



Good Shepherd Learning Center

Parent Handbook

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www.gslc-kids.org

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Good Shepherd Learning Center

Good Shepherd Learning Center assists parents by offering a Christ-centered, quality education in a safe and loving environment, sharing the Word of God with children and their families. Good Shepherd Learning Center knows that you trust us with your most valuable treasure, your child, and we strive to serve our families with the absolute best in preschool education. We believe that excellent early childhood development is the foundation for a bright future for our children at Good Shepherd Learning Center.

The Parent Handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the policies, regulations, requirements, and activities of Good Shepherd Learning Center.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

Good Shepherd Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

Curriculum

The A Beka curriculum is used in the Pre-K Four-Year-Old and Adv. 4s/Transition classrooms. A Beka is an academic curriculum that is an educational foundation that covers phonics, math, writing, reading, and readiness skills.

The Twos and Threes use Frog Street Press CD's and Big Books for letters and numbers. They have "circle time", where they learn the calendar, the days of the week, and weather. They receive instruction in letters, numbers, shapes, colors, patterns, health safety, science, and social studies. Manipulative and crafts help to develop fine motor skills and hand-to-eye coordination.

Bible lessons are taught daily. The lessons are based on the Old and New Testaments. Chapel time with Pastor Andy is held in the sanctuary once a week.

Growing Fit and Spanish are taught once a week.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is based on the child's schedule. Tuition is paid by ACH draft operated by Compass Bank. All accounts are required to be set up on ACH draft. Compass Bank will only draft the balance on the account. If a family does not want tuition drafted, they may make a payment by check on the first of the month to avoid a draft. Drafts or checks returned NSF will be charged \$35.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$125.00 is due at the time of enrollment. A supply fee of \$75.00 per semester. A one-time A Beka book fee is collected for Pre-K 4 (\$68.00) and Advanced 4's/Transition classes (\$89.00).

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Upon selecting Good Shepherd Learning Center to meet your child's educational needs, all enrollment paperwork is required before the child can start our program. Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted. Paperwork required for enrollment includes:

- Enrollment Form (pgs. 1-3)
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- Physician's Statement and immunization record
- Emergency Information Form
- Enrollment Agreement
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
- Directory/Photo Permission
- Tuition ACH Form (ACH Draft)

Required Policies

Good Shepherd Learning Center is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The following policies are required by Child Care Licensing per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501. Parents will be notified about policy changes in writing.

1. HOURS OF OPERATION

Good Shepherd Learning Center is open from 8:30am-2:30pm, Monday-Friday. We follow Conroe ISD calendar. We close to observe the holidays Conroe ISD observes and all religious holidays.

2. RELEASE OF CHILDREN

In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Please send a note with any transportation changes. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment form to pick up and the authorized adult must bring a picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

3. ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY

Children who are ill should not attend preschool. Good Shepherd Learning Center observes the standards set by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for ill children. The most common standards for exclusion are:

1. Illness that prevents the child from participating in child care activities, **including outdoor play.**

2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.
3. A temperature over 99.9 or has had a temperature over 99.9 within the last 24 hours.
4. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrollable diarrhea, 2 or more vomiting episodes in 24-hours.
5. Severe sore throat or cold symptoms, runny nose, bad cough, or frequent sneezing.
6. An upset stomach or diarrhea or has had symptoms of these in the last 24 hours; any unexplained rash.
7. Pink eye or inflammation of the eyes
8. Lice
9. A child will not be brought to school with an injury and/or broken bone **without a physician's release and instructions.**

A child who was ill may return to school when the child is free of symptoms of the illness for 24 hours **or** a health-care professional's statement is received that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child apart from the other children with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices.

If your child is absent, please call the office to let us know the symptoms they are experiencing. We watch for trends on illnesses so that we can take extra precautions when needed.

4. MEDICATION

Please inform your physician that your child is in a part-day preschool and that you prefer to give medications at home, morning and evening. Knowing this, many doctors will order longer acting medications. Limiting medications dispensed away from home prevents medication errors. If your child requires medication, bring the medication to the director: the director will administer it to your child.

If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- ❑ **Prescription medication will be accepted only if it is in the original container and hasn't reached its expiration date.**
- ❑ Nonprescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturer's recommendation on the label. Medication must be in the original container and accompanied with a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.

- ❑ Before any prescription or nonprescription medication can be administered, we must have permission in writing by the child's parent or guardian and signed instructions from the physician. Please fill out a medication permission form and with complete instructions. Please bring a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.
- ❑ A physician's instructions with an Allergy Action Plan are required for Epi Pens, inhalers, Benadryl and any medical device required to administer medication.
- ❑ Medication needs to go home after the last date that the medication is administered.

Health forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment showing any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history. These must be updated and kept current.

Medication may be given to children with a signed medical information sheet and signed physician's instructions.

5. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING EMERGENCIES

In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day.

In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), the staff will call 911, giving location and nature of emergency. As appropriate, the staff will administer CPR or first aid measures. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified.

If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance the staff will contact the Poison Control Center 1(800)222-1222.

6. PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Open Communication with parents is very important to children's success. Good Shepherd Learning Center has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging that communication has taken place. Listed below are ways that GSLC may communicate with parents:

- Through email notifications and electronic notifications
- Written memos placed in your child's weekly folders
- Verbal communication with the child's teachers and director

7. DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY

- ◆ Discipline must be:
 - (1) Individualized and consistent for each child;
 - (2) Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
 - (3) Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

- ◆ A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:
 - (1) Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 - (2) Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 - (3) Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 - (4) Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

- ◆ There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - (1) Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 - (2) Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
 - (3) Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
 - (4) Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 - (5) Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 - (6) Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 - (7) Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
 - (8) Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed;
 - (9) Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapters L, Discipline and Guidance

7a. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

In the event that a child is repeatedly disrespectful, uncooperative, or lacks self-control and a teacher is unable to guide the child's behavior, the following steps will be taken:

- Parents will be notified of the disruptive behavior.
- After three incidents, a meeting will be arranged with parents and teacher to discuss a solution to the child's behavior.
- If the behavior persists and the goal is not accomplished, it is at the discretion of the director for child's continued enrollment at the school.

8. FOOD & NUTRITION

Good Shepherd Learning Center provides a healthy snack for all children present. A snack calendar is posted across from the office. Children need to bring a nutritious lunch with them each day as per their schedule. Lunch is at 11:00, 11:30am and 12:15pm. Please advise the center of any allergies. **GSLC is not a Peanut-Free School.**

9. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

GSLC follows the Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child-Care Facilities.

Immunization records must be current for all children enrolled. All children must have a current copy in their file at GSLC. The record must be validated by a physician with a signature and the name and address of the practice/clinic. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that your child's immunizations are current. Failure to keep children current on immunizations may lead to disenrollment.

From time to time GSLC may have children enrolled that have not received immunizations due to personal belief. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children.

10. TUBERCULIN TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Based on local health department guidelines, proof of TB testing is not required in order to be enrolled in our program.

11. HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Hearing and Vision Screening for possible vision and hearing problems is required by the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 36, for children who are 4-years of age by September 1st of each new school year and first-time enrollees. Testing must be done within 120 calendar days after the first day of the school. Good Shepherd Learning Center will schedule annual screenings at our school in early fall. Parents may also bring in screening proof from their pediatrician.

12. TRANSPORTATION

Good Shepherd Learning Center does not transport children except in emergency situations.

13. WATER ACTIVITIES

Parents will be notified in advance for water play activities that involve sprinkler play and wading pools.

14. FIELD TRIPS

GSLC does not go off property for field trips. Any activity held in the parking lot or church grounds is considered a field trip by Child Care Licensing. Permission is must be given on the enrollment forms to participate these special activities.

15. ANIMALS

From time to time, Good Shepherd Learning Center may have classroom pets that meet the requirements by Texas Child Care Licensing. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a pet is present. Currently there are no pets at GSLC.

16. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If parents have questions or concerns about our program, we encourage you to have open communication with your child's teacher and the Center Director. Through open communication, we can ensure that all parties are well informed and working as partners in the child's education.

17. OPEN DOOR POLICY

We welcome parents at any time, in any area of our school. A code for the school entrance is provided to parents/caregiver.

18. PARENT PARTICIPATION

We encourage parent involvement, during class parties and special events. Also, if you have a concern, please schedule a time to meet with the classroom teacher and/or the director.

19. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Good Shepherd Learning Center is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and we follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review of a copy of these standards in our front office or view the standards online at www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default.asp

20. GANG-FREE ZONE

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Good Shepherd Learning Center Education is a GANG-FREE ZONE.

21. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A complete Emergency Preparedness Plan is available upon request. In the event of an emergency, parents would be contacted by the phone messaging system with the details of the emergency, (if required) evacuation location, and a contact phone number of the person in charge either Director or Designee.

The following have been designated as safe areas for this facility in an emergency.

Shelter in Place #1 (Tornado): Classroom Hallway/Bathrooms

Shelter in Place #2 (Lockdown): Classrooms

On-Site Evacuation (In the facility): Great Room/Church

On-Site Evacuation (On facility grounds): Parking Lot/Bike Trail/Playground

Off-Site Evacuation (Site #1) Galatas Elementary

Off-Site Evacuation (Site #2): As per directed by authorities or Stone Bridge Church

22. BREASTFEEDING

We support mothers that breastfeed their babies by offering a comfortable place with a seat either in the office or the church nursery. If at any time you need a place to nurse, please let the staff know and we will be happy to assist you in finding a comfortable location. If a nursing mother needs any assistance, please ask the office staff for help.

23. CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS

Good Shepherd Learning Center staff are REQUIRED by Texas State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to **suspect** the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Our staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. Good Shepherd Learning Center has made a commitment to help increase awareness and prevention techniques to employees and parents through trainings and literature. Good Shepherd Learning Center will also coordinate with community organizations on strategies to prevent abuse and neglect.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called.

