

2026-2027



Preschool Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Fellowship Christian Academy

Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool Families,

Welcome to Fellowship Christian Academy! We are delighted that God has called you and your family to be part of our greater FCA family. Choosing a preschool is an important decision, and we are honored that you have entrusted FCA with the care, education, and spiritual development of your child.

At FCA, we believe the early childhood years are foundational. These are the years when children begin discovering who they are, how they learn, how they relate to others, and most importantly, how deeply they are loved by God. Our desire is to provide a safe, nurturing, joyful environment where children can learn, explore, build relationships, and grow in their understanding of Christ.

As a ministry of The Fellowship Church, we are committed to partnering with families to provide an exceptional early childhood experience grounded in God's Word. Our teachers and staff recognize the tremendous responsibility of caring for young children and are committed to supporting their academic, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual development.

We believe education is discipleship, partnership strengthens children, and excellence honors God.

This Parent Handbook provides important information about our preschool's policies, procedures, expectations, and daily practices. These guidelines help us create a safe, consistent, and Christ-centered environment for every child. We ask each family to become familiar with the handbook and to partner with us through open communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to the well-being of our children.

Our theme and focus this year is **Reach. Grow. Multiply**. We pray that together we will **reach** children and families with the love of Christ, help each child **grow** into the person God created them to be, and **multiply** our impact as children carry His love into their families, friendships, churches, and communities.

Thank you for choosing Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool. We look forward to an incredible year of learning, growing, and serving alongside your family.

In His Holy Name,

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Head of School

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Chapter 1: Mission, Vision, and Values of FCA

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.” — Colossians 3:23

1.1 Our Mission

Fellowship Christian Academy exists to partner with families in providing a Christ-centered education that develops students spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally while equipping them to influence the world for Jesus Christ.

1.2 Our Vision

Our vision is to become the premier Christ-centered school in Central Texas by providing exceptional academics, intentional discipleship, and a nurturing community where students discover their God-given purpose.

1.3 Our Purpose

Reach • Grow • Multiply

Reach: We seek to reach every child and every family with the love and truth of Jesus Christ through authentic relationships and faithful teaching.

Grow: We believe students and families should continually grow spiritually, academically, emotionally, socially, and professionally.

Multiply: Our goal is to multiply disciples, servant leaders, strong families, and Kingdom influence throughout our community.

1.4 Core Values

Christ First: Jesus Christ is the foundation of everything we do.

Academic Excellence: We pursue excellence because it honors God.

Biblical Worldview: Every subject is taught through the lens of Scripture.

Relationships: Children thrive when they are known, loved, challenged, and supported.

Servant Leadership: Leadership begins with service.

1.5 Statement of Faith

Fellowship Christian Academy is a ministry of Fellowship Church and is committed to providing Christ-centered education grounded in the truth of God's Word. We affirm the following foundational beliefs:

1. The Bible

We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God. It is the complete revelation of God's truth and serves as the final authority for faith, doctrine, and Christian living. Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21; Psalm 19:7–11.

2. God

We believe there is one true and living God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

3. Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died for our sins, rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will return in power and glory.

4. The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit indwells every believer, empowers holy living, produces spiritual fruit, and equips believers for service.

5. Humanity

We believe every person is created in the image of God. Because of sin, all people are separated from God and are in need of salvation through Jesus Christ.

6. Salvation

We believe salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit and called to continual spiritual growth.

7. Baptism and Discipleship

We believe believer's baptism by immersion is an act of obedience, and every believer is called to lifelong discipleship.

8. The Church

We believe the Church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, making disciples, serving others, and proclaiming the Gospel.

9. Eternity

We believe Jesus Christ will personally return to judge the living and the dead. Believers will enjoy eternal life with God, while those who reject Christ will experience eternal separation from God.

1.6 Statement of Biblical Authority

Fellowship Christian Academy recognizes the Bible as the ultimate authority for all matters of faith, doctrine, conduct, and moral practice. The Academy's policies, educational philosophy, employment expectations, and community standards are derived from and governed by Scripture.

1.7 Christian Educational Philosophy

At Fellowship Christian Academy, we believe children are uniquely created in the image of God and possess incredible potential to grow intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, socially, and physically. Our classrooms are joyful, engaging environments where learning is rooted in biblical truth and strengthened through relationships.

- Direct instruction
- Hands-on learning
- Collaborative discussion
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Real-world application
- Problem solving
- Biblical integration across every subject

1.8 Partnership with Parents and Families

Parents are the primary educators of their children. Fellowship Christian Academy exists to partner with—not replace—the family. Open communication, mutual trust, and biblical conflict resolution strengthen the partnership between school and home.

1.9 Commitment to Christian Education

FCA integrates biblical truth into every aspect of school life. We seek to develop students who know Christ personally, love others deeply, think critically, and serve faithfully.

1.10 Texas Childcare Licensing

The Fellowship Christian Academy is a ministry of The Fellowship Church and is licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. We are committed to providing the highest standard of care. All staff are CPR/First Aid certified, FBI fingerprinted and complete 24 hours of child development training each year.

Chapter 2: FCA Preschool Curriculum and Instruction

At Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool, we believe young children learn best through a thoughtful combination of **intentional instruction, purposeful play, exploration, meaningful relationships, and hands-on experiences**. Our curriculum is designed to nurture the whole child—academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually—while building the foundational skills children need for future school success.

Our preschool instructional program uses **Frog Street** as the primary curriculum framework, supplemented with carefully selected programs and resources that strengthen specific areas of development and provide continuity as children prepare to transition into FCA Elementary.

2.1 Frog Street: Our Core Early Childhood Curriculum

Frog Street serves as the foundation of our preschool curriculum. This comprehensive, research-based early childhood program provides developmentally appropriate learning experiences designed around the way young children naturally learn and grow.

Through engaging themes, literature, music, movement, centers, teacher-guided instruction, and purposeful play, children develop skills across multiple areas, including:

- Language and vocabulary development
- Early literacy and phonological awareness
- Early mathematics and number sense
- Science and discovery
- Social studies and understanding of the world
- Fine and gross motor development
- Social-emotional development
- Creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking

Teachers use Frog Street as a framework while intentionally adapting instruction and learning experiences to meet the developmental needs of the children in their classrooms. Our goal is not simply to prepare children for the next grade level, but to develop **curious, confident, capable learners who enjoy discovering new things**.

2.2 Handwriting Without Tears

Beginning in our **Three-Year-Old classrooms and continuing through PreK and Kinder Ready**, FCA supplements Frog Street with **Learning Without Tears' Handwriting Without Tears** approach.

Young children develop handwriting skills gradually. Before children can successfully form letters, they need strong fine-motor skills, visual-motor coordination, correct pencil grasp, an understanding of shapes and lines, and opportunities to manipulate materials with their hands.

Handwriting Without Tears provides developmentally appropriate, multisensory experiences that help children progress from these foundational skills toward increasingly independent letter and number formation.

Our emphasis is on developing **proper habits and confidence**, rather than rushing children into pencil-and-paper tasks before they are developmentally ready.

2.3 Biblical Integration in Our Curriculum

Spiritual development is not an isolated part of the FCA preschool day. Biblical truth is intentionally woven throughout our classrooms, relationships, instruction, and daily routines.

Our preschool classrooms use **Abeka Bible** curriculum to introduce children to Scripture through age-appropriate Bible stories, songs, memory verses, prayer, and discussion. Children begin learning who God is, how deeply He loves them, and what it means to demonstrate Christ-like character toward others.

Our **Kinder Ready** students transition to the **Purposeful Design Early Education Bible Curriculum**, providing an intentional bridge toward the Bible instruction they will experience as they enter elementary school.

Beyond formal Bible lessons, our teachers look for opportunities throughout the day to help children connect biblical truth to their everyday experiences—showing kindness, forgiving others, making wise choices, serving friends, expressing gratitude, and recognizing God's creation.

We believe biblical worldview is not simply something we teach; it shapes how we teach and how we care for children.

2.4 Kindergarten Ready-Bridging Preschool and Elementary School

FCA's **Kinder Ready program** serves an important role within our preschool. While maintaining the developmentally appropriate, joyful, hands-on learning experiences young children need, Kinder Ready intentionally begins preparing students for the instructional structures and academic expectations they will encounter in Kindergarten.

During the spring semester, Kinder Ready students are gradually introduced to foundational concepts and routines that provide a **bridge to two of FCA Elementary's core academic programs: UFLI Foundations and Dimensions Math**.

