

Light the Bay Preschool Parent Handbook

Developing the Whole Child

Proverbs 22:6

History

Light the Bay Preschool is a ministry of Light the Bay Church in Pittsburg, California. Light the Bay Church was founded in 1940 as Lighthouse Christian Center in a downtown storefront in Pittsburg, California, with a dozen parishioners. Its goal was to reach out to a relatively unchurched population. The church purchased its current 5 acre property at 1210 Stoneman Avenue, Pittsburg, in the late 1960's and began building a program. Little Promises Preschool and Christian Center School began in 1974 as a part of this ministry. It was the dream of the parishioners to meet the ever increasing demand for Christian education that would uphold a high academic standard and the need to impart a Christian worldview to their children in a supportive, loving atmosphere. Some parishioners even mortgaged their homes and gave money for building and furnishing the schools.

Over the years, the demographics and population of Pittsburg has dramatically changed, thus the decision to rebrand the campus was approved in January, 2013. The entire ministry now falls under the name "Light the Bay" Church and Preschool.

Light the Bay Preschool is located in Pittsburg, California, approximately forty miles northeast of San Francisco, in the East Bay area of Contra Costa County. The preschool is licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services and is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International. Light the Bay Preschool accepts children funded by Childcare Council, Contra Costa County and Children's Council of San Francisco.

Description

Light the Bay Preschool offers small class sizes for students ages two through pre- kindergarten, in a safe loving environment. A Christian curriculum is the basis of our academic program. It is supplemented with a wide variety of materials and activities to ensure the development of the whole child. This is based upon the key developmental milestones of children ages two to five years old. The staff and teachers are highly qualified and work as a team to meet the needs of each of its students based on their God given uniqueness and needs. Younger children focus on developing social and motor skills, independence and completing daily activities built into our program. Older children are provided a broadened learning experience which includes an introduction to beginning phonics, writing and number skills; and developing an awareness of the world around them.

Program Policies

Affirmative Action Statement: Light the Bay Preschool is open to the public and operated on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal consideration and access to services without regard to religion, race, color, national origin, or ancestry.

Standards: Light the Bay Preschool is licensed by the State of California Social Services Community Care Licensing Department. Our preschool complies with all the standards set forth by the California State Department. Our operation is governed by the Christian Center Board of Directors and administration of Christian Center Inc., also doing business as Light the Bay. Our preschool has maintained active membership with the Association of Christian Schools International for over 25 years.

Incorporation: Light the Bay Preschool is a school department of Christian Center Inc., also doing business as Light the Bay, and is licensed as a non-profit organization. Incorporation protects the individual board and staff members against liability in fulfilling their respective duties.

Admission and Enrollment Guidelines: Children ages two through five are eligible for enrollment. We offer a two year old class, a three year old class and a Pre-K class, for students who will be attending Kindergarten the following year. Children are placed in specific classes based on age and developmental readiness.

Two and Three year old Classes: This program is designed to meet the discovery period of development. The secure environment allows for self-discovery and the introduction of many new skills. The students will be introduced to many new concepts that will foster curiosity and enhance their learning experience. Beginning academic skills are introduced on their individual level along with spiritual, social, emotional and physical skills.

Pre-Kindergarten Class: Preparation for kindergarten is the focus of this program. The students are challenged on a daily basis to develop and strengthen the advanced academic skills that are introduced through the Abeka curriculum. Spiritual, social and physical skills are continually reinforced through individualized teaching and group activities. Completion of this program will provide the foundation necessary for a successful kindergarten experience.

Program Policies-Continued

Enrollment Priorities:

1. Children who are currently enrolled in our program are given first priority placement for the following year.
2. Siblings of students already attending Light the Bay Preschool are given second priority placement.
3. Children whose parents attend Light the Bay Church are given third priority placement.

