



2017-2018
The Parent's Handbook
For
Part Time Preschool Classes
Full Time Childcare
&
Junior Kindergarten



Guardian Christian Academy
6851 Courthouse Road
Chesterfield, VA 23832
804-715-3210

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Welcome to Guardian Christian Academy. It is our desire to provide a very positive preschool experience for your children. In doing so, we pray your children will become life-long learners.

Guardian Christian Academy was originally established in 1975 as Meadowbrook Preschool which was located on Cogbill Road. It was a half-day preschool program that provided a Christian environment where children were nurtured, educated, and taught to love the Lord. Even then there were dreams to extend our programs to reach more children.

When Southside Nazarene Church relocated to the corner of 288 and Courthouse Road in 1999, the name was changed to Guardian Christian Academy, and services to families in the Chesterfield community and beyond were added. Throughout that time period, the dreams for the addition of a high school grew. Plans for building and program expansion took shape, and 9th-12th grades were added one year at a time.

Today Guardian Christian Academy offers:

- Preschool
- Junior Kindergarten
- Elementary
- Middle School
- High School
- Child Care
- Before and After School Care
- Summer Programming
Summer Camps

The following information has been prepared to help familiarize you with the Early Childhood program of Guardian Christian Academy. Not only do we provide an excellent preschool program, but also have full time childcare available for working parents. Should questions arise after reading this material, please contact the preschool / childcare office for assistance.

ORGANIZATION

Guardian Christian Academy is a ministry of Southside Nazarene Church. The school is its own corporation and is governed by a board of directors, which includes representation from the Southside Nazarene Church board. The Early Childhood Director provides supervision to the overall preschool and childcare program, with qualified supervisors and teachers to staff the rooms.

PRESCHOOL VISION

GCA partners with parents to provide their children with a distinctly biblical and academically excellent education that will equip students to be godly leaders and to successfully engage their culture for Christ.

CHILDCARE VISION

GCA childcare provides quality care in a nurturing Christian environment, emphasizing a well-rounded program that encourages the development of strong minds and character.

GCA MISSION

To equip students to become Christian leaders who impact the culture for Christ.

PHILOSOPHY

Developmentally appropriate academic instruction and social skills, which will enable your child to adjust to a classroom setting, are provided. Biblical values, as well as cultural and moral ethics, are shared with the children through stories, songs, and simple prayers during all hours of the program. Because this is not just another childcare facility, parents of all faiths will be pleased with the positive Christian values that are taught by caring, loving teachers who are passionate about children.

Guardian Christian Academy operates in the Southside Church of the Nazarene at 6851 Courthouse Road, Chesterfield, Virginia. This allows us the luxury of using the Church classrooms, the gym, lunchroom, and the kitchen for our programs.

Guardian Christian Academy is a religious sponsored center. We have filed all documents required by law with the Department of Social Services, and been granted a Religious Exemption certificate. This certificate is renewed on a yearly basis. Our class sizes are maintained at the following state mandated ratios:

2 years to 6 years
6 years and over

One adult for every 10 students
One adult for every 25 students

STATEMENTS OF FAITH

It is the desire of Guardian Christian Academy to provide a safe and caring environment in which children are able to learn both academic content and biblical truths. Biblical values and moral ethics are integrated into the academic curriculum to help children adopt a biblical world view and develop into well-rounded individuals. Christian values are taught with individualized love and attention from teachers who are passionate about teaching, the Lord, and children. This education is based on the Statements of Faith listed below. The term "Bible" at GCA always refers to the Holy Bible, the compiled 66 books forming the Old and New Testaments, and is to be the Bible used and referenced at GCA.

- 1) We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. (I Timothy 3:15, II Peter 1:21)
- 2) We believe that there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28: 19, John 10: 30)
- 3) We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His

atoning death (I Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His resurrection (John 11:25, I Corinthians 15:4), His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19), His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11 and Revelation 19:11).

- 4) We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration (spiritual rebirth) by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith alone are we saved (John 3:16-19, 5:24, Romans 3:23, 5:8-9, Ephesians 2:9-10, Titus 3:5).
- 5) We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost: those who are saved unto the resurrection of life, and those who are lost unto the resurrection where they stand before the judgment seat of Christ (John 5:28-29).
- 6) We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, I Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28).
- 7) We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:13-14, I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20, Ephesians 4:30, 5:18).
- 8) We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25)
- 9) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- 10) We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual, transgender, and bisexual behavior/conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10)
- 11) We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139)
- 12) We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11)
- 13) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the policies of Guardian Christian Academy.

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Guardian Christian Academy's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the GCA School Board - is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

CORE VALUES

The core values of Guardian Christian Academy are an extension of those of our sponsoring church; Southside Church of the Nazarene. They are as follows:

1. **Everyone's life matters.**

(Ephesians 2:1-7; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 15; John 17:1-3)

God deeply wants people to know Him, so we intensely focus on reaching out to everyone possible, meeting them where they are and guiding them into the Kingdom of God.

GCA is an evangelistic school which strives to reach out to all people and provide an avenue for coming to know God. We recognize that all people are uniquely created and as such have unique needs, gifts, and callings. Because of this, it is critical that students be met "where they are" and guided along in all areas of their growth: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, and social.

2. **We are created for intimacy with God.**

(Psalm 139:17-18; Luke 5:16; John 15:1-10; Psalm 95:5-7)

Intimacy with God is available to all believers, and is the source of strength, security, and power for our journey of faith.

In order to have an intimate relationship, one must know God; that comes from knowing His Word. At Guardian Christian Academy, the Bible is held in reverence, with the memorization, understanding, and application of scripture central to instruction. A culture of prayer is created and understood as imperative to having the intimate relationship God desires with us. Worship is a part of this intimacy as well, and is promoted at GCA as a key component of our relationship with Him. It is seen as crucial for faculty, staff, and administration to model evidence of a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and a lifestyle of prayer and worship.