UFLI Foundations provides FCA Elementary students with explicit, systematic instruction in foundational reading skills. Kinder Ready students will receive age-appropriate introductory experiences that strengthen phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge, blending, and other early literacy skills that prepare them for more formal reading instruction.

Dimensions Math develops strong mathematical thinking through a progression from concrete experiences to visual representations and eventually abstract mathematical understanding. Kinder Ready students will begin experiencing this approach through hands-on number activities, manipulatives, mathematical language, problem-solving, and number relationships.

These spring experiences are intended as an **introduction and bridge—not an acceleration of Kindergarten curriculum**. Our goal is to give children familiarity, confidence, and strong foundational skills so that the transition from FCA Preschool to FCA Elementary feels natural and successful.

2.5 Preparing the Whole Child

Academic readiness is important, but kindergarten readiness involves much more than knowing letters and numbers. Throughout every FCA Preschool classroom, we intentionally develop the skills children need to flourish in school and in life.

Children learn to listen, communicate, ask questions, solve problems, follow routines, manage emotions, work independently, collaborate with others, persevere when something is difficult, care for their belongings, show kindness, and develop increasing responsibility.

Our curriculum reflects our belief that children should leave preschool not only ready for Kindergarten, but excited to learn, confident in their abilities, secure in their relationships, and growing in their understanding of who God created them to be.

Through Frog Street, Handwriting Without Tears, Abeka Bible, Purposeful Design Bible, and intentional bridges to UFLI Foundations and Dimensions Math, FCA provides a cohesive learning pathway that begins in early childhood and prepares children for continued success at Fellowship Christian Academy.

2.6 Weekly Chapel for PreK and Kindergarten Ready

Chapel is held once a week in which character traits such as honesty, obedience, perseverance and friendship are taught with Biblical truths and stories. FCA invites guest speakers to come and speak once a month from the Bible. We welcome parents and guardians once a month to participate with their children at Family Chapel.

Our Hutto location families in PreK and Kinder Ready will join in the elementary chapel on Fridays at 8:00AM in the sanctuary. This is not a requirement for PreK, but parents are welcome to join their student in chapel and then do drop off at 8:30AM at preschool.

Our Round Rock location families will have weekly chapel on Fridays at 9:00AM.

2.7 Special Needs and Accommodations

Academy staff are not trained in special education.

Parents must provide special care needs with the accommodations recommended by:

- (A) A health-care professional; or
- (B) A qualified professional affiliated with the local school district or early childhood intervention program

We are committed to utilizing recommended adaptive equipment that has been provided to the center for a child's use and ensure that a child who receives early intervention services or special education services can receive those services from a qualified service provider at our operation, with parental request and approval. Ensuring that activities integrate children with and without special care needs; that caregivers adapt equipment and procedures and vary methods as necessary to ensure that we care for a child with special needs in a natural environment.

In early childhood education, our priority is to meet each child's needs and assist in their development. Communication is key throughout the year to ensure that the child has a successful school year.

It is always the goal of FCA to intervene early if we identify any challenging issues in the classroom. In this way, our goal is to partner with parents are potential speech, behavior, or learning issues that may require additional assistance outside of FCA. We also invite parents to express any concerns they may have regarding special circumstances with their children so that we can all be working as a team to provide the highest level of care possible.

Chapter 3: Payment, Fees, and Pick up/ Drop Off Policies

Fellowship Christian Academy is committed to maintaining clear and consistent financial and operational policies for all families. Timely payment of tuition and adherence to arrival and dismissal procedures allow FCA to provide a safe, high-quality, Christ-centered preschool program.

3.1 Registration and Enrollment Fees

Registration is for the current school year only and must be renewed annually.

The registration fee is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. Payment of the registration fee secures the student's enrollment after all other enrollment requirements have been satisfied.

FCA also requires the prepayment of May tuition as a condition of enrollment. Prepaid May tuition may be refundable when the Academy receives at least 30 days' written notice of withdrawal prior to March 1, subject to the Refund Policy outlined in this chapter.

Registration and enrollment fees at the preschool cover all supplies needed for daily use.

3.2 Tuition Payment

Tuition is calculated on an annual school-year basis and divided into monthly payments for the convenience of families. Because tuition represents the cost of the entire school-year program rather than the number of instructional days in an individual month, monthly tuition amounts do not change based on long or short months, holidays, scheduled school closures, or the number of school days within a particular month.

Tuition payments are:

- Processed on the 2nd of each month, or the following business day when applicable.
- Due in full no later than the 5th of each month.
- Subject to applicable late fees if the account is not paid in full by the due date.
- No refunds, credits, or reductions in tuition for days a child is absent, including absences due to illness, family travel, vacations, or other personal circumstances.

FCA publishes a school calendar annually. The current calendar is also maintained on the school website for families to reference throughout the year.

3.3 Late Tuition and Returned Payment Policy

Families are responsible for maintaining a current account and ensuring that valid payment information is available for tuition processing.

A \$35 returned-payment fee will be assessed for any returned or unsuccessful tuition payment. Accounts that remain unpaid after the established tuition due date will also be assessed a \$25 per-day late fee until the account is brought current.

Repeated late or returned payments will result in the following progressive actions:

- **First Offense**
The family will receive a warning and must immediately pay the outstanding tuition balance and all associated fees in order for their child to continue enrollment.
- **Second Offense**
The family will be required to prepay three months of tuition on the final day of the month preceding those months. Payment must be made by cashier's check or cash. All outstanding tuition and associated fees must also be paid.

- **Third Offense**

The student's enrollment at Fellowship Christian Academy may be terminated. The family remains responsible for all outstanding tuition, late fees, returned-payment fees, and other amounts due to FCA.

- FCA reserves the right to restrict attendance when an account is delinquent.

3.4 Other Fees

Credit Card Convenience Fee: 3%

Additional fee increases may be assessed when applicable and will be communicated to families.

All other costs associated with FCA will be parent choice—yearbook purchases, school picture purchases, school merchandise, extracurricular activities at school etc.

3.5 Refund and Withdrawal Policy

Families choosing to withdraw a child from FCA Preschool must provide at least 30 days' written notice to the Academy Director.

When proper notice is provided, eligible prepaid tuition will be refunded in accordance with this policy.

Refund checks will:

- Be issued to the primary payer listed on the student's account; and
- Be processed and mailed at the end of the month.

In the event of non-payment of tuition without proper withdrawal notice, prepaid May tuition may be applied toward the family's outstanding account balance, and the child's enrollment position will be forfeited.

No tuition refunds will be issued after March 31.

Registration fees and other fees designated as non-refundable are not included in tuition refunds.

3.6 Arrival Procedures

The safety and security of our students is a priority at Fellowship Christian Academy. Families will be greeted at designated Academy doors for the arrival and dismissal of children.

Families should park in a designated parking area and walk their child to the appropriate entrance door. Parents, guardians, and other family members may not enter the school building during regular arrival or dismissal procedures unless they have first followed FCA's visitor check-in procedures.

Before the parent or guardian leaves, FCA staff may conduct a brief visual health screening of the child. When appropriate, this screening may include a temperature check. A staff member will then escort the child to the classroom.

Whenever possible, FCA recommends that families establish consistent drop-off and pick-up routines. Parents, guardians, and other authorized individuals should have photo identification available for verification at dismissal.

3.7 During the School-Day Arrival and Departure

Children arriving or departing outside of normal arrival and dismissal times will be met at the Preschool Academy Office entrance.

Please ring the doorbell if a staff member is not immediately available when you arrive.

Families picking up a child before 1:50 p.m. are encouraged to call the Academy ahead of time so staff can prepare the child and his or her belongings for departure.

All Academy exterior doors will remain locked during the school day.

3.8 Punctuality and Attendance

At FCA, we believe education and biblical truth should be reflected not only in what children learn but also in the habits and character we help them develop. Punctuality, responsibility, and dependability are virtues we seek to model and instill in our students from an early age.

All children should arrive at school no later than 9:05 a.m.

Students arriving after the regular arrival period should follow the late-arrival procedures established by the Preschool Academy Office.

Students will not be admitted after 10:00 a.m.

Consistent and timely attendance helps children participate fully in classroom routines, instructional activities, Bible lessons, peer relationships, and the overall preschool experience.

3.9 Authorized Release of Children

FCA will release a child only to a parent, legal guardian, or individual who has been properly authorized by the parent or guardian.

Each child's enrollment information must identify the individuals authorized to pick up the child. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to keep this information accurate and current.