Admission Process:

1. Classes are filled on a first come, first serve basis, based on the date registration is paid.
2. As vacancies occur during the year, they will be filled from the waiting list or from new registrations according to the enrollment priorities listed above.
3. Community Care Licensing Regulation #101218:1 states the requirement to conduct one or more personal interviews with the child's authorized representative that meets the following requirements:
 - a. Enable the person responsible for admissions to understand the state of the child's health, physical, and emotional development and to assess whether the preschool can meet the child's needs.
 - b. Provide the child's authorized representative with information about the preschool that shall at least include the preschool's admission policies and procedures, activities, services, regulations, hours and days of operation, fees, procedures to be followed should the child become ill or injured while at the center, and procedures for conducting inspections for illness.

Student Registration

Registration Requirements: When registering your child at Light the Bay Preschool, a variety of forms are required for completion concerning your child's health history. This includes a parent emergency information form and consent for emergency medical treatment and transportation. Additionally, a Parents Rights and Personal Rights form must be filled out in entirety. These forms along with proof of immunization must be submitted to the school office prior to your child's first day of school. No exceptions.

The California School Immunization Law DOES NOT allow day care centers to admit children whose immunizations are not current. If you do not have an immunization record or your child has not received all required shots, contact your local health department immediately to arrange an appointment.

There is an annual registration fee that will cover enrollment until June 30. This fee is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. This fee along with your child's completed application will ensure your child a place, either in a class or on a waiting list depending upon availability. Applications will not be accepted without registration payment.

Tuition and Payment Guidelines

It is the goal of Light the Bay Preschool to provide each child the highest quality program available. Materials published by Abeka best meet our desire to provide our students an advanced academic skills program centered in Christian values. This quality program is operated on a stringent financial budget. The cooperation of our parents is essential to the sound management and continued operation of this quality program. To offer this level of advanced education for your child, it is necessary tuition be paid in a timely manner. Our operating expenses are covered only by the tuition you pay monthly. The following financial policy has been formulated in fairness to our parents, as well as to protect our own financial structure.

Financial Policy

1. Student Fees:

- a. The registration fee is an annual fee that will cover enrollment until June 30. This fee is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. It covers the cost of materials, curriculum, student accident insurance and various supplies.
- b. The first month's tuition payment must be paid in full before the student's start date.

2. Payment Methods:

- a. Monthly tuition payments must be made via FACTS. Please note that there will be a \$35.00 fee for insufficient funds. Parents are responsible to pay any additional fees that the school may incur and will be required to pay tuition through FACTS moving forward. Statement requests should be made at the business office.
- b. If your payment is more than 30 days past due, your child will not be allowed back to school until the account is current.
- c. To request any changes to your FACTS payment, please contact the business manager at least 5 business days before the next scheduled withdrawal date to ensure adequate time for the changes to take effect.
- d. Any program change or student withdrawal requires a 2 week WRITTEN notice, NO EXCEPTIONS.

3. Fundraisers and Community Outreach: Light the Bay Preschool receives no outside funding. Each year there will be various fundraising opportunities. Each family is expected to participate. Monies raised will go directly into your child's school helping to fund new equipment and learning materials as well campus improvement and beautification. Additionally your family will be asked to participate in charitable fundraising projects such as the annual St. Jude trike-a-thon. Due dates will be assigned to each fundraiser. Balances left unpaid will be added to the following month's bill and late charges may be applied until paid in full.

Financial Policy-Continued

4. Grievance Request for Payment Extension: Under extenuating circumstances, parents may submit a petition in writing to the Light the Bay Board of Directors. After consideration, the Board will notify the petitioner of their final decision which is to be honored immediately.

5. Additional Charges:

a. **Early Drop Off:** If a child is dropped off prior to the 6:00 opening time, a fee of \$1.50 per minute per child will be charged. The opening teacher arrives 5 to 10 minutes early to set up and prepare for the arrival of students. This time is not available for the supervision of students.

b. **Late Pick Up Fee:** There will be a fee of \$1.50 per minute per child for students who are picked up past their contracted program hours. This includes students who attend the half day preschool program. Traffic delays are not an exception. Please understand that we operate our school based on the community care licensing guidelines. In order for us to be in compliance with the teacher student ratios, parents need to honor their contracted times of service. If there are consistent late pick-ups then a meeting will be scheduled with the administration of Light the Bay Preschool to determine child's further enrollment.

c. **Breakfast:** Tuition costs include breakfast, however students must be in attendance before 8:00 to receive their meal.