3. **No one climbs alone.**

(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; John 13:34-35; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 2:22; Ephesians 4:15, 32)

God's openness and love towards us is our pattern for our relationships with each other. Believers thrive in authentic Christian relationships.

At GCA, we are committed to community through promoting a sense of unity and striving to partner with parents in the education of their children, while still recognizing and appreciating individual and cultural diversity. Our shared love for God and for one another unites us as we strive to meet the mission and vision of our school. Students are guided in their relationships with peers, as well as with faculty, recognizing that the relationships we live out on a daily basis should reflect our understanding and appreciation of God's love for us.

4. **We are to be like Christ.**

(Mark 1:17, 2:14, 8:34; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 2 Timothy 3:10-17; Galatians 5:22-23)

We have encountered the deal of a lifetime in apprenticing ourselves to Jesus. We are learning from Him how to live our daily lives.

Because of this, Guardian Christian Academy strives for academic excellence coupled with the emphasis on continuous spiritual growth. Bible is taught throughout the grades as a core course and Biblical principles are tied to all areas of learning, both in and out of the classroom. This shaping of a child's life, and of his worldview, is seen as an integral part in helping him to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit in his life, molding and shaping him to be more like Christ.

5. **God has designed us to serve.**

(Exodus 35:20-35; Matthew 20:25-28; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:3-13)

Coordinated, strategic service is an expression of our spiritual gifts and is a joyful and grateful response to God's love and purpose for us.

GCA is committed to providing opportunities for mission and service and to modeling a servant attitude as we work and minister both inside and outside of our walls. Students are taught to be good stewards of their gifts, talents, time, and resources and to utilize each to display God's love and to impact the culture for Christ. They are prayerfully guided in recognizing and utilizing their spiritual gifts and in preparing to follow God's calling on their lives.

6. **The next generation depends on us.**

(Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Hebrews 11; 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:12; Genesis 27:1-38)

Starting with our families, through example and lifestyle, we are preparing the next generation to announce the Gospel and lead the way. We believe in the power of mentoring, of passing on deep passion for Christ and His Kingdom through the relationships between older and younger Christians. We believe this is how disciples are best multiplied.

At Guardian Christian, we recognize the critical importance of preparing the next generation. Because of this, we are committed to proclaiming the Gospel and modeling a Godly lifestyle to our students and families. We are focused on promoting a Biblical worldview through our commitment to God's Word and through the purposeful use of Biblical integration in all areas of instruction. We recognize the responsibility we have to mentor students as they grow intellectually, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially, as well as the opportunity to impact the world for Christ long after we are gone. We consider it both a challenge and a blessing to have the chance to leave a legacy by investing in the lives of students.

PROGRAM

The daily preschool program shall provide constructive, educational experiences for each child through:

- Circle time
- Learning Center play
- Music
- Story time
- Art
- Structured learning times
- Outside play time
- P.E. and Library (4 year olds)

These activities are both group and individual in nature. Attention is given to the specific needs of each child, while encouraging him / her to become part of group participation. Discipline is handled with kindness and understanding.

The JK program shall provide educational experiences for each child through the administration of the A Beka K4 curriculum in its entirety. The class will also participate in Music, P. E., recess, art and library.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Center will be open Monday through Friday, 6:30AM - 6:00PM for full time childcare. Children registered for the Preschool program only will attend from 9:30AM until 1:00PM.

The Preschool and JK programs follow the Chesterfield County School calendar and are closed any time the public schools are closed (**including days missed for inclement weather**). Parents of children who only attend our Preschool classes from 9:30am until 1:00pm will need to pay special attention to announcements made by Chesterfield County schools:

- 1) if they are closed for the day, our preschool & JK classes do not meet.
- 2) if they open 1 hour late, our preschool & JK classes begin one hour late
- 3) if they open 2 hours late, our preschool & JK is closed for the day.

The Childcare Center is closed on the following holidays & training days (and/or others as announced):

New Year's Day	Memorial Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Thursday & Friday	*Christmas Day
Good Friday	One training day in the fall	

***Note: Time closed for Christmas will vary as to where Christmas day falls in the week. You will be alerted each year to the number of days and times closed.**

***In the event of inclement weather, childcare center late opening and closing announcements can be found on:

- School cell phone voicemail (call 301-8276 and listen to message)
- TV Channels 6 and 12 (on air and their website listings)

Regardless of the events listed above, full monthly or weekly tuition is due.

MAKE UP DAY POLICY (for the 3 ½ hour *preschool* program only)

We allow one week of school to be missed before make up days are assigned. For the Two day a week classes, 2 days may be missed; 3 day a week classes may miss 3 days; 5 day a week classes may miss 5 days.

If excessive days are missed from the **JK class**, the time may be made up by lengthening the instructional day.

AGE GUIDELINE

Cut-off dates for placement in an age group will be the same as the Chesterfield County School system. The child must be 2 ½, 3, or 4 years of age on or before September 30th to qualify for the programs for each age.

The JK program will accept 5 year old children whose parents feel aren't ready for Kindergarten. All other children must turn 5 between September 1st and December 31st of the admittance year.

PRE-ADMISSION:

Parents are required to tour the center with their child/children and have an interview with the Director prior to admission. At that time you will receive a packet of information which includes the following:

- An informational brochure
- Registration Form
- Immunization Form

At this meeting, communication between the Director and the parents will help determine if GCA is a good match for the family's needs.

REGISTRATION

An annual, **non-refundable registration fee** is paid at the time of registration. The registration fee is \$100. Each parent must submit a completed registration form for admittance, along with an immunization record on each child, signed by the family physician. This must be updated annually for as long as the child/children are in the program. A copy of the child's birth certificate must be presented at the time of the initial enrollment.