When someone other than a child's parent or guardian arrives for pickup, Academy staff are responsible for confirming that the individual is authorized to take the child. FCA may require a government-issued photo ID before releasing the child.

Written permission from the parent or guardian is required before a child may be released to an individual who is not already authorized on the child's enrollment records. Prior arrangements should be made with the Preschool Academy Office.

In an emergency that requires an unexpected change in pickup arrangements, the parent or guardian should contact the Academy Office as soon as possible. FCA staff must be able to verify authorization before releasing the child.

For the safety of our students, enrolled children will not be released to minor children or minor siblings. FCA reserves the right to refuse to release a child to any individual when staff cannot adequately verify the person's identity or authorization to pick up the child.

3.10 Late Pick-Up

Families are expected to pick up children promptly at the end of their enrolled program.

Regular Program:

Children picked up after 2:05 p.m. will be assessed a late pickup fee of \$1.00 per minute.

Aftercare Program:

Children enrolled in aftercare who are picked up after 3:05 p.m. will be assessed a late pickup fee of \$1.00 per minute.

Late pickup fees will be processed immediately using the Tuition Express account on file.

Repeated late pickups may result in a conference with Academy administration and may affect the child's continued participation in the program or aftercare services.

These procedures are designed to protect our students, respect the responsibilities of our staff, and ensure consistent expectations for all FCA families.

Chapter 4: Health and Safety for Students

The health, safety, and well-being of every child entrusted to Fellowship Christian Academy is one of our highest priorities. FCA works diligently to provide a clean, secure, and nurturing environment while reducing the spread of illness and preparing our staff to respond appropriately to emergencies.

FCA Preschool operates in accordance with applicable **Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers** and other state and local health and safety requirements.

We believe maintaining a healthy and safe school environment is a partnership between FCA and our families. Parents are expected to carefully monitor their children's health, communicate illnesses and absences promptly, maintain current health and emergency records, and follow the policies outlined in this chapter.

4.1 Health and Hygiene Practices

Healthy habits are an important part of the daily routine at FCA Preschool.

Hygiene stations are available throughout the building for use during the school day. Children and staff wash their hands with soap and water upon arrival and at appropriate times throughout the day, including before and after meals, after toileting or diapering, following outdoor play, and whenever otherwise necessary.

Frequently touched surfaces and classroom materials—including doorknobs, light switches, faucets, counters, tables, chairs, and toys—are routinely cleaned and disinfected.

Additional cleaning is performed after student dismissal, and enhanced cleaning of the facility is completed each evening.

Teachers also intentionally help children develop appropriate healthy age habits, including proper handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, appropriate use and disposal of tissues, and respecting others' personal space.

4.2 Illness and Exclusion from School

One of the most important ways families can help us maintain a healthy school environment is by keeping children home when they are ill.

A visual health screening may be conducted before a child enters the program each day. FCA reserves the right to deny admission or require a child to leave school when symptoms indicate that attendance may create an unhealthy or unsanitary environment for the child, other students, or staff.

A child should **not attend FCA Preschool** when experiencing any of the following:

- A temperature **greater than 100.0°F** during the previous 24 hours;
- Vomiting or diarrhea;
- Symptoms of a potentially contagious illness;

- Symptoms severe enough that the child cannot comfortably participate in normal classroom activities;
- A condition requiring a level of care that prevents staff from safely supervising and caring for the other children in the classroom; or
- Other symptoms that FCA administration determines may create an unsafe or unsanitary environment for others.

Parents, guardians, and other individuals dropping off or picking up children should also be free from symptoms of contagious illness whenever possible.

Returning to School

Children who have experienced fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms of illness may return to FCA when they have been **symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing or symptom-masking medication**, unless different return-to-care requirements apply to the child's specific illness.

FCA may require medical documentation or clearance from a healthcare professional before allowing a child to return when necessary to protect the health and safety of the school community.

4.3 Illness During the School Day

If a child develops symptoms of illness while at school, FCA staff will move the child away from the classroom group to a **safe, supervised, and caring environment** while the parent or guardian is contacted.

Parents are expected to arrange for the child to be picked up **as quickly as possible and no later than 30 minutes after notification**.

Families should maintain at least one authorized local emergency contact who is able to pick up the child when a parent or guardian cannot leave work or otherwise reach the Academy within the required timeframe.

Emergency contact information must remain current throughout the school year. Information can be updated through the online parent portal at any time. Please alert the FCA staff if you make changes.

4.4 Communicable Illness

Parents must notify the Academy promptly when a healthcare professional diagnoses their child with a contagious or communicable illness so FCA can take appropriate precautions and, when necessary, notify potentially affected families.

Examples may include:

- Strep throat
- Chicken pox
- Impetigo
- Head lice
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Other communicable illnesses or conditions

When FCA communicates a possible exposure to families, the identity of the affected child will remain confidential to the extent required by law.

Before returning to school following a communicable illness, parents should consult their child's healthcare provider and follow applicable return-to-school requirements. FCA may require written medical clearance when appropriate.

4.5 Absence from School

Parents should notify FCA when their child is not attending school.

Please contact the Academy when:

- Your child will be absent for the day;
- Your child will be absent for an extended period; or
- Your regular contact information has temporarily changed and FCA would need different information to reach you during the school day.

We also appreciate notification of planned absences for reasons other than illness, including the anticipated duration of the absence.

Preschool children form meaningful relationships with their classmates and often notice when a friend is missing. Knowing when a classmate is expected to return allows teachers to provide simple reassurance and helps maintain a sense of classroom community.

4.6 Medication Policy

FCA Preschool staff **do not administer routine medications in the classroom.**

Families should arrange medication schedules whenever possible so that routine medications can be administered outside of school hours. When this is not possible, a parent or guardian may make arrangements with the Academy leadership to come to school and personally administer the medication.

Emergency Medication

Emergency or life-saving medications are handled differently.

All emergency medications must be registered with the Preschool Academy Office before they may be maintained at school.

Required information includes:

- Child's name;
- Name of medication;
- Prescribed dosage;
- Expiration date;
- Instructions for administration; and
- Required parent/guardian authorization and medication documentation.

Emergency medication must be provided in its **original pharmacy or manufacturer packaging** with appropriate identifying and prescribing information.

An **Emergency Care Plan completed and signed by the child's healthcare provider** must be on file when required for emergency medications or medical conditions, including severe allergies requiring an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen).

Appropriate staff members will be informed of the child's emergency care procedures.

Parents are responsible for monitoring medication expiration dates and replacing expired medication promptly.

4.7 Immunizations and Health Records

Texas child-care regulations require FCA to maintain appropriate health and immunization documentation for enrolled children.

A **current immunization record** must be on file for each child unless the child has a valid exemption recognized by the State of Texas.

FCA must also have appropriate documentation from a physician or other authorized healthcare provider confirming that the child has been examined and is able to participate in the program, as required by applicable regulations. Required health documentation must be completed before the child begins attendance.

Families are responsible for keeping immunization and health records current. Parents will be notified when FCA records indicate that an updated immunization or other health documentation is required.

Immunization Exemptions

Fellowship Christian Academy accepts immunization exemptions permitted by the **State of Texas**. Families claiming an exemption must provide the appropriate **original Texas exemption documentation**, properly completed and notarized when required. The documentation will remain in the student's file.

4.8 Vision and Hearing Screening

Texas requirements provide for vision and hearing screening or an appropriate professional examination for children who meet the applicable age requirements.

For FCA students requiring screening, documentation must be provided to and maintained by the Academy Office within the timeframe established by Texas law.

Families of four year old and older students should ensure required vision and hearing screening documentation is submitted **by the end of the first semester**, when applicable.

4.9 Emergency Information

Current emergency information is required for every child enrolled at FCA Preschool. Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring FCA has accurate information including:

- Child's full name and address;
- Parent/guardian names;
- Current home, work, and mobile telephone numbers;
- Current email addresses;
- Parent/guardian employment information when required;
- Names and contact information for additional authorized emergency contacts;
- Relationship of each emergency contact to the child;
- Authorization information required for emergency care;
- Child's physician or healthcare provider; and
- Physician's address and telephone number.

Parents must notify the Academy promptly whenever emergency or contact information changes. Changes can be made in the online portal at all times.

The ability to quickly reach a parent, guardian, or emergency contact is essential to student safety.

4.10 Accidents, Injuries, and Parent Notification

Children are active learners, and minor accidents and injuries can occur even with careful supervision and appropriate safety precautions.

FCA Preschool staff members maintain required training in **first aid and CPR**.