6. Tuition Price Changes: As the operation costs of our program increase, tuition price changes may occur. If it is determined a need exists to increase fees, this change will go into effect with a 30 day notice.

“Education is not received. It is achieved.”

-Albert Einstein

General Program Information

Days and Hours of Operation: Light the Bay Preschool offers a year round program which begins in mid-August and continues through the summer program of the following year. The school year program begins mid-August and ends on June 30. Light the Bay preschool is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm.

It is extremely important that your child is in attendance for daily academic instruction. Class hours are from 9:00-10:00 am. Being punctual is important as late comers disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching.

Light The Bay Preschool is not only a childcare facility, but also a school. It is preferred that all students come to school by 9:00 am, in order to ensure that they are able to participate in the activities and curriculum planned.

School Calendar: The preschool is closed on all Federal holidays. There are several early dismissal days and a few closures for teacher in-service. Please review your admissions contract for these dates. There is no financial credit for holidays or closure dates.

Staff: Light the Bay preschool employs only the best that our Christian community has to offer. Each staff member is extensively trained in the field of early childhood education. Teachers are encouraged to continue their education and are provided training and professional growth opportunities.

Parent Visits: Parents are welcomed to visit Light the Bay Preschool. Please check in with the director or program coordinator to schedule a visit. If visiting, please remember, the teacher's responsibility is to supervise and interact with the children. Please do not engage the teacher in a conversation while they are fulfilling their duties. Other children, including siblings are not allowed in the classrooms during parent observations and visits.

Conferences: There will be parent conferences throughout the year or as needed to discuss your child's progress. As a parent, any time you have a question or concern, please feel free to call the office to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher. Our goal is to partner with you in the education and development of your child.

Birthdays: Parents are welcome to bring in a special treat to share with the class for their child's birthday. Please contact your child's teacher in advance to make the proper arrangements. This is not a replacement for the child's birthday party as gift exchanges and extended party time is not allowed.

General Information continued

Snack Time

Each half-day students will receive a mid-morning snack. Full-time students receive a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack.

Lunch Time

Lunches are to be sent with child each day in a lunch bag/box and should be ready for child to eat. Parents are encouraged to send small portions to suit your child's needs. Children are encouraged to eat at least half of their main meal before opening their drink or eating their dessert.

*Please note that we are unable to provide warm-ups or cook/prepare meals from your child's lunch bag/box.

Responsibility for Personal Belongings

We try to care for the child's personal belongings; however, we cannot be responsible for damage to personal property or lost articles. **PLEASE LABEL ALL REMOVABLE CLOTHING, LUNCH PAILS, BACKPACKS, SNACKS, BEDDING, JEWELRY, OR OTHER ITEMS YOUR CHILD MAY BRING TO SCHOOL.**

We will not be responsible for any lost items brought to school by children!

Lost and Found

Any items that are not claimed or labeled will be placed in the lost and found bin. Each month, the Lost and Found bin is emptied, bagged, and either donated or disposed of.

Absences

If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please call the office after 6:00am at (925) 432-3800. This will allow the teacher to be notified so the class can pray for the child. No tuition credit will be issued for lost time due to illness.

Extended Illness

If your child is out of school for more than two weeks due to illness, you must bring a doctor's release verifying your child's ability to resume normal preschool activities. Tuition credit for extreme illness will be at the discretion of the Light The Bay Board of Directors. The parent must submit a written letter of explanation, with doctor's verification of illness, and amount of time absent. The parent will receive written notification of acceptance or denial within two weeks of the request.

General Information continued

Substitute or Make-up Days

Substitute or make-up days are not allowed. We are licensed to have a specific number of children per teacher and staff according to enrollment. We know that on the days your child is in attendance that you would want proper student-teacher ratios.

Change in Routine

Please notify us if your child has a serious change in routine at home such as illness, death, divorce, parent separation, new baby, etc. Many times we can help your child feel more comfortable at school if we are aware of the changes that are occurring.