A financial agreement form will be completed at the time of registration. After reviewing the form's information, a signature from the parent will signify they agree and understand their financial obligation to GCA for the coming year. Each family will enroll in our FACTS automated payment system. The website and enrollment information will be provided at the time of registration.

It is your responsibility to update your child's records as needed (i.e. new address and phone number, new employment, change in custodial care, etc. . . .). This will insure that we are able to contact you concerning any issues that may arise with your child/children.

All registrations are received at the discretion of the Director

BOOK FEES

For the 2 and 3 year old classes	\$30.00
For the 4 year old classes	\$35.00
For the JK class:	\$100.00

(determined annually due to cost from supplier)

TUITION

The monthly preschool tuition is withdrawn by FACTS every month on the day selected by the parents. Payment for the month must be received for the child to attend the program the following month.

Weekly childcare tuition is withdrawn weekly by FACTS on the day selected by the parents. During the summer months of June, July, and August, tuition is billed by attendance and due at the end of the week.

Full Time Childcare families are offered the option of picking two weeks out of every year (September to August), and paying half of the weekly tuition. By doing this, we give you a week of care for free.

Absence – The Programs are staffed according to the number of children enrolled. For this reason, there will not be a reduction of tuition on holidays or days that a child misses for illness during the school year, September to May.

Please Note: Four year old students will not be allowed to participate in the graduation exercises at the end of May if their account is not paid in full and/or up to date for the program in which they are registered.

DISCOUNTS

- ***Multiple Child Discount*** – Families with two or more children in the preschool program receive a \$10 discount on the monthly tuition for the 2nd child, \$15 for the 3rd, 4th, etc. The same discount applies to families with children in the childcare program but on a weekly basis.
 - If the child registered in the JK program is the second child in the family attending GCA, the family receives a 10% discount off their tuition.
- ***Referral Discount*** – If a parent/guardian recommends Guardian Christian Academy to a family not presently seeking enrollment, the family who enrolls in GCA's programs as a direct result of the recommendation completes a referral form. The new family presents the referral form at the time of registration. The referring family:
 - Will receive a \$250 gift card for each referred family who completes the second month in childcare, JK or K-12th grades.

- Receives a gift card for the amount of one month's tuition of the preschool program for which the family registers.
- Can refer multiple families to our programs.
- Understands these benefits are contingent upon the new family remaining at GCA a minimum of 2 months, and will not be awarded until that time period has passed.

LATE FEES

If the ***monthly preschool or JK tuition*** is returned for insufficient funds, FACTS will assess a late payment fee to your child's account. GCA reserves the right to assess an additional fee.

If the ***weekly childcare payments*** fall behind by a week, appropriate arrangements must be made to pay in full the following Monday. If payment is not received, or appropriate arrangements made by the end of business Monday, you can/will be asked to leave our program. If payments on the account are returned for insufficient funds, a returned check fee will be assessed to your account by FACTS. GCA reserves the right to assess an additional fee.

If payments are returned for insufficient funds, we can/will require payment to be made by cash, cashier's check or money order.

LATE PICK UP FEES

From the Preschool class: All children must be picked up by 1:15pm. Late charges of \$5.00 for every 15 minute increment of time past 1:15pm will be charged to the family's account.

From JK: All children must be picked up from the teacher no later than 3:30pm to avoid a late pick up fee of \$5.00 for every 15 minute increment of time past 3:30pm. If the child is registered in our after school care program, they will be picked up by the GCA afterschool staff.

From the childcare program: All children must be picked up by 6:00pm. Late charges of \$1.00 per minute past 6:00pm are charged to the family's account. All parents who pick up their children after 6:00pm are required to sign a form stating the exact time the child was picked up from the facility. The time is recorded on the form from the school cell phone.

In all of these cases, the late charges billed to your child's account must be paid with the next tuition payment.

PAYMENT OPTIONS AND PROCEDURES

GCA partners with FACTS Tuition Management to process all payments. Through FACTS (Fast Automatic Cash Transfer System), all payments made for tuition, books, field trips, lunch tickets, PE uniforms (in graded school), spirit wear, tardy fees, library fines, etc. are set up to be paid by an automated withdrawal through either a bank account or credit card. Parents must complete the enrollment process online within 7 days

<http://online.factsmgt.com/signin/4JS5Q>. Credit cards that can be processed through FACTS include Master Card, American Express, and Discover. All payments made by credit card will be charged a convenience fee of 2.75%. FACTS can also accept a "Blue Bird" card purchased through Wal-Mart that acts as a preloaded debit card providing a third payment alternative. One annual fee per child for this service is covered by the school for the 2017-2018 school year.

ARRIVAL & PICK UP:

For the Childcare Program: The doors open at 6:30AM to receive children. Parents of preschoolers must walk their children into the center and let the workers know they have arrived. At dismissal time, parents must sign their children out before leaving for the day. The doors close at 6:00PM.

For the Preschool Program: The children are allowed into their classrooms at 9:30AM. Parents may walk their children into the building, or wait in the car pool line to drop them off at the front door. The Director, or other responsible adult, will be there to assist the children with the doors of the building. At dismissal time, parents must come to the classroom to pick up their children.

For the JK Program: The children are allowed into their classroom at 8:15am. Parents may walk their children into the Atrium or wait in the carpool line to drop them off at the front door. A staff member will be there to assist the children with the doors of the building. At dismissal time, parents must come into the Atrium to pick up and sign their children out.

For all programs, parents will provide a list of authorized adult persons allowed to pick up their child/ren from the school. **We do not release children to anyone under age 16.** A note or phone call from the parents must be received before a child is released to someone whose name does not appear on the original list. If a note or phone call is not received, the child will remain with academy personnel until the parent or legal guardian can be reached by phone for permission to release the child.

**** THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY! This is for the welfare of the child. ****

CHILD CUSTODY

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians have:

- Accessibility to progress reports can be granted - To do so, make an appointment with an administrator.
- The opportunity to participate in parent/teacher or administrative conferences and/or be advised of developmental, behavioral, or emotional concerns
- The right to pick up or sign out the child

Any student for whom the court has granted custody to an individual parent or person must have a copy of official court documentation as verification to be included in his/her student

file. It is only with official documentation of restrictions that any of the above named rights can be denied a parent. Guardian Christian Academy will comply with the court-ordered mandates as written in the latest copy provided to the school.

In addition, any student for whom the court has granted guardianship to a grandparent or other individual must have a copy of the official court documentation included in his/her student file. In such a case, the above named rights will be granted to the legal guardian. Such documentation is also required before an admissions application will be processed if it is being submitted by someone other than the parent. If a parent desires for a grandparent, step parent, or other family member to have the parental rights stated above, they must provide a written statement stating so.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

Parents are required to give two (2) weeks written notice of intent to withdraw their child/ren from the center. Without such written notice, parents are liable to pay the center for two (2) weeks of tuition after the last day of attendance. Forms are available at the front desk.

NON - DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Children are accepted by the school regardless of race, color, religion, or natural origin.

SUPPLIES

PRESCHOOL
1 Plastic Pencil Box
1 Box of crayons; Jumbo 8 for 2s/3s, 24 regular for 4s
1 set of washable markers; 10 count classic
1 package of 2 glue sticks
1 pair of Kid scissors
1 box of tissues
1 small bottle of Elmer’s glue
1 folder
1 old Adult sized t-shirt for painting
1 change of clothes
1 large back-pack

JK
1 Plastic Pencil Box
1 Box of crayons, 24 count
1 Box of washable markers, 10 count
5 Large glue sticks
1 pair of Kid scissors
1 box of tissues
1 small bottle of Elmer’s glue
1 Two pocket plastic folder
1 composition notebook
1 change of clothes
1 rest mat

Please clearly label all personal belongings with the child’s name.

DRESS CODE, CHANGE OF CLOTHES

Children should attend the school appropriately dressed for the weather. Please keep in mind that we go outside for playtime, as long as the weather is nice and the temperature is 40 degrees or above.

Since there are climbing toys on the playground and in the gym, tennis shoes are the preferred footwear for children to safely play on this equipment. Flip flop style sandals and shoes do not provide traction and support for children running and climbing in play areas.

All outer garments should be clearly marked with the child's name. Belts can pose a problem when it comes to using the potty. If your child's outfit requires a belt, make sure he / she is able to buckle and unbuckle it by him / her self.

To properly deal with potty / sickness accidents, a complete change of clothes must be left at the school at all times for the child. As the seasons change, so should the type of extra clothes left at the school for the children.

MEDICATIONS

A Medical Authorization form must be filled out and signed; one medication per form. Medication must be turned in to the teacher or director at the time of arrival with instructions on how it is to be administered. **NEVER** leave medications unattended on a counter, classroom desk, or in a child's bag.

Clearly mark the child's name on the outside of the medicine container. Medicines will not be given if they are out of date. Also, we cannot give a dosage that exceeds the pharmacist or manufactures label. If your child has been sick through the night, or is running a fever, please do not send him/her to school the next day. A rash which persists for a week must be examined by a doctor before a child is readmitted to class.

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION FORMS

A medical authorization form must be completed and signed by the parent every time they want GCA personnel to administer medicine to their child. In case a parent cannot be reached in an emergency, a doctor or hospital must have written permission to provide any emergency service. The registration form provides a place to give us the proper permission for any type of situation.

HEALTH STANDARDS

In order to protect your child and the other children in the Center, the following guidelines have been established for illnesses.

If at any time the Director or Supervisors feel that a child is sick or contagious, parents will be notified promptly so the child can receive proper medical care. Parents are expected to pick up their children immediately upon being called.

When enrolling in the Center, the parents or guardians agree to keep the child at home if he/she has:

- Fever
- Unidentified rash
- Diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Contagious disease (such as chicken pox)
- Bronchitis
- Impetigo (a bacterial skin infection around the nose and/or mouth, accompanied by ooze and yellow crusting; treated by antibiotics)
- Vomiting
- Severe cold

A child may be readmitted to the Center following an illness with the approval of the Center Director or with a doctor's note. **A CHILD MAY NOT BE READMITTED TO THE CENTER FOR 24 HOURS AFTER THE LAST SIGNS OF FEVER without the aid of fever reducing medicines.**

HEALTH SCREENING

Daily health observations will be conducted for each child to promptly identify changes in the child's pattern of behavior or physical appearance that might alert staff to an illness. Staff will check for these symptoms:

- severe coughing
- pink eye
- infected skin patches
- unusual behavior
- vomiting
- yellowish skin or eyes
- unusual spots or rashes
- feverish appearance
- scratching body or scalp
- severe diarrhea

If a child has any of these symptoms he / she will be separated from the other children and the parents will be notified immediately.

HAND WASHING POLICY

All sinks post proper hand washing procedures.

Staff should wash hands:

- Upon arrival
- Before putting on gloves to prepare and / or serve food
- After taking gloves off following each instances of handling diapers, soiled clothing, toilet, or an injured or sick child

Children should wash hands:

- After toileting / diapering
- Before food is served / eaten
- After blowing nose
- Before cooking

Hand washing must be done in sinks in the bathrooms or classrooms, not in the sinks in the kitchen or janitor closet.

ANIMALS ON SITE

For a number of reasons, pets and animals are to be kept at home and not to be brought onto the property. Provisions and permission can be obtained for animals involved in educational instruction.