Minor injuries requiring first aid—such as falls, bumps, scratches, bruises, or bites—will be appropriately addressed by staff and documented. Parents will be notified of reportable injuries in accordance with FCA procedures and applicable licensing requirements.

When an injury or medical condition requires immediate professional attention, FCA will take appropriate emergency action. Examples may include serious burns, significant head injuries, suspected broken bones, serious eye injuries, dental injuries, severe allergic reactions, breathing difficulties, or other potentially serious medical emergencies.

When emergency medical care is necessary:

911 will be called when appropriate;

- The child's parent or guardian will be contacted as quickly as possible;
- If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, FCA will attempt to contact the child's designated emergency contacts;
- FCA staff will provide emergency responders with relevant medical and emergency information available in the child's records; and
- When emergency transportation is necessary and a parent or guardian is not present, EMS may transport the child to an appropriate medical facility based upon the child's needs and emergency protocols.
- The immediate health and safety needs of the child will guide FCA's response in any medical emergency.

4.11 Safety and Emergency Preparedness Drills

FCA is committed to preparing students and staff to respond safely and calmly in an emergency. Throughout the school year, students and staff participate in regularly scheduled safety and emergency preparedness drills in accordance with applicable requirements. Drills may include:

- Fire and evacuation drills;
- Severe weather drills;
- Lockdown or secure-building drills;
- Intruder-related safety procedures; and
- Other emergency preparedness exercises as appropriate.

Because we serve young children, **all safety drills are conducted in a calm, reassuring, and developmentally appropriate manner.**

Teachers explain procedures using simple language focused on listening, staying together, following the teacher, and moving safely to a designated location.

During drills that require children to remain quiet and in place, teachers may use quiet games, songs, breathing activities, or other age-appropriate strategies to help children remain calm and secure. Our purpose is to develop **preparedness without creating fear.**

4.12 A Shared Commitment to Health and Safety

Creating a healthy and safe preschool requires partnership among our staff, students, and families. We ask parents to support FCA by keeping sick children home, communicating health concerns promptly, maintaining current medical and emergency information, following medication procedures, and respecting all school safety practices.

In return, FCA is committed to providing an environment where children are **known, cared for, protected, and loved.**

The health and safety practices described in this handbook are designed not only to meet regulatory requirements, but also to reflect the responsibility we share as a Christian community to care well for one another.

Chapter 5: Parent Communication and Positive Guidance

At Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool, we believe children flourish when families and educators work together. Open, respectful communication builds trust, provides consistency between home and school, and allows us to better understand and support each child.

We also recognize that learning how to manage emotions, communicate needs, solve problems, develop self-control, and interact appropriately with others is an important part of early childhood development. Our approach to classroom management and discipline is therefore centered on teaching, guiding, modeling, and restoring, rather than simply responding to inappropriate behavior.

5.1 Parent and Teacher Communication

Procare is the primary communication platform between FCA Preschool teachers and families. Parents should regularly review Procare for classroom information, announcements, reminders, and communication regarding their child.

School-wide communications, administrative notices, and end-of-year financial statements will be sent to the primary parent email address provided during enrollment. Parents are responsible for ensuring that FCA has current email addresses, telephone numbers, and other contact information.

Families will receive an annual school calendar identifying important school-wide dates and events. This calendar is also available on the school website. Teachers will communicate additional information regarding classroom activities, celebrations, special events, and theme days.

Because strong communication is essential to our partnership, parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher whenever they have questions or concerns.

Parents should not utilize teacher cell phones for communication. Preschool teachers are on contract during the school day and parent contact should be made by phone at the Academy only.

5.2 Daily Communication for Infants and Toddlers

Families of infants and toddlers will receive daily information from their child's teacher documenting important events and routines from the child's day.

Depending upon the child's age and classroom, information may include:

- Meals and feeding;
- Diapering and toileting;
- Rest and naps;
- Classroom activities;
- General disposition and participation; and
- Other information important to the child's care.

Our goal is to help families remain connected to their child's experience even when they cannot be present throughout the school day.

5.3 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents may request a conference with their child's teacher at any time during the school year. Arrival and dismissal are not appropriate times for extended conversations regarding concerns, developmental progress, behavior, or other confidential matters. Teachers must remain focused on supervising students and safely managing arrival and dismissal.

When a parent or teacher believes a longer conversation is needed, a conference will be scheduled outside of classroom instructional time or at a time when appropriate classroom coverage is available. This allows the parent and teacher to give the conversation their full attention while maintaining confidentiality.

Parents of four- and five-year-old students preparing to enter Kinder Ready or Kindergarten will be offered an end-of-year parent-teacher conference during the school day in April. These conferences provide an opportunity to discuss the child's development, strengths, areas for continued growth, and readiness for the next educational setting.

5.4 Our Approach to Positive Guidance

FCA Preschool believes that guiding young children toward appropriate social behavior, emotional regulation, responsibility, and self-control is one of our most important responsibilities.

Young children are still learning how to:

- Communicate their wants and needs;
- Manage frustration and disappointment;
- Wait and take turns;
- Share space and materials;
- Follow directions and classroom routines;
- Solve problems with peers;
- Respect appropriate boundaries;
- Understand how their actions affect others; and
- Make increasingly independent and responsible choices.

For this reason, our teachers view behavior as an opportunity for instruction and growth.

Effective classroom management begins long before challenging behavior occurs. FCA teachers thoughtfully plan classroom environments, daily schedules, transitions, physical spaces, expectations, and engaging activities to encourage successful participation and reduce unnecessary behavioral challenges. Teachers are committed to helping every child feel safe, secure, known, and valued while maintaining appropriate and consistent boundaries.

5.5 Positive Guidance Strategies

FCA staff use positive, developmentally appropriate guidance methods designed to encourage self-esteem, self-control, responsibility, and self-direction.

- Strategies may include:
- Positive suggestions and language;
- Praise and encouragement for appropriate behavior;
- Positive reinforcement;
- Clearly stated expectations;
- Developmentally appropriate choices and consequences;
- Redirection;
- Modeling appropriate behavior;
- Teaching problem-solving strategies;

- Helping children identify and communicate emotions;
- Reminding children of expectations using clear, positive statements; and
- Brief, supervised separation from the group when developmentally appropriate.
- Discipline and guidance will be:
- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to the child's developmental level and understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching acceptable behavior, self-control, and increasing independence.
-

When brief supervised separation or time away from the group is developmentally appropriate, it will be limited in accordance with Texas Minimum Standards, including applicable limits based upon the child's age. Children who are temporarily separated from an activity will remain appropriately supervised by FCA staff.

5.6 Prohibited Discipline Practices

FCA Preschool staff will never use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating, frightening, harsh, cruel, or unusual punishment.

Prohibited practices include, but are not limited to:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Hitting a child with a hand or object;
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth as punishment;
- Punishment associated with food or withholding food;
- Punishment associated with naps or sleep;
- Punishment related to toileting or toilet training;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or intimidating a child;
- Yelling at or using threatening language toward a child;
- Using harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, closet, or other inappropriate area;
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for a developmentally inappropriate length of time;
- or
- Any other discipline prohibited by applicable Texas Minimum Standards.

Physical restraint will not be used as punishment. A child may be physically redirected or restrained only when necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of the child or another person and as otherwise permitted by applicable requirements.

5.7 Outdoor Play and Discipline

FCA believes physical activity and outdoor play are important components of healthy child development. Outdoor recess and active play will not be withheld as punishment or used as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.

When a child's behavior during active play presents a safety concern, staff may use a brief, supervised separation from the activity when permitted by Texas Minimum Standards. The purpose of the separation is to help the child regain control and return safely to the activity—not to deprive the child of needed physical activity.

5.8 Biting

Biting can occur during normal early childhood development, particularly among toddlers who are still developing language, impulse control, and appropriate ways to communicate frustration.

When biting occurs, FCA staff will first attend to the child who was bitten and then appropriately address and redirect the child who bit. Staff will document incidents and communicate with the families involved while protecting the confidentiality of each child.

Repeated biting will be addressed through observation, communication with the family, identification of possible triggers, and developmentally appropriate intervention strategies.

As children mature and develop stronger communication and self-regulation skills, biting becomes less developmentally typical. Biting by children age three and older will therefore require additional intervention and may be addressed through the behavioral support process outlined below.

Our goal is always to protect children while helping the child exhibiting the behavior develop safer and more appropriate ways to communicate.

5.9 Behavior That Presents a Safety Concern

The physical and emotional safety of children and staff is essential. Behavior that causes injury, presents a significant risk of injury, or repeatedly threatens the safety of the child, another student, or an FCA staff member requires immediate attention.

