

Valley Christian Preschool

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Welcome to Valley Christian Preschool in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. This handbook contains information regarding the preschool program. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy as long as your child is enrolled in the program. It will answer many of the questions you have about Valley Christian Preschool.

Editor's Note: The term "parent" is used throughout to represent the primary individual(s) responsible for the child's care.

Overview of the School

Valley Christian Preschool was founded as a ministry of Valley Lutheran Church in 1995.

Valley Christian's Preschool Mission:

To provide a Christ-centered education where children, two through five years of age, will have an opportunity to grow according to their spiritual, social and cognitive potential.

Valley Christian Preschool Goal:

To glorify God by providing a program that is consistent with the highest academic standards, utilizing the Ohio Content, Early Learning Standards as our educational guide and the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct as a guideline

for responsible behavior, when working with families and children from age 2 through 5.

Valley Christian Preschool will achieve this goal by:

- Implementing ongoing assessments
- Including specific learning goals into each lesson plan
- Regularly record student's progress
- Adapt our teaching strategies to meet the needs of VCP's students

Statement of Purpose

Valley Christian Preschool is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. We strive to provide the young child with a safe, nurturing, age-appropriate environment. Our school is designed to meet the needs of the whole child in a setting that allows him/her to feel safe and secure.

The educational programs at Valley Christian Preschool are designed to meet the developmental needs of children in six key areas:

- Gross Motor Development
- Fine Motor Development
- Language Acquisition
- Cognitive Skill Development
- Social Development
- Personality/Psychological Development

These areas of growth and development are incorporated into lesson plans that take into consideration the diversity of young children. Our teachers understand that the young child learns best "through play." The staff uses a variety of teaching techniques and learning strategies, which allow each child to progress at his/her own pace, according to his/her individual need and abilities. Through the use of developmental records, our teachers are able to track each child's progress and discuss his/her successes with his/her parents.

Enrollment is open to any child 23 months to 6 years of age provided Valley Christian Preschool can meet their needs. Enrollment shall be granted without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, religion, national origin, or political affiliation.

Philosophy

Valley Christian Preschool's philosophy is to provide an atmosphere suited to the development of a child's love of Christ and a love for learning in order to prepare them to enter any elementary school.

Valley Christian Preschool utilizes fun and creativity to foster a love of learning. We challenge our students by promoting inquiry and discovery through exploring the world around them. This instills a sense of confidence in their ability to master new situations and tasks through reasoning. Your child will be exposed to a variety of teaching methods so that he/she will be ready to enter any elementary school.

You, the parent, are very important to Valley Christian Preschool. Because you know your child best, we encourage you to contact the school about any questions or concerns you might have. If there is anything we can do to make your child's experiences more meaningful, please let us know.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child and sharing in his/her growth and development. Many thanks for selecting our school.

Valley Christian Preschool adheres to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. You can access the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct through this link.

https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct_

Licensing Statement

Valley Christian Preschool is a licensed preschool program by The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Step Up To Quality

Step Up To Quality was created to help parents identify early care and education programs that go beyond the minimum standards of licensing.

Star Rated programs voluntarily meet higher levels of care and early learning. The more stars the better. Each star signals a higher standard of staff qualifications and planned learning activities. Parents are choosing Step up to Quality because they want the best for their children. Research from The Ohio State University confirms that as programs add stars, there are benefits to the children's education. As a result, the children display more confidence, a curiosity about the world around them and are ready to learn. These are skills important for success in school and in life.

In January 2016 Valley Christian Preschool was awarded 5 out of 5 Stars from the Ohio Department of Education.

Guidance Policy

It is the policy of Valley Christian Preschool to keep disciplinary issues minimized and to help children monitor their own behavior. The staff of the Valley Christian Preschool presents and models age-appropriate behavioral guidelines and uses reflective communication to encourage children to express their emotions. The staff encourages self-control, self direction, responsibility, and cooperation. When practical and safe, logical or natural consequences will be presented to the child.

Valley Christian Preschool staff is trained in the process of positive discipline. Positive discipline instructs children as to what they should do. For example: "We walk inside the building" vs. "No running!" This philosophy of discipline is in accordance with the Valley Christian Preschool belief that children learn best in an environment where love, guidance, and encouragement promote the development of self-esteem.

Aggressive physical behavior (fighting, hitting, biting, etc.) by a child toward another child or staff member is unacceptable. Staff members will intervene immediately should this type of situation occur in order to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Physical restraint (a teacher holding a child) will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and then only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation. Children will be shown positive alternatives rather than just being told "no". Parents will be informed if such an incident occurs, and a conference may be requested at any time to discuss an acceptable

behavioral plan. If a child's behavior is uncontrollable, extremely disruptive and/or harmful to him/herself or others, a parent may be asked to remove the child from school for the day. Open communication between home and school is considered the key to effective discipline.

At no time at Valley Christian Preschool will a child be subjected to physical corporal punishment (shaking, hitting, biting, pinching, etc.), Psychological abuse (e.g. humiliation, frightening), verbally abused by the staff or coercion (e.g. shoving, pulling, forcing a child to sit down, etc.). Children will never be disciplined for sleep habits, toileting accidents, food consumption, or lack of participation in scheduled activities. At all times, a child's age, emotional state, and past experiences will be considered in discipline matters. Any violation of the school's discipline policy should be brought to the Director's attention immediately. Any suspect of abuse the Director will meet with the staff person and will communicate situation to the Valley Christian Preschool Board for guidance on the course of action.