Toileting

We offer assistance and supervision to all students completing their potty training process.

Afternoon Nap

If your child is enrolled in a full day program, please bring a small blanket for naptime. A small pillow is optional. The preschool provides the cot and sheet. Using a permanent marker, please write your child's name on these items in LARGE PRINT. Naptime items are brought to school on Monday and sent home on Friday to allow parents to launder them over the weekend.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND LARGE DOLLS OR STUFFED ANIMALS, FULL SIZE PILLOWS OR BLANKETS...Thank you.

Toys from Home

Toys from home can get lost or broken. This results in tears. We suggest you explain to your child they play with their toys at home and preschool toys at school. Each class will have a special day each week for share time. On this day, children are welcome to bring a special item for sharing. You will be notified in advance of share days.

Remember to use this guideline for unacceptable toys to bring to school for share day: all electronic games, Pokémon, Power Rangers, superheroes, Simpsons, Ninja Turtles, He-Man, rock stars, guns, knives, mouth toys, fragile items, or things of value. If they are brought to school, they will not be allowed to share and will be kept in the office until the end of the day. If in doubt, please ask first.

Section 6
BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE
PLAN

Light The Bay Preschool believes all children should experience success. We strive for classroom environments that provide children with opportunities to explore their environment within consistent, age-appropriate limits. In this atmosphere, most behavioral issues are prevented. On the rare occasion a child misbehaves, our philosophy is to use this as an opportunity to teach biblical life and problem solving skills and how to take responsibility for their actions and choices. By using the following progressive guidance techniques, we strive to minimize events of inappropriate behavior while maximizing a positive environment for all students enrolled at Light The Bay Preschool.

Classroom Management

Our teachers will manage their classrooms by:

- ✓ Modeling and reinforcing positive behavior
- ✓ Maintaining consistent supervision
- ✓ Setting reasonable expectations for children's behavior based on their developmental levels and individual differences
- ✓ Being aware of each individual child's likes and dislikes, needs, abilities, and learning styles.
- ✓ Providing interesting, challenging, age appropriate, multi-modality learning experiences.

Positive Behavioral Techniques We Employ Include:

- I. Ignoring:
Some negative behavior is produced by the child to gain attention. Often the child will stop when he/she does not receive the desired result. We utilize ignorance as a tool to curb behavior unless a safety issue is involved.
- II. Redirection/Refocus:
As a means of curtailing undesired behavior, the staff at Light The Bay Preschool often will redirect a child with a different toy, engage the child in a different activity with a teacher or peer, or suggest independent play.
- III. Verbal Interaction:
The teacher and the misbehaving child will engage in a conversation to help him/her take responsibility for their actions and to help the child understand the consequences of their actions. The teacher will also model the appropriate way to handle the situation. For example, the teacher might say, "Instead of hitting Sarah, you could say, 'I am angry because you took my truck.'"

IV. Logical Consequences:

The teacher helps the child understand there is a logical consequence for his/her actions by removing the disputed object or change the activity that is causing the problem. For instance, the consequence for hitting another child with a block would be removal from the block area.

V. Time-Out:

To allow the child who is disregarding instruction or not following rules time to calm down and relax, he/she will be asked to sit out of the group. He/she will be directed to a quiet area within sight of the teacher. The child is given the option to return to the activity when ready. Total time out should not exceed one minute per year of age.

VI. Director's Office:

When all the above has been attempted without favorable results, the teacher will escort the child to the Director's office for additional discipline.

Guidelines for Persistent Inappropriate Behavior

Persistent inappropriate behavior is any unacceptable action that continues after the positive behavior techniques have been exhausted without a change. Additionally, it is any behavior that threatens the health or safety of other children and/or staff, or a continuous inability to conform to the rules and policies of Light The Bay Preschool. Final consequences and discipline are at the discretion of the director and is determined by seriousness and repetitiveness.