Examples may include persistent:

- Hitting, kicking, biting, or other physical aggression;
- Throwing objects in a manner that could cause injury;
- Running from supervised areas;
- Destructive behavior that creates a safety risk;
- Severe or prolonged behavioral episodes that cannot be safely managed within the classroom environment; or
- Other behavior that creates a significant safety concern.

FCA will consider the child's age, developmental level, frequency and severity of the behavior, circumstances surrounding the behavior, interventions already attempted, and the school's ability to safely meet the needs of the child and the classroom.

5.10 Persistent Disruptive Behavior

Social and emotional development is an essential part of preparing children for future academic success. FCA recognizes that children develop these skills at different rates. Occasional challenging behavior is expected in early childhood and will ordinarily be addressed through classroom guidance and communication with families.

When behavior becomes persistent, significant, or disruptive to the degree that it substantially interferes with the child's learning, the learning or safety of other children, or the teacher's ability to safely and effectively lead the classroom, additional intervention may be necessary.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with families whenever reasonably possible to help the child experience success.

5.11 Behavioral Support Process

When a pattern of significant behavioral concerns develops, FCA will generally use the following process:

- **Step 1 – Documentation**
Teachers and/or administrators will document significant or recurring behaviors through incident reports, observations, or other appropriate records.
- **Step 2 – Parent Communication and Conference**
The parent or guardian will meet with appropriate FCA staff, which may include the classroom teacher, Academy Director, and/or Head of School, to discuss the concerns, contributing factors, and strategies already attempted.
- **Step 3 – Behavior Support Plan**
When appropriate, FCA and the family will establish a behavior support or modification plan. The plan may identify specific goals, strategies, supports, communication procedures, and a timeframe for reviewing progress.
- **Step 4 – Review of Progress**
FCA will monitor the child's response to intervention and communicate with the family regarding progress. Additional strategies or outside evaluation/support may be recommended when appropriate.
- **Step 5 – Temporary Suspension**
If behavior continues to create significant disruption or safety concerns, FCA may temporarily suspend enrollment to address the immediate concern and allow the family and school time to determine appropriate next steps.
- **Step 6 – Withdrawal or Dismissal**
If significant concerns continue following intervention, or if FCA determines that it cannot safely or appropriately meet the child's needs within the resources and structure of the program, the Academy may require withdrawal or dismiss the child from the program.

Whenever circumstances reasonably allow, these steps will be followed progressively. However, FCA reserves the right to bypass one or more steps when a child's behavior creates an immediate or serious safety concern.

Decisions regarding suspension or dismissal will be made by the Academy Director and/or Head of School and will not be made arbitrarily or in haste.

FCA recognizes that there may be circumstances in which a child requires a level of behavioral, developmental, academic, therapeutic, or one-to-one support that the Academy is not equipped to provide. In those situations, FCA will communicate with the family regarding the child's needs and the school's ability to continue providing an appropriate and safe educational environment.

5.12 When Your Child Is Involved in an Incident

When a child is hurt by another child, parents may understandably feel concerned, frustrated, or upset. FCA takes these concerns seriously.

Each safety or behavioral incident will be addressed individually based upon the children's ages, developmental levels, circumstances, and severity of the incident.

FCA will communicate appropriate information to the family of an injured child while also protecting the confidentiality of other students. The identity, disciplinary consequences, behavioral history, or confidential information of another child will not be disclosed.

Similarly, when your child is the child exhibiting challenging behavior, we ask that families approach the situation as a partnership with the school. Our shared goal is not to label or shame a child, but to understand the behavior, protect everyone involved, and teach the skills necessary for future success.

5.13 Partnering for Growth

Positive guidance works best when children receive consistent expectations and encouragement from the adults who care for them.

We ask parents to partner with FCA through open communication, consistency, respect, and a willingness to work collaboratively when concerns arise.

Our teachers will celebrate children's successes, communicate concerns, establish appropriate boundaries, and help children learn from mistakes. In turn, we ask families to support classroom expectations and work alongside our staff when additional intervention is needed.

At FCA, discipline is ultimately about discipleship and development. We want children to learn not simply to follow rules because an adult is watching, but gradually to develop the self-control, responsibility, kindness, respect, and Christ-like character that will guide their choices as they grow.

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” — Proverbs 22:6

Chapter 6: Daily Life at FCA Preschool

Life at Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool is intentionally designed around the developmental needs of young children. Children need opportunities to learn, play, move, explore, create, rest, build relationships, and develop increasing independence.

The following policies provide families with important information about the routines and expectations that are part of everyday life at FCA Preschool.

6.1 Meals and Snacks

FCA Preschool does not provide daily snacks or lunches. Families are responsible for sending the food their child will need for the school day.

Each child should bring:

- A nutritious, balanced lunch;
- A refillable water bottle; and
- A snack from home that complies with any classroom allergy restrictions.
- Children participating in aftercare must bring an additional snack for the afternoon.

Lunches should be ready for children to eat and must not require refrigeration or microwave heating. Refrigerators and microwaves are not available in individual classrooms.

As children grow, lunchtime provides another opportunity to develop independence. Families are encouraged to use containers and packaging their child can open with increasing independence.

Please:

- Clearly label lunch boxes, water bottles, thermoses, containers, and other food items with your child's name;
- Include any utensils your child will need, as FCA does not provide forks or spoons for lunches;
- Limit sweets and highly sugary foods;
- Cut foods that may present a choking concern, such as grapes and hot dogs, into appropriate bite-sized pieces; and

- Follow all classroom-specific allergy restrictions.

Teachers will assist young children as developmentally appropriate while also encouraging children to practice age-appropriate independence during meals.

6.2 Food Allergies and Classroom Food Safety

The health and safety of our students is especially important during meals and snacks. Before food is prepared or served, appropriate eating and food-service surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected. Children and staff will wash their hands before and after meals and snacks.

Children may not share food with one another.

Individual classrooms may have additional food restrictions based upon the allergies and medical needs of enrolled students. For example, a classroom with a student who has a peanut allergy may be designated peanut-free.

Parents are expected to carefully follow any allergy restrictions communicated by the classroom teacher or Academy administration.

Families of children with diagnosed food allergies should also follow the emergency medication and Emergency Care Plan procedures outlined in Chapter 4: Health and Safety.

6.3 Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are special, and we enjoy celebrating our FCA students!

Families wishing to recognize a child's birthday at school should coordinate with the classroom teacher in advance so the celebration can be incorporated appropriately into the classroom schedule.

A child celebrating a birthday may bring an individually wrapped snack for each child in the classroom.

All food must comply with the allergy and food-safety requirements of the classroom.

Birthday celebrations at school are intended to be simple classroom celebrations rather than full birthday parties.

Personal party invitations may be distributed at school only when every child in the class is invited. Gifts will not be exchanged at school.

6.4 Holidays, Parties, and Special Events

Throughout the year, FCA may recognize holidays, seasons, and special events through developmentally appropriate classroom experiences.

Because young children understand holidays differently than adults, teachers intentionally select activities that help children understand the meaning of celebrations through stories, art, music, sensory experiences, classroom activities, and—most importantly for our Christian school—opportunities to connect celebrations to biblical truth when appropriate.

Teachers will communicate with families regarding special classroom celebrations, activities, theme days, or items children may need to bring.

Halloween and the Fall Season

FCA recognizes that Christian families have different traditions and convictions regarding Halloween.

Out of respect for our families and our Christian mission, students will not wear Halloween costumes to school. Instead, classrooms may celebrate the beauty and fun of the fall season through pumpkins, leaves,

harvest activities, fall colors, and other age-appropriate seasonal experiences. Ghosts, witches, monsters, and similar Halloween themes will not be incorporated into classroom instruction or celebrations.

6.5 Animals in the Classroom

Animals can provide meaningful learning experiences for young children; however, student health and safety must always come first.

Any animal brought into the Academy must meet applicable health and safety requirements. Animals brought into the building must have appropriate documentation of health from a licensed veterinarian and be current on required vaccinations.

Certain animals may not have direct contact with children due to health risks and applicable Texas Minimum Standards.

Parents will be notified when appropriate if an animal visit or special animal-related classroom experience is planned.

6.6 School Supplies and Items from Home

Young children naturally enjoy bringing favorite toys and treasures to school. However, personal toys can easily become lost, damaged, distracting, or a source of conflict among children.

For this reason, toys from home should not be brought to school unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for a special activity or permitted as a rest-time comfort item.