The ultimate goal of the staff and VCP Board of Valley Christian Preschool is to keep every child in the program and exhaust all measure before suspension or exclusion is used. Not until the staff and board find it in the best interest of the child will exclusion be determined. In the event a child's behavior should escalate to endanger the health and safety of her/himself, other classmate or faculty, the following procedure will be implemented:

Parent Conference - The parents, teacher(s) and Director will meet to discuss the situation to form a plan that is mutually agreeable to all parties in order to alter the undesired/unsafe behavior.

Early Dismissal - If the child continues to be disruptive or the undesired/unsafe behavior continues after the parent conference has occurred, the parent will be called to come pick the child up and the child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.

Suspension - Should the behavior continue after the early dismissal has occurred, the child will be suspended from attending school for a period of 3 full school days. It will be the parents' responsibility to arrange for alternate care during the suspension period.

Disenrollment - The Director will disenroll a child if the undesired/unsafe behavior after the above procedures have been exhausted. This may occur without notice due to the health and safety of the other students and staff. The Director has the right to disenroll a child after receiving input from the teacher(s) and under direction of the preschool board. The Director does not need to provide any notice of disenrollment nor do any of the above procedures need to occur. The Director will do the best to provide alternate placements.

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Once the reported incident is reported to the director the director will handle it in the following ways.

1. There will be an immediate removal of staff from classroom until accusation is given a comprehensive investigation
2. Director will interview the adult who reported the abuse/neglect
3. Director will interview the teacher who is being accused of the abuse or neglect

4. Once information is gathered Director will report the incident and facts to the preschool board for further direction
5. If abuse/neglect is proven to have happened, staff member will be immediately terminated with no further pay, parents will be informed and Director will notify State Licensing of a serious incident.
6. If it is found that the staff member did not abuse or neglect a child, the staff member will report back to work with no further action required

Valley Christian Preschool's Policy complies with federal and civil rights laws

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Children's Bill Of Rights

We, the faculty and staff at Valley Christian Preschool for Early Childhood Education, pledge to recognize and honor this Children's Bill of Rights.

Every child in our program has the right to be respected as an individual with concern for his or her interests, special needs, talents, and individual style and pace of learning.

Every child has the right to a calm, warm, loving and nurturing environment where physical attention (hugs and cuddling) is freely given so that a child feels valued and secure, and is thus able to develop positive self-esteem.

Every child has the right to personal attention, a relaxed atmosphere, and freedom of choice in his/her daily activities, which can only be provided in small classes.

Every child has the right to have all physical needs met.

Every child has the right to a clean, safe environment in which to spend his/her day.

Every child has the right to experience a variety of activities throughout the day that help him/her develop a feeling of independence and confidence.

These activities provide opportunities for creativity, exploration, learning and development in language skills, gross and fine motor skills, cognitive skills, social skills and emotional/psychological maturation. Outdoor play is a daily part of their activities. It is important that your child has weather appropriate clothing.

License

In the handbook you will find an attachment about licensing and other valuable information. Please take the time to read this information.

Admissions

A child is considered to be enrolled in the center only after the registration fee has been received, the administrator confirms the availability of space and the required paperwork is received. This includes basic enrollment and health information. Any change to this information must be communicated to the office immediately so that current information is always on file. This is for the safety of your child. A medical form signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner is required to be submitted within 30 days of admission. This medical form must be updated every 12 months.

Hours and Days of Operation

Valley Christian Preschool will be in operation Monday through Friday 9:00-3:00 following the Chagrin Falls School District Schedule.

Teachers will be ready to greet your child at 9:00 A.M. Children will be dismissed at 12:20 for the morning program and 2:50 for the full day program.

Staff/Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size:

Valley Christian Preschool strives to provide a high level of quality care. Our ratios are as follows (during all hours of operation/in classrooms and all indoor settings/ in all outdoor learning environments):

each other's specific needs and are able to communicate with each other so that the child's needs are met. A strong teacher/student relationship is encouraged to help children feel safe and secure in their preschool environment, make families feel welcome and feel like their teacher can address their concerns in a positive manner and celebrate the milestones their child achieves. These practices can positively impact the child's cognitive, language, and social-emotional development.

Tuition/Fees and Payment Policies:

Tuition is paid on a monthly basis. Monthly payments are due August-May. Payments are billed monthly August through May. Payment by check is preferred. Checks should be payable to "Valley Christian Preschool".

Payment received 10 days after the invoice due date will be subject to a \$25.00 late fee. Please contact the office if payment difficulties are anticipated so alternative arrangements may be made. Failure to meet this payment schedule may result in your child's dismissal in the program per board review and approval.

There is no credit given for scheduled school holidays, child's illness, or school closing due to inclement weather/emergency school closing.

Registration Fee

An annual registration fee of \$125.00 is payable upon enrollment and each year when the child is re-enrolled. If there are two or more children in the same family, the second registration fee is \$75. A child is not considered enrolled until the registration fee is received.

Delinquent Accounts/Returned Checks

There will be a \$25.00 fee for checks returned by the bank. This fee is due at the time of notification.