LUNCH/SNACKS

Children have the option of buying their lunch from the school cafeteria or bringing their lunches from home. All tickets are purchased at the front desk. A \$35 ticket is good for 10 lunches. Milk/dessert tickets can be purchased for \$10.00, covering the cost for 10 milks/desserts. Each child must have his/her own ticket.

You will be notified when the child has 5 lunches left on the ticket so that you may purchase another one in a timely fashion. If your child arrives at school without a lunch, and does not have a lunch ticket on file, a peanut butter or cheese sandwich will be provided for him/her. If the child receives a sandwich for the third time, you will be billed \$1.50 for each of the 3 sandwiches received.

If you provide a lunch from home, please include a drink if your child is not buying milk. Snacks are provided for the children in the childcare program at 8:05am and 4:00pm.

Parents must notify the school of any food allergies that their child/ren may have at the time of registration. All precautions will be taken to ensure that a child does not eat anything that they are allergic to, and substitutions will be made for that child to ensure a nutritious and complete meal or snack.

The school menu is published monthly. It can be found online at our website (GCAKids.com). Please review it and let us know if you have any concerns or questions. The children are not forced to eat, but are encouraged to “try” everything on their plate. Because some children have allergies to certain things, they are not allowed to share their food with each other and are always supervised while eating.

If your child will be arriving after 10am, you must call the school prior to 10am to add him/her to the lunch count.

NAP TIME

Children who stay with us all day will have nap time from 1:30pm until 3:00pm. All children are expected to rest quietly on their cots – sleep is not mandatory.

Each child is assigned a cot and may bring a “special” blanket or stuffed animal, clearly labeled with the child’s name, for nap time with the understanding that the item will be placed in the child’s cubby for the remainder of the day and not to be carried around.

All nap time items are taken home on Fridays for laundering.

FIELD TRIPS

Preschool children usually take two (2) field trips a year. We highly encourage adult chaperones to accompany each 2 year old on the trip. All children wear name tags bearing the name and phone number of the school. The child's name will not appear on the tag. A booster/car seat is required for anyone under the age of 8 who rides in GCA's 15 passenger vans. They are not required in the minibus or full sized school bus. All payments for field trips are to be given to your child's teacher.

HAND IN HAND

"Hand in Hand" is the name of the volunteer program **inclusive of each GCA parent** which also imparts the optimistic message that we partner together to enhance our children's educational experiences. **All parents or invested adults are asked to volunteer time during the school year. Volunteers have an important and valuable role at Guardian Christian Academy.** I Corinthians 12:12-20 speaks of one body with many members, each with different talents, abilities, and services, all used for the Lord. God has given the GCA body many talents and abilities; there are countless opportunities to work together to build His kingdom.

In mid-summer a packet of materials comes home including information about volunteering and an electronic copy of the volunteer handbook complete with brief descriptions of the opportunities. A myriad of opportunities are listed and parents are asked to respond to a questionnaire. Opportunities may be on-site or off campus; the scope encompasses a wide variety of talents, abilities, and schedules.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers have an important and valuable role at Guardian Christian Academy. Whether you volunteer for five hours or five hundred hours over the course of the school year, your help is essential to enhancing the education of the students. Besides supporting the school, your volunteer efforts teach our children the joy and responsibility we all have to give some of our precious time to worthwhile causes. We hope you find your volunteer experience to be a rewarding one.

Volunteering has far reaching benefits for you as a parent as well as for the school:

When parents volunteer regularly, it reinforces the view in the child's mind that school and home are connected and that school is an important part of the family's life.

- Statistically students whose parents volunteer at school are more likely to make good grades and to stay out of trouble. In the eyes of the student, education/school is important because *my parents want to be involved*.
- To a child parental involvement validates the child and what he does at school. This results in a more positive attitude toward school and schoolwork.
- Parental involvement improves the quality of the school and increases unity.
- Volunteering raises teacher morale.

- Volunteers working together improve a school's reputation in the community.
- Research indicates that when parents become involved, the parents gain confidence in their parenting skills and feel more comfortable and capable in helping their children learn.

And in the words of one of GCA's volunteers, "Volunteers not only become friends; they become family".

WATCH D.O.G.S.[®] PROGRAM

Statistics prove dads who volunteer have a tremendously positive impact on the climate at school and on their own children. GCA continues with the **WATCH D.O.G.S.[®]** program for the fourth year. **WATCH D.O.G.S.[®]**, a PS-12th grade national program, invites fathers, grandfathers, or other father figures to volunteer one day at their child's school during the school year. Individuals sign up at a kick-off event at the beginning of the school year and again in January.

Watch D.O.G.S. volunteers are given a schedule at the beginning of the day and perform in a variety of roles during their volunteer time. **WATCH D.O.G.S.[®]** shirts are worn at school by the dads to designate their role; students look forward to these special volunteers, and volunteer dads look forward to seeing their children's environment firsthand.

SALT

A team of parents, known as SALT (**S**chool **A**dvisory **L**iaison **T**eam), similar to a PTA or PTO, partners to promote the mission and vision of Guardian Christian Academy. This group is representative of students from preschool through secondary. Each is committed to the Lord, supports the vision of the school, has invested in the life of the *school* as well as those things which affect his/her own child, has demonstrated both leadership qualities and the willingness to take initiative, has shown a desire to invest time, talents, and energy into making GCA a better school, and works towards those things in unity.

The general responsibilities of the advisory team are to:

- Provide input and feedback
- Help plan and execute school events / activities
- Promote school unity and school spirit
- Assist / oversee the organization of volunteers
- Assist / oversee fundraising
- Serve on / chair a committee for accreditation when it arises
- Serve as an eye / ear to the community in terms of promoting community awareness of GCA and finding community resources
- Bathe the school in prayer at all times

We are blessed at GCA to have volunteers who work together for the good of the school. As we have become a group of *many* strong volunteers and prayer warriors, great things are happening here at GCA!