Personal belongings should be limited to items that fit inside the child's backpack.

A small, lightweight blanket or towel that fits completely inside the backpack may be used for rest time when appropriate.

All personal belongings must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name.

This includes:

- Backpacks;
- Lunch boxes;
- Water bottles;
- Jackets and coats;
- Sweaters;
- Clothing;
- Blankets or rest items; and
- Other items brought to school.

FCA cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged personal belongings.

6.7 Student Dress and Clothing

Preschool is wonderfully active—and sometimes wonderfully messy!

Children paint, build, dig, run, climb, explore, eat, create, and play throughout the school day. Children should therefore come to school dressed in comfortable, practical clothing that allows them to participate fully in classroom and outdoor activities.

Families should expect that clothing may occasionally become dirty, wet, painted, or stained.

Children should be dressed appropriately for the day's weather. Because outdoor play is an important part of our program, families should provide coats, jackets, and other appropriate cold-weather clothing when necessary.

Children wearing dresses or skirts should wear shorts underneath to allow them to participate comfortably in climbing, sitting on the floor, and active play.

Extra Clothing

Every child must have two complete changes of clothing, including socks, available at school or in the child's backpack.

Extra clothing should:

- Be appropriate for the current season;
- Fit the child properly;
- Include underwear when applicable;
- Include socks; and
- Be stored in a clearly labeled resealable bag.

Parents should regularly check extra clothing as children grow and as seasons change. Wet or soiled clothing will be sent home for laundering.

Shoes

Children must wear shoes at school to protect their feet and allow them to participate safely in indoor and outdoor activities.

Shoes should:

- Fit securely;
- Be comfortable;
- Have rubber or non-slip soles; and
- Allow children to safely run, climb, and play.
- Socks must be worn.

Flip-flops and open-toed sandals are not appropriate for preschool activities. Crocs and boots are discouraged because they may make running, climbing, and active outdoor play more difficult.

6.8 Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Because FCA students spend time outdoors each day when conditions permit, families should consider sun and insect protection as part of their child's morning routine.

FCA recommends that parents apply sunscreen and insect repellent before bringing their child to school. The facility also receives routine professional pest-control treatment to help manage biting insects and ants.

When it is necessary for FCA staff to apply parent-provided sunscreen or insect repellent during the school day, the parent or guardian must provide appropriate written authorization and instructions identifying when and where the product should be applied.

Required documentation must be maintained by the Academy and classroom as appropriate.

6.9 Rest Time

Rest is an important part of a young child's day.

Children attending preschool for the applicable length of day will participate in a scheduled rest period in accordance with licensing requirements.

Children are not required to sleep. However, classroom activities will pause, and children will be expected to rest quietly on their assigned mats so that children who need sleep have an appropriate environment in which to do so.

FCA provides sleeping/rest mats for students.

Cloth nap mats from home are not permitted in accordance with the licensing requirements applicable to our program.

Our goal is to create a peaceful transition during the day that respects both children who need sleep and children who simply need a period of quiet rest.

6.10 Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity

FCA strongly believes that movement is essential to healthy child development.

Young children were made to move. Running, climbing, jumping, dancing, balancing, throwing, catching, and exploring help children develop gross-motor skills, coordination, confidence, strength, and body awareness.

Physical activity also supports children's social-emotional development and provides important opportunities for cooperation, problem-solving, creativity, and joyful play.

Preschool students will participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day, to the extent of their individual abilities. Activities may include:

- Running;
- Climbing;
- Dancing;
- Skipping;
- Jumping;
- Playground activities;
- Movement games; and
- Other developmentally appropriate active play.

Whenever weather and safety conditions permit, children will have opportunities to play outdoors. When outdoor play is not possible because of weather or other conditions, teachers will provide appropriate opportunities for movement and active play indoors.

Outdoor play and physical activity will never be withheld as punishment.

As outlined in Chapter 5, a child whose behavior during active play creates an immediate safety concern may receive a brief, supervised separation when developmentally appropriate and permitted by Texas Minimum Standards.

6.11 Technology and Screen Time

FCA Preschool believes young children learn best through relationships, conversation, movement, exploration, hands-on experiences, purposeful play, books, music, art, and interaction with the world around them.

For that reason, screen use during the preschool day is intentionally limited.

During the regularly scheduled school day, screen-based media may be used when it has a specific instructional purpose and is directly connected to the curriculum or classroom learning experience. Screen time is not used as a substitute for active teaching, purposeful play, outdoor activity, or meaningful interaction between children and teachers.

Any media shown at school must comply with applicable licensing requirements, including requirements regarding appropriate ratings, content, advertising, violence, and duration.

Our goal is not to entertain children with technology, but to use it sparingly and intentionally when it genuinely enhances learning.

6.12 Learning Through Everyday Experiences

At FCA Preschool, some of the most important learning happens during the ordinary moments of a child's day.

Opening a lunch container builds independence. Waiting for a turn develops patience. Cleaning up after an activity teaches responsibility. Putting on a jacket builds self-help skills. Running on the playground develops coordination. Resting quietly demonstrates consideration for others. Celebrating a friend's birthday builds community.

Our teachers intentionally use these everyday experiences to help children become increasingly independent, responsible, confident, kind, and capable.

We believe these skills are an important part of preparing children not only for Kindergarten, but also for a lifetime of learning, relationships, service, and growth.

Chapter 7: Campus Safety and Emergency Procedures

The safety and security of every child, family, and staff member at Fellowship Christian Academy is a responsibility we take seriously. FCA maintains procedures for campus security, severe weather, emergency situations, evacuation, and safe arrival and departure.

Our goal is to be prepared, calm, consistent, and proactive while creating an environment where young children feel safe and secure.

Families play an important role in campus safety. We ask every parent, guardian, and authorized pickup person to follow campus procedures, drive cautiously, maintain current emergency contact information, and respond promptly to school communications during an emergency.

7.1 Campus Security

All FCA exterior doors remain locked during the school day.

Parents, family members, volunteers, and visitors may not enter the building without following established visitor procedures. Visitors must enter through the designated entrance and check in as required.

Families should never open or hold a secured exterior door for an individual they do not know or allow another person to enter the building behind them without following FCA's check-in procedures. Any suspicious activity or safety concern observed on campus should be reported to FCA administration immediately.

7.2 Weather-Related Delays and School Closures

The Head of School and Academy Directors will make final decisions regarding weather-related delays, early dismissals, or school closures. For a standard, we will follow our largest local school district—Round Rock ISD for weather delays. For instance, if RRISD delays start for two hours, we will also delay for two hours.

Decisions will be based on the safety of our students, families, and staff and may take into consideration:

- Road and travel conditions;
- Ice or other hazardous conditions on The Fellowship Church campus;
- National Weather Service information;
- Local weather forecasts and warnings;
- Conditions and decisions affecting surrounding school districts; and

- Other information relevant to the safety of the FCA community.

FCA may make a decision that differs from surrounding public school districts when campus or local conditions warrant a different response.

When FCA determines that a delayed opening, early dismissal, or school closure is necessary, families will be notified through established school communication channels.

If school is closed because of inclement weather, Academy offices may also be closed.

Weather-related closure days that are not included as makeup days on the FCA school calendar will not be made up.

7.3 Severe Weather During the School Day

FCA monitors changing weather conditions and will take appropriate precautions when severe weather threatens during the school day.

When necessary, children and staff will move to designated safe areas and follow established emergency procedures.

Parents are asked not to come to the school during an active severe-weather emergency unless specifically instructed to do so. Additional vehicles and individuals arriving on campus during an emergency may interfere with staff members' ability to keep children safely sheltered and follow emergency procedures. FCA will communicate with families as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

The safety of children and staff will always take priority over immediate communication during an active emergency.

7.4 Emergency Preparedness

FCA maintains emergency preparedness procedures designed to address situations that could affect the safety of students and staff.

As outlined in Chapter 4, children and staff participate in developmentally appropriate emergency drills throughout the school year.

Depending upon the circumstances, an emergency response may require FCA to:

- Shelter students and staff inside the building;
- Move students to a designated safe area;
- Secure or lock down portions of the campus;
- Evacuate the building;
- Relocate students to an alternate location;
- Contact emergency services;
- Contact parents or emergency contacts; or
- Dismiss students through modified emergency procedures.

During an emergency, families should follow instructions communicated by FCA administration and avoid coming to campus unless directed to do so.

7.5 Emergency Evacuation and Relocation

In some emergency situations, remaining on The Fellowship Church campus may not be safe. FCA maintains plans for relocating students and staff to designated off-site locations when necessary.