Late Pick-up Charges

If a parent realizes that circumstances beyond their control are going to delay pick-up, a phone call or email is requested. This is important as many

children fear they have been forgotten when parents do not arrive at their usual time. The first time arriving late will be considered a grace period...any recurring times will be charged a \$20 late fee for arriving after the scheduled dismissal time.

Withdrawals

Two weeks written notice is required for withdrawing for any reason. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged for that period. If two weeks' notice is given, any additional tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal less any outstanding charges for late fees, field trip costs, etc.

Additional Days/Hours

Switching of scheduled days is prohibited. Additional days may be added based on the rates quoted in the enrollment agreement. Parents are required to let the Office Manager know if planning to bring a child for an additional day. Additional days are offered based on enrollment and may not always be available. Last minute requests will be considered only if sufficient space and staff are available to adequately meet the needs of the additional child.

Inclement Weather

Valley Christian Preschool will follow Chagrin Falls school district for school closings due to inclement weather and emergency closings. Parents will be emailed to be notified when Valley Christian Preschool is closed.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Procedures

When the fire alarm sounds:

1. Teacher will determine what evacuation route to be taken
2. Children will walk quickly and quietly in a line. One adult must be in front and in the rear as children evacuate building.
3. A HEAD COUNT WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS TIME

4. Notify Fire Department

Responsibilities

1. Lead Teacher leads the classroom outside, Support teachers follows behind with attendance
2. Director checks all rooms and bathrooms for all children
3. Lead Teacher will hold a green card if all children are present, red if one or more children are missing
4. Director notifies the fire department

Tornado Evacuation Procedure

When storm warning is issued, follow these procedures:

1. Lead Teacher will lead classroom to the specified hallway or Stairwell based on their classroom.
2. Make sure there is no crowding, children will sit down and cover their head with arms, and children should be at least 3 feet apart.
3. Children and teachers will remain in this position until alert is over
4. Have flashlight available for emergency lighting

Responsibilities

1. Director signals when a storm warning is issued
2. Lead Teacher leads the classroom outside, Support teachers follows behind with attendance chart
3. Lead Teacher will hold a green card if all children are present, red if one or more children are missing
4. The Director checks rooms and bathrooms for all children

Additional Severe Weather Emergencies

- Severe Storms (e.g., thunderstorms): Director will monitor the weather news sources for any storm information and/or emergency instructions. Staff and children will remain indoors and move away from windows.

- **Flash Flooding:** Director will monitor weather information for flooding details. If advised to evacuate we will do so immediately. Parents will be notified as soon as possible via tadpoles of evacuation and where to pick up the children.
- **Winter Weather (e.g., major snowstorms, blizzards, ice storms):** Valley Christian Preschool follows Chagrin Falls SD to determine when to close school in the case of blizzards, excessive snowfall, and ice storms. Director or Office Manager will email emergency notification of school closer via tadpoles. If severe winter weather starts developing during the day Director or Office Manager will email parents to pick up their children early and if necessary, will make phone calls using the Tadpoles app.
- **Earthquakes:** Safe spots will be identified in each classroom, under tables away from windows. We will assume the safe position (covering head and neck) in the safe spot until the earthquake has passed.

Supervision Policy

A major responsibility of the staff is to ensure the health and safety of each child entrusted in our care. Staff persons are alert to the safety needs of their children, anticipate possible hazards, and take necessary appropriate precautionary and preventive measures. The staff members must be able to see and hear children at all times

At no time will a toddler and/or preschooler be left unattended. If a child becomes ill a teacher will escort the child to the preschool office where the director and/or office manager will stay with the child until the caregiver arrives to pick up their child. The child will always be within sight of the staff member.

Arrival/Departure

A parent should notify Valley Christian Preschool by 9:00 A.M. at (440) 247-0390 whenever a child will not be attending on a scheduled day. Please state if your child is ill and their symptoms. Teachers attempt to wait until everyone has arrived to start their activities, so timely notification is

appreciated. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses that may occur at the school.

Upon arrival each morning parents will escort their child to their designated classroom or assigned area of the building where they are left in the care of the supervising staff member. Children are required by law to be under adult supervision at all times. A parent's participation in getting the child settled with the staff member will help the child adjust quickly to the morning routine. If there is anything that the staff can do to assist with the morning transition, parents should not hesitate to ask. Children attending the morning preschool program should be settled and ready for school to start by 9:10 AM. Parents have a 10 minute transition time starting at 9:00 before class officially starts. If a parent would like to stay longer arrangements must be made with the Director AND the child's teacher. Classroom teachers will determine the best times for volunteering in the classroom. Arriving late may make a child feel left out, because classmates will already be involved in the day's activities.

At the end of the day, teachers will escort the child to the parents' car by the parking lot entrance of the church (3-5 Year Old Classes & Afternoon Classes); by the half circle driveway at the front of the church (2 Year Old Class). Parents will have a card in their front windshield with the last name of the child they are picking up from school. If someone we do not know is picking up your child, please make sure to inform the teacher during morning drop-off or through email. During dismissal teachers will have a master pick-up list which will include the approved adults' names who each child is able to be released (from the enrollment paperwork). Remind the authorized person that we may ask for a valid driver's license to ensure your child's safety. We are not allowed to release your child to an older sibling (under the age of 18). If there are any changes in emergency contact information or individuals who are authorized to pick up your child, please make sure to let the office staff know immediately. We reserve the right to refuse the release of a child to any person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. In such instances, another parent, guardian or authorized contact person will be contacted.