The following procedures will be followed for children displaying inappropriate behavior:

1. Staff will observe and document all incidents of inappropriate behavior.
2. Steps taken to correct the behavior will be included in the documentation.
3. If corrective action is ineffective or persistent offenses continue, a mandatory parent-teacher conference will be scheduled. The child may be invited to attend. During this meeting, a specific action plan will outline corrective measures and additional consequences up to expulsion if the behavior continues.
4. The Director may suggest outside resources to parents to assist all in better understanding and dealing with behavioral issues. Light The Bay Preschool staff will do their best to work with these resources for further guidance in addressing a child's inappropriate behavior.
5. If the inappropriate behavior still persists, the parents will be asked to keep the child at home for a day or two.

6. If the inappropriate behavior continues after the child has been kept home a second time, the parent will be given a one week notice to withdraw the child from Light The Bay Preschool.

Guidelines for Immediate Expulsion

Certain behavior may cause a significant risk of harm to the health and/or safety of other children and/or staff. Light The Bay Preschool may expel any child displaying such actions without following the above mentioned guidelines. These actions include, but are not limited to: an attempted physical assault which, if completed, would have resulted in serious bodily harm, a physical assault which resulted in serious injuries, an attempt at or the setting of fires, bringing weapons on campus, and causing substantial and intentional damage to real or personal property.

Our policy does not permit corporal or emotional punishment or physical restraint unless needed for the safety of the child from self or others. Ridicule, embarrassment, humiliation, or punishing a child for toileting lapses is not allowed. Staff will not withhold food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a means of punishment.

“In early childhood you may lay the foundation of poverty or riches, industry or idleness, good or evil, by the habits to which you train your children. Teach them right habits then, and their future life is safe.”

-Lydia Sigourney

Section 7 COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

To partner in the development of your child, Light The Bay Preschool makes every effort to maintain open lines of communication between home and school. Written communication is sent home using, but not limited to, the following means:

- ✓ Memos and flyers are attached to your child's sign in/sign out sheet
- ✓ Memos and flyers posted on doors and bulletin boards
- ✓ Yearly and monthly calendars
- ✓ Teacher notes
- ✓ Phone calls

Section 8 SAFETY

Campus Security

Light The Bay Preschool is a secure campus. The entrance to the preschool is locked. To gain access, please ring the doorbell located to the right of the door. All visitors must report to the front desk prior to admittance to classrooms.

Signing In and Out Policy

Please sign your child in and out daily in your child's program appropriate notebook located in the front office. State licensing laws require the signature of release (full signature, not initials) on the sign in and sign out document belonging to the individual the child is legally entrusted to on that day. It must be listed on the official transportation release in the child's file. Legal responsibility of a minor child is defined as persons over the age of 18 selected by the parent or legal guardian or child's natural parents.

Sign-In Procedures: The entrusted person must deliver the child to the receiving teacher and sign them in for the day. If you do not sign the child in, you will receive a call from the school to return to legally transfer the care of the child to Light The Bay Preschool by officially signing him/her in as required by law.

Sign-Out Procedures: A child may not leave the premises until they have been released by a teacher to an authorized adult who has officially signed the child out for the day. Official permission in WRITING must be given to the school to release a child to a previously unspecified adult. TELEPHONE PERMISSION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Never remove a child from the premise without first informing the teacher on duty.

Emergency Preparedness

For the safety of children and staff; fire, earthquake and shelter-in-place drills are discussed and conducted monthly.

Seat Belt Law

Please follow the guidelines below when transporting your child to and from school. Passenger restraint requirements will be followed during all field trips (see appendix for additional pamphlet).

“Effective January 1, 2012, all children must be secured in a child passenger safety seat (car seat or booster seat) in the back seat until their 8th birthday. This law prohibits a parent, legal guardian, or driver from transporting, on a highway in a motor vehicle, a child who is under 8 years of age without securing that child in an appropriate child passenger restraint system meeting applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.”

From: <http://www.childcarelinks.org/?/community/news/legislative-news>

Emergency Forms

Emergency information forms will be kept on file at all times. This must list your child’s physician and office phone number. Medical consent and a list of emergency contacts in the immediate area must be complete. Please be sure to include your child’s medical insurance or Kaiser number required for medical attention. **REMEMBER TO CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE WITH ANY CHANGES IN EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS AND INFORMATION IMMEDIATELY.**

Physician Report for Admission

State health regulations require a physician’s report of good health, physical and emotional maturity, special problems or needs, verification of immunizations, and tuberculosis risk screening. This must be updated yearly.