Round Rock Campus

If an emergency requires physical evacuation and relocation of the Round Rock campus, students will be relocated to:

Ridgeview Middle School
2000 Via Sonoma Trail
Round Rock, Texas

Hutto Campus

If an emergency requires physical evacuation and relocation of the Hutto campus, students will be relocated to:

Hutto Family YMCA
200 Alliance Boulevard
Hutto, Texas

If relocation occurs, FCA will communicate with parents and/or the emergency contacts listed in each child's enrollment records and provide instructions regarding reunification and pickup.

Parents should not attempt to enter an evacuated FCA campus unless directed to do so by FCA administration or emergency personnel.

Children will remain under FCA supervision until they are safely released to an authorized individual.

7.6 Emergency Parent Notification

Accurate contact information is essential during an emergency.

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that FCA has current:

- Parent and guardian telephone numbers;
- Email addresses;
- Emergency contact information; and
- Authorized pickup information.
- During an emergency, FCA will use the communication method or methods determined most appropriate for the situation.
- Families should monitor FCA communications and follow instructions carefully.
- Depending upon the circumstances, parents may be directed to:
 - Delay coming to campus;
 - Pick up from the regular school location;
 - Pick up from an alternate location;
 - Bring identification for emergency reunification; or
 - Follow another temporary procedure designed to protect students and staff.

During an emergency, FCA may need to limit telephone communication so staff members can focus on supervising children and responding to the situation.

7.7 Emergency Reunification and Release

Following an evacuation or other significant emergency, FCA will maintain supervision of students until each child can be safely reunited with an authorized adult.

Children will only be released to a parent, guardian, or other individual authorized to pick up the child. Photo identification may be required even when the FCA staff member knows the individual.

Emergency situations can understandably create anxiety and urgency. However, FCA will not bypass student release procedures for the sake of speed. Maintaining an accurate record of each child's release is an important part of keeping every student safe.

Families are expected to follow the instructions of FCA staff and emergency personnel throughout the reunification process.

7.8 Parking Lot and Vehicle Safety

The parking lot is one of the most important areas for family cooperation with school safety procedures. Preschool children are small and may be difficult for drivers to see when they are walking between vehicles, standing near a parked car, or crossing the parking lot.

Please drive slowly and use extreme caution on campus at all times.

Families must:

- Park only in designated parking spaces;
- Avoid parking along curbs, fire lanes, or other areas that narrow traffic flow or create a safety hazard;
- Turn off vehicles when leaving them to drop off or pick up a child;
- Keep children with an adult and under direct supervision in the parking lot;
- Use particular caution when backing out of a parking space; and
- Follow any temporary traffic or parking instructions provided by FCA or The Fellowship Church.

Please allow enough time during arrival and dismissal that you do not feel rushed.

No appointment, meeting, or schedule is more important than the safety of a child in our parking lot.

7.9 Children in Vehicles

Children may never be left unattended in a vehicle on FCA or The Fellowship Church property.

This applies during arrival, dismissal, classroom events, conferences, and any other time a family is on campus.

If FCA staff observe an unattended child in a vehicle, administration will take immediate action based upon the circumstances and the safety of the child. Repeated violations or situations involving an immediate threat to a child's safety may result in notification of appropriate authorities.

7.10 Supervision After Dismissal

Once a child has been released to a parent, guardian, or authorized pickup person, responsibility for supervising the child transfers to that adult.

Families are welcome to build relationships with one another, but parents who remain on campus after dismissal must keep their children with them and within sight at all times.

Families visiting after school should move away from school entrances and dismissal areas so other families can safely enter, exit, and collect their children.

Children may not return to playgrounds, classrooms, hallways, or other school areas after being released unless specifically permitted and appropriately supervised.

7.11 Accessible Parking

FCA and The Fellowship Church work to accommodate families who require accessible parking during school arrival and dismissal.

Families who regularly require an accessible parking space or other parking accommodation should contact their Academy Director so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Designated accessible spaces and loading areas should remain available for individuals who need them.

7.12 Weapons and Firearms

Weapons and firearms are prohibited on FCA Preschool premises in accordance with applicable law, licensing requirements, and FCA/The Fellowship Church policies.

This prohibition applies to concealed and openly carried firearms and other prohibited weapons. Exceptions may apply to authorized law enforcement officers or other individuals specifically permitted by applicable law and FCA policy while acting within the scope of their official responsibilities.

Parents, visitors, volunteers, vendors, and other individuals entering FCA Preschool facilities are expected to comply fully with all campus weapons and safety policies.

7.13 Family Responsibility During an Emergency

Emergencies are managed most effectively when school staff and families work together.

During an emergency, we ask families to:

- Remain calm and monitor FCA communications;
- Keep telephone and emergency contact information current;
- Follow instructions from FCA administration and emergency personnel;
- Avoid calling or coming to campus unless directed to do so;
- Bring identification when requested for student reunification;
- Refrain from posting unverified information or speculation that could create unnecessary confusion; and
- Allow FCA staff to focus first on the immediate safety and supervision of children.

We understand that a parent's first instinct during an emergency is to get to his or her child. Our first responsibility is the same: to protect the children entrusted to us.

Preparation, communication, and cooperation allow us to do that well.

At Fellowship Christian Academy, campus safety is more than a set of procedures. It is part of the trust families place in us each day. We are committed to being thoughtful in our preparation, vigilant in our practices, and calm and responsive when an unexpected situation occurs.

Chapter 8: Family Partnerships and Parent Expectations

At Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool, we believe a strong partnership between families and the school is essential to creating a safe, nurturing, Christ-centered environment where children can flourish. Parents, guardians, teachers, and administrators share a responsibility to model respect, kindness, self-control, and appropriate communication for the children in our care.

We welcome parent involvement and open communication. At the same time, all adults on FCA and The Fellowship Church property are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the safety, dignity, and well-being of our students, families, and staff.

8.1 Our Partnership with Families

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. FCA values the opportunity to work alongside families as children grow academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

Questions and concerns are a normal part of a healthy school partnership. FCA encourages parents to communicate openly with teachers and administration and to approach conversations with a shared desire to understand concerns, solve problems, and support the child.

As outlined in Chapter 5, concerns that require an extended or confidential conversation should be addressed through a scheduled conference rather than during arrival or dismissal.

8.2 Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are welcomed and appreciated at FCA Preschool, particularly during special events, classroom activities, and field trips.

Parents interested in volunteering should contact their Academy Director for instructions. Volunteer opportunities may require completion of a background check and any other screening or documentation required by FCA or applicable licensing standards before a parent may serve with students.

All volunteers are expected to follow FCA policies, staff directions, confidentiality expectations, safety procedures, and standards of conduct while serving on campus or participating in a school-sponsored activity.

8.3 Respectful Communication

FCA promotes open communication and respectful discussion. From time to time, parents may have questions or concerns regarding their child's care, education, classroom experience, or school procedures. We want families to bring those concerns to us so they can be addressed appropriately.

Parents, guardians, visitors, and FCA staff are expected to communicate in a calm, respectful, and constructive manner, including when disagreement occurs.

Whenever possible, concerns should first be addressed with the staff member most directly involved. When additional support is needed, the Academy Director and/or Head of School may become involved in the conversation.

8.4 Appropriate Language and Conduct on Campus

Young children are present throughout our campus and learn from the words and behavior of the adults around them. Parents, guardians, visitors, and volunteers are therefore expected to use language and demonstrate conduct that is appropriate for a Christian preschool environment.

Swearing, cursing, offensive language, or other inappropriate verbal behavior is not permitted on FCA or The Fellowship Church premises.

Families should also be mindful of music, audio, conversations, or other content that may be heard from vehicles while on campus, particularly during arrival and dismissal.

Our expectation is simple: adults should model the same respect, kindness, and self-control that we are working to develop in our students.

8.5 Threats, Confrontations, and Unsafe Behavior

FCA understands that concerns involving a child can create strong emotions. However, threatening, intimidating, aggressive, or confrontational behavior toward staff members, children, parents, volunteers, or visitors will not be tolerated.

All threats will be taken seriously. FCA administration will respond based on the nature and severity of the situation and the need to protect children, staff, and families.

When conduct creates a safety concern, FCA may require an individual to leave the property and may take additional action necessary to maintain a safe school environment.

8.6 Adult Compliance with Discipline and Guidance Standards

Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool is a licensed child-care program and is required to follow the discipline and guidance standards established by the State of Texas.