Once the supervising staff member approaches the vehicle the parent and/or guardian is responsible for the child by opening the door, getting the child into the car, buckling the child safely into the car and closing the door before pulling out of the school property.

VCP discourages idling vehicles in your parking areas unless of extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures. The care may remain on during the pick-up line.

Building Security

Doors to Valley Christian Preschool will be locked from 9:15 until 2:45. If you arrive during this time period you need to ring the bell on the keypad, which is to the right of the main entrance doors. Once you ring the bell either the church secretary or someone from the preschool office will unlock the doors for you to enter. If you need to pick your child up early or arrive late please notify the preschool office so the school can expect when you will arrive. There are security cameras on the exterior and interior of the building. Lastly we have a MARCS Radio that immediately contacts first responders if there is an intruder in the building.

Classroom Visitations

If a parent would like to visit their child's current/future class arrangements must be made with the Director. The Director will make arrangements with the classroom teacher and will be present during the entire visit. Visits will not last more than 15-20 minutes. During the visitation, teachers are still responsible for students in their care and will not be able to communicate about their class routine until a substitute is in place. There will also be opportunities for parents to be a room parent planning holiday parties. In addition, parents will have the opportunity to volunteer to help during field trips, be secret reader in the classroom, help out with activities happening in the classroom, etc.

Supervision of Infants/Toddlers/Preschoolers

At no time will a child be left unattended. Staff will supervise children at all times. If a child becomes ill, they may be isolated in a section of the room

not in use or put in the Director's office until a parent arrives to pick him/her up. They will always be within the sight and hearing of a staff member.

Custody Agreements

If there are custody issues involved with your child, you must provide Valley Christian Preschool with the most recent court order on file indicating who has permission to pick up the child. If a non-custodial parent is not included among those persons authorized by the custodial parent to pick up the child, please inform the Director. A copy of the appropriate documentation must be included in the child's school record. This information will remain confidential and will be shared with other staff members only as required to meet the needs of the child. Valley Christian Preschool will abide by all court orders.

Child Abuse Reporting

All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staff has suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they **MUST** make a report to the local children's services agency. The safety of the children is always our first concern.

Field Trips/Transportation of Children

Valley Christian Preschool will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation, the parent or the emergency squad will be contacted.

As part of Valley Christian Preschool's program, periodic walking field trips will be planned to provide the children with exposure to learning experiences in our local community. Prior to each field trip, information will be sent home outlining the date, time, cost, location, chaperones, etc. The permission slip must be signed and returned to the supervising teacher by the date requested in order for a child to attend. Before departing from Valley Christian Preschool, a count will be taken of all of the children. Upon arrival at the destination, another count will be taken to assure that all of the children have safely arrived. This process will be repeated upon leaving the destination, and returning to Valley Christian Preschool. During the course of field trips, each staff member will have specific children that they are

responsible for supervising. On each field trip, each child has identification attached to his clothing. A first aid kit is taken on all trips and all trips include at least one staff member trained in communicable diseases, first aid and CPR. A copy of the Child Enrollment and Health Information form on each child will be carried.

Swimming

There are no swimming activities planned at Valley Christian Preschool

Meals and Snacks

Valley Christian Preschool does not provide lunches for their children. Since parents know their children's eating habits as well as any allergies their child might suffer from, Valley Christian Preschool feels that it is in the best interest of the children to have the parents provide their lunch. This meal must consist of nutritional food from the following food groups: protein, grain, and two foods from the fruit/vegetable group. All food items must be stored in a lunch box/bag clearly marked with your child's first and last name and dated. The lunches will be stored in the classroom; please be sure to include ice packs in your child's lunch if foods need to be kept cold. Children are encouraged to join their classmates for lunch and socialization. For the safety of the children, we ask that NO food be brought in glass containers. If your child forgets their lunch we will provide food from our snack supply to include the necessary food groups required by ODJFS.

Valley Christian Preschool provides a nutritious afternoon snack on a daily basis. These may include items such as cheese and crackers, cheerios, pretzels and graham crackers. 100% fruit juice is served with snacks. The snack menu is posted on the classroom door for parents to see what their child is being offered. A child will be encouraged to eat a balanced snack that the school has provided. However, if a child refuses certain foods, they will not be forced to finish the snack.

Special Feeding Needs

ODJFS licensing regulations state that we are required to have physician's documentation for each child who is on a special diet due to medical reasons.

- Special feeding needs: Food intolerance, allergy, health concerns; diabetes, overweight/underweight, or medical conditions that require the use of specialized feeding equipment (e.g. feeding tubes).

The documentation must include food items which are to be excluded from the diet. Please see the office manager to be given form JFS 01236 Medical/Physical Care Plan. Your physician will need to complete this form and then your child's teacher and VCP Director will schedule a meeting to make sure your child's needs will be met in the classroom.

If children are on special diets due to religious or cultural reasons, a signed note from the parent/guardian is required. The note must outline the foods to be excluded and the reasons for excluding the foods from the child's diet.

