and classroom. When a school or classroom rule has been disobeyed, the teacher will follow the school's discipline

procedures by discussing and encouraging the student to make a better choice. The teacher may also pray with and/or for the child about the situation to restore peaceful behaviors and interactions.

Our Pre-Kindergarten classroom is a nurturing environment, and we will try to resolve any conflicts and undesirable behaviors before anything escalates. However, we will uphold such standards to promote a classroom where learning can take place and all students feel safe and respected. The following school procedures for discipline are followed in the classroom but in a different fashion, using a name magnet. Each day, the child will start out in the green space. In the instance of misbehavior, the child's name magnet will be moved to a different color. Each color has the following meaning:

- Name Magnet to Yellow: Student is visually reminded to correct behavioral choices. This is a warning.
- Name Magnet to Orange: The student has continued undesirable behavior and will miss a few minutes of independent choice time by sitting at his/her seat.
- Name Magnet to Red: The parent will be notified via a behavior form and must sign and return to the teacher the next day.
- Name Magnet to Blue: The child will be removed from the classroom and meet with the Director or Principal. The parents will be notified.

We understand that sometimes what is going on at home can affect the emotions and behaviors of young ones. Please notify the director and/or teacher if there are any big changes going on that could possibly affect the child, such as: a new sibling, parent out of town, loss of a pet, death in the family, etc., so that we can be particularly sensitive to the situation.

(1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.

(2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

(3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.

(4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.

(5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.

(6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.

(7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.

(8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior.

(9) Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.

(10) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Health and Safety Practices

Practices and Policies

- Emergency telephone numbers are posted by the classroom telephone.
- A first aid kit will be stored in the Pre-K room as well as in the nurse's clinic.
- Fire extinguishers are located by main entrance doors, hallways, and cooking areas.
- The building is equipped with a fire alarm system with pull alarms located in the hallways and each classroom.
- There is a full-time school nurse in the building.
- There is always one or more staff members qualified in First Aid and/or CPR present whenever there are children present in the Pre-K.
- Should an emergency arise and the parent or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the child will be transported via an Emergency Squad to the physician or hospital. The child's records, including medical records, will be transported with the child.

In case of a General Emergency:

- Valley Christian Academy has several procedures to follow in the event of an emergency due to environmental situations, threats of violence, and natural disasters.
- The students will participate in monthly fire drills and periodic tornado drills.
- Teachers will follow written procedures and evacuation routes posted in the classroom for fire or tornado drills.
- A safety drill, modeled by the National Incident Management System, is practiced twice a year. In the event of a threat of violence, the school will go into lockdown procedure to remain safe and secure.
- Although these scenarios are serious, the children are comforted and instructed calmly so that they feel safe and secure.

In Case of Serious Incident, Injury, or Illness:

- In case of illness, the child will be taken to the nurse's office. The nurse will call the parents and stay with the student until the parents arrive for pickup.
- An incident report will be completed for an accident or injury. One copy will be given to the parent and placed in the child's file. An incident report would be required for:
 - Illness that requires first aid treatment
 - Accident involving first aid treatment
 - Bump or blow to the head
 - Emergency transporting
 - Unusual or unexpected event that would jeopardize the safety of a child or staff member

Management of Communicable Disease

VCA works to provide an environment that is clean and healthy. We ask that if your child is ill, please do not send them to VCA. He/she will be sent home!

Children should remain at home (or will be sent home) with:

- Temperature- 100 degrees or higher or if he/she has not been fever free for 24 hours
- Conjunctivitis- "Pink eye"
- Diarrhea- More than two abnormally loose stools within a 24-hour period
- Severe Coughing
- Difficult or Rapid Breathing
- Yellowish Skin or Eyes
- Vomiting- within 24 hours
- Untreated Skin Rashes, Patches, or Unusual Spots
- Stiff Neck
- Elevated Temperature

- Head Lice-lice and nit free for 24 hours, scabies and parasitic infection free
- Sore Throat or Difficulty Swallowing
- Some Unknown Illness
- Any Contagious Disease: Measles, Chicken Pox, Mumps, Roseola, Strep Throat, etc. until the child is cleared by the physician
- Unusually Dark Urine and/or Grey/White Stool

Children may return to school when:

- There has been no recurrence of fever for 24 hours.
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours.
- The child who has been diagnosed with an infectious disease has received the recommended doses of an antibiotic for a 24-hour period.
- The child is eating, sleeping, and playing normally.