SCHOOL PARTIES

At the beginning of each school year, a room parent(s) is selected. These volunteers are responsible for handling all details for the class parties. Planned parties happen on the following holidays:

- 1) **Fall Festival** – (our version of Halloween) – Children are allowed to dress up, but no scary costumes such as witches, ghosts, ghouls, skeletons, or anything of this nature is allowed. If the child arrives in something unacceptable, it will be removed or the child will be sent home.
- 2) **Christmas** – Money can be collected by the room parent to provide a special lunch for all of the children in the room (pizza, McDonalds). The children may exchange boy/girl gifts such as books, etc.
- 3) **Valentine's Day** – candy is collected from each family in the room and evenly distributed among the children. The kids can exchange valentine cards, signing the back of the card and leaving the envelope blank.

To celebrate **Thanksgiving**, the children are involved in a community project that aids someone in need. The K4 classes dress up as Indians or Pilgrims and imitate the first Thanksgiving meal.

For **Easter**, everyone is invited to participate in the services held by Southside Church of The Nazarene.

SPECIAL DAYS FOR PARENTS

- 1) **Mother's Tea** – a salad buffet is provided for all mothers. This is held at Noon on a weekday close to Mother's Day in May. Invitations are sent home. One adult per child may attend the luncheon
- 2) **Camping with Dad** – kids and Dads enjoy the great outdoors camping overnight on the property.
- 3) **Graduation Ceremony** – the Four year old classes and their families come together at the end of May to celebrate the end of their preschool experience. A \$15 - \$20 fee will be charged for the student's cap, gown, tassel, and diploma. The order for these items will be placed by the Early Childhood Director.
- 4) **Christmas Program** – the threes, fours, and JK students invite their friends and family to their special Christmas performance. It usually begins at 6:30pm in the Life Center.
- 5) **Grandparents' Day** – the children invite their grandparents to join them for a special day of celebration in their honor. Crafts and goodies are provided for the event.

IMAGES, PHOTOS, VIDEOS, DVDS

GCA staff takes pictures and videos throughout the year for a number of purposes. These include, but are not limited to: bulletin boards in the building, presentations for the children and their families, the teaching of technological skills, and promoting Guardian Christian

Academy through the church, advertisements, DVDs, and the internet/social media to name a few. As stated in the registration, these pictures/videos/DVDs are in no way sold for profit but can be used for the benefit of Guardian Christian Academy.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Parents are encouraged to celebrate their child's birthday by bringing in cookies, cupcakes, or cake and juice to be shared by the children in the classroom after lunch.

For a party that is taking place outside of the school, you may give invitations to the teacher for distribution. If you are not inviting the entire class, please bring the invitation to the teacher in a stamped envelope. She will provide the address and place it in the mail.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The following procedure will be administered if your child is in need of discipline:

- 1) the teacher issues verbal warnings and tries to redirect behavior.
- 2) the child is placed into a time out chair.
- 3) the second time out is spent in a chair near the door and away from the rest of the class.
- 4) the child is brought to the office for additional time out and discussion of behavior.
- 5) child is dismissed from school if cooperative attitude is not achieved.

Parents are kept informed as to their child's behavior, both good and bad. Aggressiveness such as hitting, biting, spitting, swearing, etc. will be dealt with immediately by coming to the office. These aggressive acts may result in dismissal from our programs.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A Crisis Management plan of action has been developed by the school administration in partnership with church personnel with the aim to protect and sustain life, minimize personal injury, reduce emotional trauma, assist in emotional recovery, limit damage to facilities, and prepare for cooperation with local emergency responders in the event of a crisis. The plan consists of comprehensive crisis management policies and procedures designed to address a range of potential crisis events and critical incidents. It should be noted, however, that no plans can specifically address the limitless, diverse threats and scenarios that may confront Guardian Christian Academy and other schools across America. No plans should limit the use of common sense, good judgment, flexibility, and ingenuity, needed to adapt and respond to a wide variety of unpredictable events and complex circumstances. It is the responsibility of each member of the faculty and staff of Guardian Christian Academy to participate in crisis preparation and training, and to be ready to respond in the event of a crisis.

Crisis Management plans include the training of all faculty and staff in crisis management, as well as for providing resources pertinent to being prepared to respond to a crisis event. It includes the training of select faculty and staff in CPR and emergency first aid. Ongoing

training and preparation includes the discussion of various crisis scenarios and the conducting of scenario drills with faculty and staff.

Students participate in regularly scheduled and documented fire and tornado drills, some of which are announced and some of which are not. Though other potential crisis events are not drilled with students present, students are taught the importance of listening and following directions of their teacher at all times, including when there is an emergency. Discussion of potential crises are limited and tailored to the developmental level of the student. When questions arise on the part of a student or students, teachers give a brief, age appropriate response, then refer the student to their parent to address any concerns that may have given rise to the question.

Parents need to be prepared to cooperate with the administration, faculty, and staff in the event of a crisis. In a crisis situation GCA:

- First addresses the situation
- Secondly takes the necessary steps to keep the students safe
- Thirdly informs the parents

The mode of communication will be the *best mode of communication for the issue at hand*. With the variances in potential scenarios, the mode of communication will vary as well.