Water for Thirst

At Valley Christian Preschool we believe in Water First for Thirst. We make drinking water freely available so that children can serve themselves both inside and outdoors. Other than water, only unflavored skim or 1% milk will be offered to children ages two and older. We do not serve juice, soft drinks, or sports drinks to children, in an effort to help them limit the amount of sugar in their diets.

Designated Location for Mothers who are Breastfeeding

If you are in need of a location to breastfeed your infant/toddler you can use the Preschool Conference Room.

Cleaning/Disinfecting/Sanitizing

Valley Christian Preschool adheres to the NAEYC Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting Frequency Table and ODJFS Rules for cleaning (Sanitary Equipment, Cleaning and Sanitizing Items and Handwashing Rules). All cleaning procedures are posted within each classroom for quick reference.

You can access the NAEYC Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfection Frequency Table form through this link.

https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/accréditation/early-learning/clean_table.pdf

Valley Christian Preschool does routine cleaning with Bioesque Disinfectant Solution – a chemical free product that is approved by the CDC for removing germs from surfaces. We select and use fragrance-free and least toxic cleaning products in our facility. We use Bioesque, Green Seal, UL/EcoLogo, and EPA's Safer Choice research and certify cleaning products that are biodegradable and environmentally friendly.

Accidents/Emergencies

Valley Christian Preschool has devised several procedures to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while a child is in our care. In the event of a fire, or tornado, staff would follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes, and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at the designated spot. In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the center does conduct monthly fire drills, and periodic tornado drills. Should we need to evacuate due to fire or weather conditions, or the loss of power, heat, or water to the School, our emergency destination Chagrin Library across the street. A sign will be posted on the front door of the school indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible to come to pick up your child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contact as listed on your child's enrollment information.

There is always one staff member present that has received training in First Aid/Communicable Diseases and CPR. In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first aid. If the injury would be more serious, first aid would be administered and the parents would be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If any injury is life threatening, the EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records. Staff may not transport children in their vehicles. Only parents or EMS will transport. If a child would ever require Syrup of Ipecac to be administered, it would only be done with instructions from the Poison Control Center.

An accident/injury report will be completed, and given to the person picking up the child, on the day of the incident/injury, if any of the following occur:

the child has an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid; the child receives a bump or blow to the head; Valley Christian Preschool has to administer Syrup of Ipecac; the child has to be transported by emergency squad; or an unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child. If a child requires emergency transportation, the report shall be available within twenty-four hours after the incident occurs. If the parent refuses emergency transport Valley Christian Preschool has the right to refuse enrollment.

Management of Illnesses

The health of the children is very important to the staff at Valley Christian Preschool. By monitoring each child's health status, teachers are able to maintain a better environment for the entire class. Children who are ill cannot be appropriately cared for in a preschool setting. A child who is unable to participate in all school activities due to illness should not be in attendance. Cooperation in keeping a child home when he/she is showing symptoms of illness will be greatly appreciated by the teaching staff and all the children who would normally be in contact with that child. By establishing and maintaining a healthy environment, and reasonable health policies, all of our children will benefit.

If a child does arrive in the morning showing symptoms of ill health, the school will be unable to accept him/her. The exception to this requirement would be that a licensed physician has indicated in writing that there would be no health risk to your child or to any of the other children or staff. All final decisions regarding symptoms of ill health are at the discretion of the Director.

Examples of health symptoms that require exclusion from the program include (but are not limited to):

- Severe pain or discomfort particularly in joints, abdomen, or ears
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Severe coughing or sore throat

- Temperature of 100.0 degrees F or above-in combination with any other signs of illness
- Uncontrolled nasal discharge (discretion of our VCP staff)
- Jaundiced (yellow) skin or eyes
- Red eyes with discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- Infected, untreated skin patches/lesions or severe itching of body/scalp
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Skin rashes (excluding diaper rash) lasting more than 24 hours
- Swollen joints, visibly enlarged lymph nodes, or stiff neck
- Blood/pus from ears, skin, urine, stool
- Unusual behavior characterized by listlessness, loss of normal appetite, or confusion
- Symptoms of chicken pox, impetigo, lice, scabies, or strep throat
- Headache and stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool

If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent will be advised immediately. The child will be given the opportunity to rest or have quiet activities in a separate area until a designated release person can pick the child up. Anytime a child is isolated they will be kept within sight and hearing of a staff member. If the child is not picked up within one hour from the time of notification, the emergency contact person will be called. Children who are sent home due to illness will not be readmitted to school until all signs of illness have been gone for 24 hours. The exception to this requirement would be that a licensed physician has indicated in writing that the child does

not present a health threat to others and is able to participate in all school activities.