Scratches, Scrapes and Bumps

Basic childhood accidents will occur when children are at play and will be treated with basic first aid practices. The teacher on duty will complete an “Ouch Report”. The original will be attached to the child’s sign-in/sign-out sheet and a copy filed in their student records file for future reference. Basic first aid will be administered for cuts, scrapes, and bumps as necessary and may comprise of washing the affected area with soap and water, ointment applied, bandaging and/or administered to the bumped area.

Emergency Procedure

In the case of a medical/dental emergency, whether from injury or illness, emergency first aid will be started and 911 will be called immediately. Every attempt will be made to contact parents or other individuals listed on the emergency form until contact is made.

Section 9 DRESS CODE

As Light The Bay Preschool does not encourage superhero play or the emulation of movie, television and/or rock stars, please do not dress your child in a way that represents any of the listed. Disney characters are acceptable. Please use this guideline when choosing backpacks, lunch pails, blankets, pillows and any accessories or clothing worn to school. It is best children wear casual, washable clothing. Please consider clothing that encourages self-help. Simple apparel is very important to your child's independence. We will play on the playground daily if weather permits. Please supply your child with appropriate clothing for the weather: sweaters, coats, hats, glove, long pants, etc.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LABEL ALL REMOVABLE CLOTHING

For your child's safety, sandals are discouraged. If worn, they must be worn with socks and buckle across the foot. COWBOY BOOTS and FLIP FLOP STYLE SHOES ARE NEVER ALLOWED.

Extra Clothing

An extra change of clothes must be brought to school. Please make sure they are clearly marked with your child's name. Items should include: 2 pairs of underwear, a pair of socks, a shirt and a pair of pants or shorts. This change of clothes will be used for spills and/or potty accidents that may occur during the day. Remember to change the supply of clothes according to changes in the weather and accordance with your child's growth pattern. Please use a child's type backpack to store all items. Take them home on Friday and return them Monday washed, if necessary.

Section 10 SPIRITUAL GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS

- TWO YEARS:** Begins to understand sharing, being kind, and learning ways to express his/her love of God.
- THREE YEARS:** Discovers ways that God lovingly cares for them and learns to be responsive in a thankful way and with kindness.
- FOUR YEARS:** Reacts with wonder, and begins to develop ways to respond to Jesus's love for them.
- FIVE YEARS:** Learns that God's friends obey, love and help one another.

Grace (sung)

God our Father, God our Father Once
again, Once again
Thank you for our blessings, thank you for our blessings A-
amen, A-amen

Pledges

Pledge of Allegiance: I Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Pledge to the Christian Flag: I pledge allegiance to the Christian Flag and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one Savior, crucified, risen and coming again with liberty and justice for all.

Pledge to the Bible: I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God’s Holy Word, I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God.

Section 11 PRE-KINDERGARTEN READING READINESS

Curriculum: Abeka & Bob Jones University Press

Pre-Kindergarteners are introduced to each of the letters of the alphabet. Starting with the short vowel sounds, the child will learn its name and shape of the letter, its phonetic pronunciation (sound), and a clue word to help them remember its sound. Once proficient, the child progresses to combining a vowel with a consonant to make a blend sound. This progresses to the addition of a second consonant, allowing the child to begin reading short words.

Examples: “a”- “ba” – “bat” “e”- “le” – “let”

In this way, learning to read becomes fun and natural, without pushing or forcing the child before they are ready to progress.

For your information, the list of clue words Pre-Kindergartners learn is below:

A- Apple	N- Nest
B- Bell	O- Ostrich
C- Cat	P- Pear
D- Door	Qu- Queen
E- Egg	R- Ring
F- Fox	S- Saw
G- Goat	T- Table
H- Horse	U- Umbrella
I- Indian	V- Violin
J- Jar	W- Water
K- Kite	X- says
L- Lamp	“ks” Z-
M- Milk	Zebra