Since one crisis may vary from another, an exact protocol cannot be given. However, in general, if a parent is on site at the time:

- Stay in the area to which you've been assigned.
- Stay off the parking lot and away from emergency responders or where emergency responders may need to go
- Do NOT find or make a move to find or pick up your child at that time
- Stay away from staging areas such as where administrators are functioning, first aid may be given, or first responders may be gathering
- Do NOT speak with the media; designated personnel will provide the media with the type of information and amount of information that is best given

If parents are off-site, wait WHERE YOU ARE for communication from GCA personnel. Additional people on the premises can result in confusion, cloud the accountability of known persons, and open the possibility of slowing the critical actions of first responders. Plans are in place to address communication with parents during a crisis and to provide for the safe and orderly reuniting of student and parents following a crisis event whether it is on site or at another prearranged location.

VISITORS

Parents are welcome at GCA. We require that parents/prearranged guests sign in and out at the main office and receive a pass before going to an appointment, conference, classroom, or to the lunchroom. To avoid interruptions but adequately address concerns, arrangements to conference with teachers need to be made in advance. This allows teachers to give full

attention to the matter at hand. Visits to the classroom *during instructional time* must be prearranged for a specific purpose with both the teacher and the administrator.

Remember, if you plan to eat a cafeteria lunch, we need to know by 9:55 am. We ask that parents remember they too are role models in the way they dress, converse, and respond. In addition, it is important to remember that Guardian Christian Academy as a school is a gun-free property. Guns are not to be brought onto the premises inclusive of the facility or the roughly 290 acres upon which it sets.

SCHOOL OFFICE

- 1) Main office personnel is available from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm on school days. If your call is unanswered, leave a message. Your call will be returned. School office hours may vary during school vacations. The differing hours will be listed in the newsletter.
 - a. To reach the daycare before 8:00 am or after 4:30 pm, please call 804-301-8276.
- 2) All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must sign in and out at the main office and wear a visitor's badge indicating they have legitimate business at the school. In the event of an emergency, it is critical to know who is in the building.
- 3) Parents wishing to talk with a child's teacher may schedule an appointment by contacting the school by phone or by note, or through avenues relayed by the teacher.
- 4) During the school day, forgotten lunches, blankets, etc., may be left in the main office to be delivered. PLEASE DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO THE CLASSROOMS; this causes interruptions or distractions which can be avoided.
- 5) It is essential, for the sake of the child, that any changes in phone numbers, address, pick-up information, or custody issues be relayed to both the office and the teacher at the time of the occurrence. Copies of updated court decisions need to be submitted when changes in custody occur.

EVALUATIONS

Evaluations for all students are done in October. The Four year old classes and Junior Kindergarten are also done in the spring of each year prior to Kindergarten registration. They are not used for placement; they are for your information only. You may want to share it with your child's future Kindergarten teacher.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

EMAIL

E-mail may be used to relay information, but is not a forum by which to discuss the progress or behavior of a student. This is to be done in person where the need for clarification or evidence of concern or confusion is more easily discerned and, thereby, addressed.

E-mail or batch texting may also be used to:

- Announce any unexpected changes (i.e. cancelation of after school practice) or reminders (i.e. special dress day or School Spirit Day)
- Give pertinent reminders
- Provide information of a timely or sensitive nature
- Communicate classroom information

Parents are strongly encouraged to check e-mails daily.

WEBSITE

The school website, www.gcakids.com, includes supply lists, calendars, newsletters, and menus for you to access from home or work. Revisions to the website will be ongoing and become an important source of information.

FACEBOOK

The school's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/GuardianChristianAcademy, is a valuable tool for our community to learn what activities and events our students and families are enjoying. When you tell how creative the students were in doing ... , how awesome a particular field trip was, what the students learned, they did ... , how much you enjoyed a skating party with just GCA folks in attendance, etc., it says a lot about our school that other parents want to hear. Social media is not the forum for voicing internal concerns or grievances; taking them directly to the persons involved brings about a solution or mutual understanding much more effectively. Therefore, GCA expects all parents and students to honor this policy when utilizing both GCA and their own personal forms of social media.

When immediate changes in announced or standard procedures occur, every attempt is made to post them on Facebook. Examples include a cancelled athletic event, school closure, or closed roads. With the vast majority of parents/guardians using Facebook, it is an effective means of communication.

All communication is to be appropriate, worded carefully, respectful of others, and generated from a positive motivation whether it be written, printed, verbal, non-verbal, on the computer, or on the internet. *"May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer."* Psalm 19:14

STAFF

Our staff is qualified by study, personality, and experience. Each member is dedicated to the education, care, and personal guidance of your child by setting Christian standards and ideals.

Throughout the year, staff members are required to attend on-going professional and personal development classes through such organizations as CCCECE (Chesterfield County Coalition of Early Childhood Educators) and PACED (Preschool Association of Church Educational Directors). In monthly staff meetings, they are also provided with on-going ideas and concepts to better equip them in the classroom.

Each staff member has been certified by their family physician, stating that they are free from any physical disabilities which would prohibit their involvement with children. Documents are on file at the school.

GCA staff members are not allowed to provide babysitting services for any of the parents who currently have children enrolled in the program.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The minimum qualifications for staff at GCA are as follows:

- A. No staff shall have been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor related to abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or adults.
- B. Staff shall be:
 - a. Of good character and reputation; active in their local church
 - b. Be 18 years or older to teach preschool
 - c. Have a High School diploma or equivalent certificate
 - d. Capable of carrying out assigned responsibilities
 - e. Capable of accepting training and supervision
 - f. Capable of communicating effectively both orally and in writing as applicable to the job responsibility
 - g. Be able to work in harmony with the doctrinal issues of the Nazarene Denomination
 - h. Have their own transportation
- C. All staff shall have the following documents on file:
 - a. Criminal History Records check through the State police
 - b. Criminal Records check through Child Protective Services
 - c. Staff health report signed by a practicing physician, certified annually to be free from any disease that would prevent them from caring for children
 - d. TB test results. Screening is conducted every two years
 - e. References

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

By Virginia law, anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being physically abused, sexually abused, neglected, or otherwise abused is legally required to report this information. Any staff member of GCA who has cause to question that a child's physical or emotional health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect, must report that possibility which will in turn be reported to one of the following: the local Child Protective Services or the Child Abuse Hotline (800-752-6200). Child Protective Services will notify the parents of the child. All reports of child abuse or neglect shall be held in absolute confidence. GCA staff members are charged with not communicating any information concerning the alleged event to any person except as necessary to cooperate with any official investigation.