In cases of certain communicable diseases, Valley Christian Preschool is required to file a report with the Department of Health in 24 hours so that control measures can be used. Parents and staff are reminded to notify Valley Christian Preschool within 24 hours if a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable disease. An email will be sent out with a notification that your child may have been exposed to this illness. If a child has not been fully immunized for some of these diseases (due to the child's age, medical condition, or religious reason) he/she will be excluded from the school during an outbreak of a vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Medications

If a child needs any type of prescription medication while he/she is in attendance at Valley Christian Preschool, a state required medication form must be completed and signed on a daily basis. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of adverse reaction. If a child needs medication that is prescribed by your doctor, please give it to your child before he/she comes to school and after picking up your child. Should the child need a dose during the day, a Request for Administration of Medication must be completed and signed by a parent and the child's doctor. Non essential medicines must be stored in an area out of reach of children with the original container and a prescription label that includes the child's full name, a current dispensing date within the previous twelve months, exact dosage, name of health care provider and direction for use. Medicines that are needed for emergency use will be stored in the classroom where the child is assigned, and will be out of reach of children. Changes in prescription requires a new label on the container or a signed note from the child's health care provider. Medication is to be taken home everyday and expired medication will be discarded. The Director dispensing the medication will sign and date the Authorization form and medication log when the medication is administered.

It is Valley Christian Preschool's policy to not administer any over the counter medication to the children. This includes sunscreen, lotions, diaper cream

etc. Given the length of time that most children attend school, we encourage parents to apply sunscreen and other lotions prior to entering school in the morning. An exception to this policy is made for children who attend school until 3:00 PM. If you would like sunscreen reapplied to your child prior to afternoon outdoor play, Valley Christian Preschool needs a signed note from the parent that we are allowed to apply sunscreen. Sunscreen must be stored in the original container and a manufacturer's label that includes directions based on the age and/or weight of the child.

All prescription medications and sunscreen will be stored safely in the Preschool office in the First Aide Kit within a locked storage bin EXCEPT if the condition is life threatening in which case the medicine will be kept in the child's classroom out of reach of children and in a locked storage bin. Please do not mix medication into a child's food or drink, or store medications in diaper bags, book bags, or cubbies.

The dispensation of medication is undertaken as a professional courtesy and not required by law. Valley Christian Preschool reserves the right to refuse to dispense medication to any child if necessary procedures are not followed."

Valley Christian Preschool complies with the Americans Disabilities Act (ADA), including, administering medication to children with disabilities and administering care procedures to children with disabilities.

Medical/Dental That May Require Medication

Administering Emergency Medicines:

If a child has an allergy, asthma, diabetes or dental concern which may require emergency medication, an authorization form must be on file with a signature from a doctor as well as the parent. The form includes the five correct practices of medication administration, to verify specific training was completed on an annual basis.

1. Verifying the right child receives
2. Receives the correct medication
3. In the right dose

4. At the right time
5. By the right method, documenting each time a child receives the medication

Signature of the person signature is needed on the forms

All medicines NEEDS to be current (not expired), have a non-expired original prescription label with the child's first and last name, name of prescription, name of health care provider and appropriate dosage and directions of how to administer. Before the first day of school the staff and director who is involved with the care of the child will be trained. All parties will sign the training form. If it is determined that the child needs this emergency medication, a faculty member will dispense and document this on the medication log. The parent will be notified so that upon arrival at the school, the medication log can be completed and signed.

Health Screening and Referral Policy

Upon enrolling into Valley Christian Preschool and annually thereafter while in the program all children are required to complete a medical evaluation, such as vision, dental, height, weight, hearing, blood lead and hemoglobin levels. All of these screenings are important to determine the health needs of each child. The office manager will review records before the first day of school and will inform families when healthy records need to be updated. In the fall Valley Christian Preschool will post on Family Community Board referrals of doctors so that families know who to contact for health assessments. If at any time a teacher feels there is a concern, they will encourage the family to take their child to be checked by their physician. Vaccinations are highly encouraged but are not required by the Ohio Department of Education based on religious and personal beliefs.

Outdoor Play

Research has shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play. Based on this information and state requirements, outdoor play will be included in our program on a daily basis. We will limit the amount of time outside when the temperatures are very warm or very cold. Children will not be taken outside when the temperature (wind chill and heat

index factored in) drop below 15 degrees or rise above 95 degree. If the situation requires it we will also adjust the outdoor time due to rain, threatening weather, ozone warnings. etc. On days that outdoor play is not provided due to these conditions, we will include a time for indoor gross motor activities. Please send your children with the proper clothing so they may be comfortable and safe whenever we are outside. This includes snow pants, hats, mittens and boots in the winter time.

Toys from Home

It is recommended that all toys remain at home. It is very difficult for young children to share favorite possessions, and all toys that enter the school must be shared. In addition, many toys break easily and contain small parts.

A child's teacher may occasionally request show and tell items. Suggested show and tell items include books, photographs, special treasures such as seashells, or theme-related items. These should be discussed with the teacher and items will be shown at the teacher's discretion. Anything pertaining to violence (guns, war toys, etc.) cannot be utilized at Valley Christian Preschool. Material deemed inappropriate for a preschool audience will not be used.

Items to Bring to School

Toddlers and Preschoolers:

- One full change of clothing including socks
- Diapers and wipes, and/or extra sets of underwear if "in training"
- Bookbag

All items brought to school should be conspicuously labeled. Extra clothing should be provided as seasons change and as the child grows. Rubber soled, closed-toe shoes such as sneakers are the most appropriate school shoes for climbing, running, and playing outside. Appropriate outdoor apparel is needed daily as every effort is made to have some outdoor play time, even in the winter snow. Labeled clothing that is attached where possible (hoods on coats, clips on mittens) will lessen missing items. Additional sets of clothing

and appropriate underwear will be required when the child is “potty-training”.