Any child who begins exhibiting signs of illness or does not feel well while at school will be taken to the nurse's office to be carefully observed. The parent will be notified to pick up their child if he/she is not well enough to resume the Pre-K activities. The child's exclusion or readmission will be subject to review by the teacher, school nurse, or director.

Children, parents, and teachers are expected to wash their hands upon arrival to school, after using the restroom, after nose blowing, and before eating. Tables are disinfected before and after eating lunch. The toys and materials within the classroom will be sanitized on a regular basis. Our classroom bathroom is cleaned and disinfected daily.

Administration of Medication

Our school nurse will administer medication when absolutely necessary. In order to comply with the law, Valley Christian Academy requires that the Physician and Parents Request form be completed by both the parent/guardian and the physician for all prescribed and over-the-counter medications. The medication must be received in the original container. An affixed label must include the student's name, name of medication, dosage, route of administration and time to be administered. We give medication only when absolutely necessary. If you need additional forms, please notify the clinic.

Parent Communication and Involvement

School Folders

Each day, your child will bring home his/her school folder which will contain all the communication from the teacher and the school (papers, notes, flyers, etc.). Parents should check the folder daily and utilize it for returning or sending information back to the school. It must return with the student each day. At the beginning of the year, each student will receive his/her first folder free. All replacement folders must be purchased in the Academic Office.

Calendar

You will be given a calendar of the school year. This will provide you with information concerning breaks, conference days, professional development days, etc. If there are any unforeseen changes, you will be notified.

Weekly Web Updates

The Pre-Kindergarten web page will have reminders and special news that will be updated every Friday on the VCA website. Please check this for important information and

communication from the teacher and director that is particular to the Pre-Kindergarten classroom.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences happen twice a year. In the fall, in grades PK-5, teachers will schedule each family for a conference to discuss student progress. Both parents are encouraged to attend, if possible. In the spring, either the teacher or the parents may request conferences. Parents may request a written progress report or make other appointments with teachers to discuss progress throughout the year. Please do not expect teachers to hold unscheduled conferences before or after school.

Parent Volunteers

We will have many volunteer opportunities available to parents (ex. class parties, assisting with crafts, helping with centers, playing educational games with the students, reading to the class, etc.), and a sign-up sheet will be provided at the beginning of the year for those who would like to do so. ALL volunteers or visitors MUST sign-in at the main office and have a visible nametag on at all times in the building. We ask all parental volunteers bringing non-student siblings to please keep them in your supervision at all times so that no interruption to the educational process occurs. When volunteering, please be cautious about any physical contact with students. As a general rule, volunteers should not inappropriately kiss or hug students, lift them, or hold them on their laps.

Parent Access Statement

Parents have unlimited access to their child at any point during classroom hours. The parent must sign in at the Main Office, and the teacher will be notified. If a parent wishes to assist or participate in the classroom, please communicate and prearrange this with the classroom teacher.

To File a Complaint or Access Inspection Reports

To file a complaint, the parent should first speak with the teacher. If the situation is not resolved between parent/teacher, the parent may contact the assistant director and/or principal.

If a parent is interested in seeing an inspection report, he/she may ask the teacher for such documentation.

School Supplies

Pre-K School Supplies

Your child is expected to bring these items before or on the first day of school. Typically, children bring these items with them during the Ice Cream Social, where they can meet the teacher and unload all items in preparation for the first day of school. Please label your child's backpack and clothing.

- One backpack
- One change of clothes (including underpants and socks) to be kept in your child's backpack at all times

- 2 packages Clorox wipes (yellow container only)
- 1 box Kleenex
- 2 rolls of paper towels
- 1 hand soap
- Emergency items (will be kept in the classroom, please label):
 - One blanket, rolled and secured
 - One sweatshirt
 - 6-pack of water bottles and 2 protein snacks

For any additional information about Valley Christian Academy, please refer to the VCA Webpage (www.valleychristian.com) and the Parent/Student Handbook on the Resources tab.