SOLICITATION

In an effort to be consistent, Guardian Christian Academy does not permit soliciting on the premises. This includes the distribution or posting of flyers or business/cause related materials left by a parent or affiliate. The only exceptions are materials/information generated by GCA itself or its partners, Southside Nazarene Church, XZone, or Footsteps Counseling.

SOUTHSIDE NAZARENE CHURCH

The church of the Nazarene is evangelical in doctrine, with an emphasis on being set free from sin and guilt. Our church believes a person can live a holy life through the power of Jesus Christ. If you do not have a church home, we invite you to visit Southside Church of the Nazarene.

CURRICULUM

The preschool curriculum was developed using methods found in the A Beka Christian materials, as well as the MacMillan Early Skills Materials. Websites, such as Pinterest, provide a variety of arts, crafts, and projects designed to promote age-appropriate skill development in preschoolers.

~GCA Developmentally Appropriate Educational Goals~

Two Years Old

- 1) Basic instructions in Social Skills
 - Being part of a group
 - Sharing toys and ideas
 - Increasing verbal skills
 - Following directions
- 2) Potty Training
- 3) Introduction to:
 - Shapes
 - Colors
 - Alphabet
 - Numbers
 - Simple songs and rhymes
- 4) Sensory skill development
- 5) Introduction to scissors and cutting on lines

Three Years Old

- 1) Continuing instruction in social skills; socially and in the classroom
- 2) Continued work with the alphabet, numbers, shapes, and colors
- 3) Introduction to the concepts of size, direction, different-ness, etc...
- 4) Begin learning the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag
- 5) Recognize first name

- 6) Know family last name
- 7) Know what city they live in
- 8) Begin to color in the lines
- 9) Become skillful with a pair of scissors
- 10) Count to 10

Four Years Old

- 1) In depth work on classroom social skills; obedience to classroom rules
- 2) Mastering the alphabet, colors, shapes, and numbers (up to 10) so that the child can not only say them, but identify them when asked
- 3) Continued work on concepts of size, direction, different-ness, etc...
- 4) Masters the Pledge of Allegiance
- 5) Knows family last name and all the members' first names
- 6) Knows home address and phone number
- 7) Uses scissors well and cuts along lines
- 8) Dresses one's self after bathroom break
- 9) Begins to work on writing first name and alphabet letters in January
- 10) Learns to tie one's own shoes

Guardian Christian Academy

RATE SHEET

Effective 6/1/2017

Preschool Program

Hours 9:30am-1pm

2 ½ - 4/5 years

Age	Days per week	Yearly	Monthly	Registration fee*	Book fee
2s	Mon & Wed	\$1440.00	\$160.00	\$100	\$30
	Tues & Thurs	\$1440.00	\$160.00	\$100	\$30
3s & 4s	Tues & Thurs	\$1440.00	\$160.00	\$100	\$30 (3s) \$35 (4s)
3s & 4s	Mon-Wed-Fri	\$1800.00	\$200.00	\$100	\$30 (3s) \$35 (4s)
3s & 4s	Mon through Fri	\$2115.00	\$235.00	\$100	\$30 (3s) \$35 (4s)

* Registration fee is non-refundable

Preschool / Childcare services

Hours: 6:30am – 6pm (includes preschool)

2 ½ - 4/5 years

Age	Rates	Registration fee*	Book fee
2s	\$175.00 for full week \$36.00 daily **	\$100	\$30
3s	\$170.00 for full week \$36.00 daily **	\$100	\$30
4s	\$165.00 for full week \$36 daily **	\$100	\$35

* Registration fee is non-refundable

****Daily rates only apply for those registered for less than 5 daycare days weekly.**

Lunch

Students & Adults \$35 ticket (10 lunches), \$10.00 (10 milks/desserts)

Junior Kindergarten Program

In response to a growing number of parents who feel their children are ready for a program more challenging than K4, we have begun a Junior Kindergarten program. To qualify for the classroom, a child must turn 5 years of age between September 1st through December 31st of the current school year.

Standards for the classroom include:

- A Virginia state licensed instructor
- A minimum of 10 students; maximum of 20 with an aide
- Utilization of A Beka curriculum for JK
- Student materials from A Beka
- Appropriately sized desks and chairs
- Instruction hours between 8:15am – 3:15pm, Monday through Friday*
- Lunch, P.E., Music, Recess
- Rest time after lunch

Registration fee is \$100.00

Tuition is \$4,200.00 and may be paid in 10 monthly installments of \$420.

The first payment is due August 1.

Book fee is determined yearly and due August 1.

*Before and after school services are available 6:30am – 8:15am and 3:00pm – 6:00pm for a weekly fee:

- Before and After \$70 weekly
- Before only \$35 weekly
- After only \$50 weekly

Registration fee for the B/A program is an additional \$100.

**(these prices are only offered to students who attend GCA JK through 5^h grade)*



***Part Time Preschool Classes
Full Time Childcare
&
Junior Kindergarten
Parent's Handbook Receipt Page***

We / I have received a copy of the 2017/2018 Guardian Christian Academy Parent Handbook for the Part Time Preschool, Full time Childcare, and Junior Kindergarten programs and agree to abide by the conditions set therein.

Parents' Name

Signature

Parents' Name

Signature

Date