Smoking Policy

It is our desire that the environment around the children be as safe and healthy as possible. Therefore, Valley Christian Preschool is a smoke-free school. Parents, staff and visitors are asked to comply with this request.

Blogs

Out of concern for child safety, we do not permit the use of Valley Christian Preschool name or service mark, including logos, photographs of school grounds, and photographs of any child, parent or employee of the school, to be posted on a web site, blog, or online social network without written permission from Valley Christian Preschool. If you wish to share information about Valley Christian Preschool in this manner please check with the Director.

Communication:

Valley Christian Preschool provides many opportunities for parents to receive information on the progress of their children as well as details on other general activities occurring from time to time. Examples of the types of communication that parents will receive include:

- The results from your child’s CDR-PR Screening will be sent home in November
- Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in January
- Progress Reports will be sent home in May

If you or your child’s teacher feel like there needs to be an additional conference time there will be one scheduled as needed.

Information Boards: These are located on the door or entry way of each classroom. Information is provided about upcoming school and community events. Individual classroom boards have lesson plans, class schedules, and attendance information posted. It is recommended that parents check the boards regularly to get updates on the planned program in the classrooms

Parking and Speed

The speed limit through the parking lot is 5 mph. For the safety of all, children should be accompanied by a parent into the building. The parent must hold the child's hand while walking between the car and the School. Please do not leave your car running while unattended.

School Communication

Activities and informational programs may be presented throughout the year based on parent interest. The goals and focus will largely depend on the needs and interests of the parents and children. Some of our goals are:

- To increase the involvement of parents in the school program
- To educate the parents concerning the school curriculum and philosophy
- To develop an understanding and open communication between home and school
- To develop friendship among parents/children
- To raise funds for special events for the children

Communications include but are not limited to;

- Weekly emails
- Informal notes
- Community newsletters

Parent Roster

A parent roster will be developed and updated every September. It will include parent names, email, phone numbers of those who choose to be on the roster.

Opportunities for Parent Involvement in Center Activities

We are Valley welcome parent involvement in center activities. Listed are some but does not include all the ways parents can be involved at Valley Christian Preschool.

Classroom Liaison, special speaker, chair teacher appreciation week, help with scholastic book fairs, chaperone during monthly and yearly field trips, volunteer in the classroom,

Screening and Referral Process

Within 60 business days of enrollment families will complete CDR-PQ to fill out information about their child's development. Once the questionnaire is filled out you will return back to school to be scored. Teachers will review the questionnaire so to gather information and see if there are any areas of development which are in concern. If there are concerns the child's teacher will provide families with the correct contacts in order to be fully evaluated by their home school district. Necessary referrals will be completed within 90 days if needs are identified.

During the year if staff suspects that a child has a developmental delay or any other special need the teacher will:

- Provide documentation of the assessment and explain concerns via parent/teacher conference, or phone call
- The teacher will provide next steps, such as contacting local school district for a formal evaluation
- Staff at VCP will coordinate with local school district to set up formal observations at VCP and provide any further assistance if necessary

The information provided will remain confidential between teacher and family. We do not report any data to Ohio Department of Jobs and Family services.

Transition Policy

We recognize that transitions are an important milestone at Valley Christian Preschool. As a result, we have policies in place to help children and families have smooth transitions.

Transition Information

In the beginning of August you will receive contact from your child's lead teacher via email, phone call OR postcard. You are invited to meet with your

child's teaching and complete the Transition Form regarding your child's specific needs and goals you have for the school year during the first two days of school. Valley Christian Preschool hosts a Meet and Greet before the start of school. This will give your child the opportunity to meet their teacher, visit their classroom and socialize with their classmates. Following the first day of school your child's teacher will provide input on how your child transitioned on the Transition Form. Within 30 days of the start of school you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's teacher to communicate any questions or concerns. You will receive a list of transition activities that pertain to your child's age group. Children who transition out of the program will be given a chance to gather materials and say goodbye to teachers and classmates.

Confidentiality

Each child's health and safety file are confidential. Records are kept in a secure area with limited access except by authorized personnel. These will be made immediately available upon request to the following:

- Administrators and teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the records.
- Parents and legal guardians
- Regulatory authorities

Record Transfer Policy

Families will be given a Consent Form to gain permission to release children's records from a previous setting and/or a future setting.

Process for Parent/Guardian Concerns

As a community-oriented school, it is essential that the adults in the community model the cooperative, compassionate communication we want our children to imitate. VCP has been fortunate to foster a positive culture, where adults in the community are mindful of their communication. Generally, VCP adults are aware of the toxic culture that can result from

habitual negative communication, and conscious about how to foster a functional community. In the spirit of Valley Christian Preschool, we know it isn't healthy for people to push away their concerns and unmet desires, but that it is necessary to move through them. The conflict resolution process below is designed to help us all recognize our needs and to move through them toward resolution... while treating people respectfully and keeping things in perspective. Although we may not, individually, always get exactly what we want; as a community we increase our health and happiness (which, ultimately, brings the best kind of individual satisfaction). The intended result is the gratification of feeling understood, while continuing to grow as humans. It is lifelong learning at its fullest. 36 Suggestions for moving through the conflict resolution process gracefully:

- Remember that VCP educators are dedicated to finding solutions that fit within the school's philosophy. Conflict can be a time to better understand the philosophy of the school.
- Remember that a "perfect educational environment" for children is not truly perfect, i.e. "without flaw" – but one where children and adults can experience problems and learn from them in a supportive environment.
- Recognize many problems represent the proverbial balance between individual and communal needs.
- Have faith that, unless a situation is extremely traumatic, your child is resilient. Believe in the holistic strength of your child.
- Remember that many problems are best solved by our children – for their sake and for ours.
- Remember that educators and support staff, although they try to be saints, have the same human frailties, emotions, and flaws as everyone else.
- Keep the feelings of others in your heart
 - Forgive
 - Keep the problem in perspective.