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html

The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

24. WELL CHECKS

Good Shepherd Learning Center staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual they are required to point this out to the parent at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

ABSENT/VACATION

If your child will be absent from school, we ask that you notify the front office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

While your child is enrolled in our program, parents may come across confidential information about our program, our staff, and sometimes other children. All information received from Good Shepherd Learning Center must always remain confidential. Breaching confidentiality may lead to disenrollment.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible teaching atmosphere for your child:

- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to staff.
- Read the notices and information left for you in your child's folder and/or posted outside your child's classroom, at the office, or in e-mail.
- Look at your child's papers/projects daily. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communication between parent and child and helps the parent share in the child's day.
- Please do not allow your child to bring gum or candy to the classroom. We **STRONGLY** encourage you to send a healthy lunch for your child to eat. In the case of allergies, we ask that you bring a note from your physician.
- Please do not send hand sanitizer in your child's backpack or lunch. Hands will be washed at arrival, before snack and lunch, after toileting, after playground.

Periodically check on your child's supply of extra clothing. In order not to confuse school toys with a child's personal property, we ask that children not bring playthings from home. Good Shepherd Learning Center staff cannot be responsible for lost or broken personal toys.

APPLICATION OF INSECT REPELLENT AND SUN SCREEN

Insect repellent and sun screen must be applied by the parent before the child arrives at school. In special circumstances the director can apply the repellent or sunscreen provided specifically for the child. It must be labeled with the child's name.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Thirty (30) days written notice is preferred for withdrawing a child from Good Shepherd Learning Center.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICIES

Good Shepherd Learning Center follows the lead of Conroe I.S.D during inclement weather. Please check our website; gslc-kids.org, local TV stations and web sites for announcement of closing. In most cases you will receive a recorded call with specific information about GSLC. There is no refund of tuition for severe weather events.

In case of serious emergencies such as earthquakes, fire, storms, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Good Shepherd Learning Center classrooms follow a daily schedule designed specifically to meet the children's developmental, social and emotional, and personal needs. All schedules specific to the classroom are posted in the hallway outside the classroom. All Schedules are contingent on the needs of the children and may vary from day to day.

NAP TIME

Supervised rest periods are provided for children that stay until 2:30.

CLOTHING

Clothing should be loose enough to provide comfort and freedom of movement. **Tennis shoes or play shoes** are that are suitable for indoor and outdoor activities. No Crocs or flip-flops. Avoid clothing with inappropriate picture, words or violent cartoon logos. Please mark all clothing with the child's name (especially outerwear). Each child should bring a complete change of clothes, including underwear and socks, labeled in a Ziploc bag. Please put your child's name on everything!

We use washable crayons, markers and paint during art time, but the children's clothing may get stained from just being kids! Please dress your children in play clothes.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Parents must supply diapers, wipes and diapering accessories for their child. Please label everything with your child's first and last name. Please leave all valuable items at home since Good Shepherd Learning Center cannot be responsible for broken or lost items.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine. Children should be prepared to play outside every day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. Per the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children too sick to go outside should not be at school. Children may not wear flip flops or Crocks due to the danger these shoes may cause on the playground.

BIRTHDAYS

Parents are welcome to make birthday's special events for the children. If you wish to share your child's birthday with the class, we welcome you to do so by bringing a special snack. Please let your child's teacher or the director know in advance when you plan to bring a birthday snack. Birthday treats are usually served during the child's snack time.

You may send party invitations to school with your child if it is to the whole class or to all girls or all the boys in the class.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Good Shepherd Learning Center believes in the benefit of using pictures in our educational program. If parents choose to take pictures of events held at our program, they should only photograph their child. Pictures of other children should not be shared on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram unless written permission is given by the other parent. Please note: during certain parent events, such as, Fall Festival, Rodeo Day, Christmas program, Festivals, Splish-Splash Day and Luau Program photographs may be taken. If you wish for your child to not be photographed during the events, you may want to remove them from these events.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees of Good Shepherd Learning Center are prohibited from outside employment with parents of the organization. This includes, but is not limited to, babysitting and/or nanny type jobs.

BITING

Biting is a common issue in early child development. The best way to deal with biting is consistency between providers and parents. Biting could occur for multiple reasons. Proper communication will help determine why a child is biting. Good Shepherd Learning Center will work with parents when biting becomes a problem. We will make every effort to solve the issue as soon as possible.

CUSTODY SITUATIONS

Good Shepherd Learning Center will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. It must be certified and signed by the judge.

EMPLOYEE IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Good Shepherd Learning Center has implemented the following immunization policy for all its employees, to be in compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Minimum Standards Rule # 746.3611, which requires a policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases. While the safety of our employees and the children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional to the employees.

Vaccines that we currently recommend our employees to receive:

- Influenza (annually)
- Pertussis (Tdap)

Good Shepherd Learning Center admits children of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to children at the center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other center-administered programs. Good Shepherd Learning Center is licensed with the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. A copy of the minimum standards is available for you to review at the Center. You can also request a copy of these standards from our local licensing office. All the licensing offices may be found on the PRS website <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care> or you can call Child Care Information Line at 1-800-862-5252. All pertinent certificates are posted on the wall across from the office. To contact Child Care Licensing go to www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care or <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care> or call 713-940-5200. Child Abuse Hotline at 800-252-5400. The most recent Licensing inspection report is displayed on the bulletin board in the hallway.