These requirements apply to the treatment of children while they are in FCA's care and on FCA property. All adults, including parents, guardians, volunteers, and visitors, are expected to comply with FCA's Discipline and Guidance Policy while on campus or participating in FCA-sponsored activities.

As described in Chapter 5, harsh, cruel, humiliating, frightening, or corporal punishment is prohibited. A parent's or guardian's personal beliefs regarding discipline do not override the standards FCA is legally required to follow while children are in our program or on our premises.

Parents will be asked to review and acknowledge FCA's Discipline and Guidance Policy as required.

8.7 Conduct That May Affect Continued Enrollment

FCA desires to resolve concerns through communication and partnership whenever reasonably possible. However, continued enrollment requires a cooperative relationship between the family and the Academy and compliance with policies designed to protect children and staff.

Serious or repeated violations of FCA's parent conduct, safety, or discipline and guidance expectations may result in administrative action, up to and including termination of care or enrollment.

Failure by a parent, guardian, or other adult associated with a student to comply with required Texas discipline and guidance standards may result in immediate termination of care when necessary to maintain compliance and protect children.

8.8 A Christ-Centered School Community

FCA seeks to be a community in which children experience consistency between the values we teach and the behavior they see modeled by adults.

We ask every member of the FCA family to help us create a culture marked by respectful communication, patience, grace, personal responsibility, and a shared commitment to the well-being of children. When families and school staff work together with those values at the center, we create the kind of environment in which children can feel secure, develop healthy relationships, and flourish.

Chapter 9: Licensing, Legal, and Special Policies

Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool is committed to operating responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with applicable requirements for licensed child-care programs in the State of Texas. This chapter provides families with additional information regarding licensing, required notifications, special family accommodations, and Academy policies that support the safe and respectful operation of our preschool.

Families are encouraged to contact the Academy Director or Head of School whenever they have questions regarding a policy, licensing requirement, or other matter affecting their child's enrollment.

9.1 Texas Child-Care Licensing

Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool operates as a licensed child-care program and follows applicable Texas Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers.

These standards establish requirements in areas including health and safety, supervision, discipline and guidance, staff qualifications and training, emergency preparedness, recordkeeping, and the operation of licensed child-care programs.

FCA administration and staff are responsible for maintaining required practices and documentation. Parents and guardians are also expected to cooperate with licensing requirements that apply to enrolled children and families, including providing required enrollment, health, immunization, emergency, and authorization records.

9.2 Parent Notifications and Required Information

FCA will provide parents and guardians with notices and information required by applicable licensing standards and Academy policy.

Depending upon the circumstances, parent notifications may include information regarding:

- Changes affecting the operation of the preschool program;
- Health or communicable illness concerns when notification is appropriate;
- Reportable accidents, injuries, or incidents involving a child;
- Emergency situations, evacuations, relocations, delays, or closures;
- Changes to policies or procedures;
- Licensing notices or information required to be made available to parents; and
- Other matters FCA determines are important to the health, safety, education, or care of enrolled children.

Parents are responsible for maintaining current contact information so that FCA can provide timely communication when necessary.

9.3 Parent Access to Licensing Information

Parents may request information from FCA administration regarding the Academy's child-care licensing and applicable Texas Minimum Standards.

Required licensing notices and inspection information will be posted or made available to families as required by the State of Texas.

Questions regarding licensing requirements should be directed to the Academy Director.

9.4 Nursing Mothers

Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool does not provide care for infants 18 months of age and younger. However, breastfeeding mothers of enrolled toddlers may provide breast milk for their child in accordance with FCA procedures and applicable health and safety requirements.

The Fellowship Church provides a private space that may be available for mothers who need to breastfeed while visiting the campus. Families needing this accommodation should contact the Academy Office or campus administration for assistance.

9.5 Safe Sleep Information

Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool does not provide care for infants 18 months of age and younger. FCA nevertheless recognizes the importance of safe-sleep practices and will comply with any applicable child-care licensing requirements related to children in its care.

Any rest or sleep practices used by FCA will be developmentally appropriate and consistent with applicable Texas Minimum Standards and the policies outlined elsewhere in this handbook.

9.6 Equal Dignity and Nondiscrimination

Fellowship Christian Academy values every child and family and is committed to treating individuals with dignity, respect, and Christ-like care.

As a Christian ministry of The Fellowship Church, FCA's mission, educational philosophy, biblical instruction, policies, and practices are grounded in its sincerely held Christian beliefs and Statement of Faith.

FCA will comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws governing its operations while maintaining its rights and responsibilities as a Christian religious and educational ministry. Questions regarding the application of this policy should be directed to the Head of School.

9.7 Compliance with Academy Policies

Enrollment at Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool represents a partnership between the Academy and the family. Parents and guardians are expected to review, understand, and support the policies and procedures contained in this handbook.

FCA reserves the right to revise policies when necessary because of changes in licensing requirements, law, safety practices, Academy operations, or program needs. Families will be notified of material changes when appropriate.

When a handbook provision conflicts with an applicable law or licensing requirement, FCA will follow the applicable legal or regulatory requirement.

9.8 Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

Parents and guardians will be asked to acknowledge receipt of the FCA Preschool Parent Handbook and their responsibility to review and comply with its policies.

The acknowledgment confirms that the family has been provided access to the handbook and understands that questions regarding policies should be directed to FCA administration.

The Parent Handbook is intended to provide families with clear expectations and consistent procedures. It does not anticipate every circumstance that may arise. FCA administration reserves appropriate discretion to respond to individual situations in a manner consistent with the Academy's mission, policies, licensing obligations, and commitment to student safety.

Our goal is to maintain a preschool community in which families and staff work together with trust, respect, open communication, and a shared commitment to the children God has entrusted to our care.

You are entitled to see the following information. The most recent copies are kept in The Fellowship Christian Academy Director's Office

- *Minimum Standards*
- *Documentation of liability insurance*

- Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Inspection / Investigation Report
- Fire Marshal's Inspection Report
- Health Department's Sanitation Inspection Report

You may obtain information about Texas Licensed Child Care Centers Minimum Standards by contacting the licensing office in Round Rock at (512) 834-3426 or online at www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care.

Texas law requires that suspected child abuse or neglect be reported to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or law enforcement. Guidelines in recognizing signs of child abuse may be found at www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Child_Safety/recognize_abuse.asp. Confidential reports of suspicion of abuse or neglect may be made to the Abuse Hotline 800-252-5400 or online at www.txabusehotline.org.

The Fellowship Hutto campus is GANG FREE ZONE. Under the Texas Penal Code criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of a childcare center are subject to a harsher penalty.

NO SMOKING of any kind is allowed on The Fellowship Church campus at any time.

We at The Fellowship Christian Academy are honored that you have chosen our program for your preschooler. We strive to provide the best care and support for you and your family and look forward to working with you.

We welcome parents to visit the school and observe their child's classroom.

The Head of School and Academy Director are available during our normal business hours to discuss any questions or concerns you may have regarding our program.

Thank you for your support!

Emily Reichert, Ph.D.
Head of School
Fellowship Christian Academy
ereichert@fellowshipacademy.org

Jennifer Castaneda
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FELLOWSHIP CHRISTIAN ACADEMY PRESCHOOL
2026–2027 Parent/ Guardian Handbook Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received or been provided access to the Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool Parent Handbook for the 2026–2027 school year. I understand that it is my responsibility to read, understand, and support the policies, procedures, expectations, and standards described in the handbook.

I understand that enrollment at Fellowship Christian Academy Preschool represents a partnership between the Academy and our family. I agree to communicate respectfully with FCA staff, maintain current contact and emergency information, and follow Academy policies related to tuition, attendance, arrival and dismissal, health and safety, positive guidance, campus procedures, and family conduct.

I understand that Fellowship Christian Academy is a Christian ministry of The Fellowship Church and that its mission, educational philosophy, biblical instruction, policies, and practices are grounded in its Statement of Faith and sincerely held Christian beliefs.

I understand that FCA may revise policies when necessary because of changes in licensing requirements, law, safety practices, Academy operations, or program needs, and that families will be notified of material changes when appropriate. I understand that questions regarding the handbook or its application should be directed to FCA administration.

By signing below, I confirm that I have reviewed the 2026–2027 FCA Preschool Parent Handbook and agree to partner with Fellowship Christian Academy in support of its policies and commitment to the care, education, safety, and spiritual development of students.

Student Name: _____

Campus (check one): ☐ Hutto ☐ Round Rock

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Parent/Guardian Name:

Thank you for partnering with Fellowship Christian Academy.