Ask yourself

- How much do I value Valley Christian Preschool Community School in relation to this particular problem?
- How important will this problem seem in a year, in several years?
- Is the problem something I can live with?
- Is the problem important, urgent, both, or neither?
- While our emotions can make problems seem incredibly urgent, most conflicts can be wisely resolved with time and patience.

The Conflict Resolution Process

Please take a minute to read these recommendations regarding the steps to conflict resolution. We want to hear from you as we are committed to making VCP a community where needs are addressed in a clear and respectful way. After all, a problem cannot be fixed if school personnel are not aware of the problem or if they don't understand that a particular situation, policy, or action is/was considered a problem or concern to you or the community. **Ultimately, the process establishes Trust.**

The Process:

1. Identify and define the conflict
 - i. Recognize that conflict is a normal part of the human condition, and does not make you weak or wrong. To recognize our feelings, and to directly confront the person with whom we have a conflict, requires courage.
 - ii. What really is the problem? Can you identify the problem without blaming the other person or group? Think in terms of "I want....I need....I feel...," rather than "You did this, or "You didn't do that." Be aware of your true feelings and the feeling of others.
2. Find a safe way to vent your feelings without damaging the community. Feelings strongly influence our behavior, and they need validation. It is human, with our need to validate our feelings or to simply think them through, to spread the problem to others, which often creates stronger feelings and moves things beyond perspective. When possible, we recommend that

you work directly with your child's teacher (or applicable person) if you have concerns or needs that involve the teacher or a classroom situation. This way, you work with the person who has the ability to solve the problem.

Note: In a school community, many conflicts are resolved after the first two steps. When a conflict or concern is shared directly with the teacher or leader, often a miscommunication, misinformation, missing information, or a misunderstanding come to light. If this is the case, most likely it can easily be resolved (if it hasn't spread among too many people).

3. If you feel a need for further resolution (after going through this process) or the concern involves VCP as a community, you may make an appointment with the Preschool Board President.

Written Concerns: If you would like the concern documented, please write a letter to the Valley Christian Preschool Board stating the concern and stating your needs and proposed solutions. If you need mediation between you and the teacher, the Valley Christian Preschool Board will help you. If you choose to, or if you are asked to write down your concern, we encourage you to be as clear and concise as possible. Try to be equally clear in writing about what you feel you need from the teacher or the school.

1. Expect that the teacher and/or Director will listen to your concern but may not immediately offer a solution. Provide the teacher and/or Director time to analyze and/or observe firsthand (if applicable) the situation and gather information. Allow him/her time to respond, which may be a day or several weeks.
2. Expect that the teacher and/or Director may ask you to brainstorm for solutions with them.
3. Together, agree upon a solution. This may require compromise. Remember the solution is not written in stone, but is something both parties are committed to trying.
4. Together, implement a solution.
5. Follow-up evaluation. After allowing plenty of time, make sure the chosen solution has really solved the conflict to your mutual satisfaction.

- If you are satisfied with the result, please let the other party know. If you submitted a written concern, please also indicate your satisfaction in writing for documentation.

- If the conflict has not been resolved to your mutual satisfaction, start the process over again

You are welcome to address the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Contact the preschool board president prior to the next meeting to review your concern and to request placement on the meeting agenda, if needed. The board, while not designed to manage or problem-solve operational and managerial issues or to direct school management in the resolution of conflict, will take the information into consideration, and determine whether the Director has violated any policies.

Policy taken from Rainbow Community Schools in Ashville NC

Parent Conference/Formal Assessments

Parents will have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher two times per year. Once before the school year to discuss goals and concerns. The second conference will be held mid-year to go over the formal assessments results. Children enrolled at Valley will be assessed two times a year in November and April. Parents will receive a written progress report about their child's development two times per year. During the December conferences goals will be created by parents and teachers. Parents will receive updates on goals and update on other areas of development in May before the end of the school year. Parents are welcome to request a meeting at any point during the year if there are any questions/concerns.

Valley Christian Preschool does not report child level data to ODJFS pursuant to the Chapter 5101:2-17 Of the Administrative Code.

Center Parent Information

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio department of job and family services.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>

FINAL WORD

The Director reserves the right to deny, cancel, sever or suspend a child's enrollment if deemed in the best interest of the child or the school. In such cases, any unused tuition will be refunded

We reserve the right to refuse the release of a child to any person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. In such instances, another parent, guardian or authorized contact person will be contacted.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately.

If, after reviewing this Parent's Handbook, there are any questions or comments regarding Valley Christian Preschool and its policies, parents should feel free to speak with the Director.