



Early Education Parent Handbook

Firewheel Christian Academy

Early Education

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INTRODUCTION

We welcome you and your child to Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education. We are honored that you are considering our school for your child's early childhood experiences. Our center offers a friendly and flexible environment, which will facilitate your child's transition from home to school. Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education is here to provide your child personal care, attention, guidance and love. We are looking forward to a rewarding experience working and playing with your child!

PHILOSOPHY

Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education is dedicated to providing a caring, Christian atmosphere. Our faculty believes that every child is a unique individual with special gifts and talents from God that can and should be nurtured to their fullest potential. Each staff member is committed to guiding the whole child toward balanced spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and intelligent growth.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Our purpose at Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education:

- To honor God by providing quality care facilitating growth in the lives of young children in a loving and safe environment where they can develop spiritually as they grow emotionally, physically, cognitively, and socially.
- To provide a Christian service to the families and children of the community.
- To foster learning and allow the children to develop socially in an age-appropriate environment including such activities as:
 - ◇ Beginning language skills
 - ◇ Letter recognition and introduction to phonics
 - ◇ Number recognition and introduction to basic math concepts
 - ◇ Strong emphasis on children's literature
 - ◇ Bible stories and Bible memory
 - ◇ Music
 - ◇ Science through hands-on interaction with God's world
 - ◇ Social interaction
 - ◇ Large-muscle and small-muscle motor skill development
 - ◇ Playtime either inside or outside
 - ◇ Special event days
- To provide facilities where all are welcome regardless of race, color, sex, or national and ethnic origin.

PROGRAM GOALS

Our program meets the needs of children ages 6 months through 3 years of age during the school year, during the summer we have children through completed 7th grade..

Our goals are to:

- Help each child understand that God loves them, and that they are special.
- Give your child a good foundation of Bible stories.
- Provide a variety of learning experiences with freedom to choose activities of their choice.
- Help your child develop relationships with classmates and adults.

- Help develop problem-solving skills.
- Foster independence and self-reliance.
- Teach respect for others.
- Our 3 and K-3 classes one day a week attend chapel, computer, library and reading eggs.

STAFFING

Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education chooses their teachers and caregivers based on their ability to work with and care for children. Our staff is continually being trained in Early Childhood Development.

TUITION

Tuition is due during the first week of each month. We accept cash, checks, money orders, credit card or you may sign up with Facts Management. Returned checks will result in a \$25 fee and the check with fee must be repaid in cash or money order. If you have a second returned check you will be required to make all tuition payments in cash or with a money order. **NOTE:** There is a \$10.00 late fee charge if payment is not received on time.

ENROLLMENT

Children will be placed initially in classes according to their chronological age with some variances as the staff evaluates developmental placements.

When classes are full, parents are encouraged to place their child on the waiting list. When an opening becomes available, we will contact you. Children of parents already in the center will receive priority.

All new students are accepted on a three month probationary period.

Before attending the first day, the following forms **must be in** before your child's first day at school.

- Enrollment forms;
- Parental Agreement Form;
- Copy of the immunization record;
- Physician's examination form signed by a qualified physician stating that your child is able to participate in the Preschool program. The physician's report must be submitted yearly.
- Discipline guidance policy

All changes to the policy will be sent out in the daily folders or in their cubbies.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Texas Children

Age	Vaccine with # of dose
Younger than 2 months	No shots
By 3 months	DTaP 1, HIB 1, IPV 1, Hep B 1
By 5 Months	DTaP 2, HIB 2, IPV 2, Hep B 2
By 7 Months	DTaP 3, HIB 3
By 16 Months	HIB 4, MMR 1
By 19 Months	DTaP 4, IPV 3, Varicella , Hep B 3
By 36 Months	Hep A 1
By 48 Months	Hep A 2
Age 5	DTaP 5, IPV 4, MMR 2

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

If it becomes necessary for you to withdraw your child from the program for any reason, it is our policy that parents/guardians must notify the director 2 weeks prior to the withdrawal date. **This notification must be given in written form.**

PROCEDURE FOR TERMINATION OF SERVICES TO FAMILIES

Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education makes every effort to provide a program that meets the needs of each child. However, at times it is impossible to meet the needs of a child and family. If, after working with the child and family, we do not believe it is in the child's best interest to remain at the center, we will ask the family to make other arrangements.

Your child may be terminated from the program based on abuse and neglect of the parent's rules and guidelines. If you are found to be in violation of the rules and guidelines, the following procedures will be taken.

- Notice to bring the situation to your attention.
- Written warning of suspension.
- Suspension-the child may not attend for three days.
- Termination from the program if the situation continues. A written notice stating the reason for termination will be given.

Major Reasons for Termination:

- Unpaid fees
- Medical (not up-to-date as required)
- Behavioral (disruptive or abnormal)

PARENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Parents have rights at Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education. We provide these rights to allow parents the freedom to discuss all issues with the director and teachers in a professional manner.

- A parent has the right to be treated courteously, fairly, and with respect.
- The parent has the right to visit the center at anytime during normal business hours.
- A parent has the right to ask questions and not be intimidated by anyone.
- A parent has the right to complain when we do a poor job.
- The parent has the right to compliment us when we do a good job.
- A parent has the right to expect us to be enthusiastic and stand behind our school.
- A parent has the right to have knowledgeable and skilled people care for his or her child.

ABSENCES

Tuition must be paid in full without deduction for absence of any duration or for any cause, and without substitution of other days of attendance as “make-up” days. Daily attendance is recorded when you check your child in/out.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Upon arrival you **must** sign in at your child’s classroom each day. Do not let your child enter or leave the building unaccompanied. Do not let your child leave their classroom without you.

Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education will only release children to the designated people listed on the enrollment form. When you arrive to pick up your child, you **must** sign your child out.

Only those persons listed on your Enrollment Form will be authorized to pick up your child/children. These persons must bring their state issued identification to verify they are the person you have designated to pick up your child. **NO** child will be released without proper identification.

You are responsible for updating the records if a person on your enrollment form is no longer allowed to pick up your child. All people on your list must have the correct car-seat for your child. If you have a new person that you would like to pick up your child you must give the Administrator the full name of the person. That person must bring their state issued ID to verify they are the person you have designated to pick up your child that day. **NO child will be released without proper ID.**

PARKING

As you pull into the parking lot, you must **always go right**. Speed limit in the parking lot is **10 MPH**

WATER ACTIVITIES

Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education does not participate in water activities that involve a pool or standing water due to minimum standards guidelines.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

During the school year, Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education does not go on field trips or provide transportation of any kind (except medical emergencies). In lieu of field trips we will have special programs and guests throughout the year.

During the summer months, completed Kindergarten and up may go on field trips. Permission Forms will be sent home and must be signed and returned before each trip.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

At school, security is a top concern. Doors are locked all day in the Early Education wing.. **Ring the doorbell for assistance.** Children will be released only to persons authorized by the enrolling parents. The Early Education office must be notified if someone other than the parent is picking up the child.

ILLNESS

If your child is not feeling well (fever, undiagnosed rash, cough, watery eyes, diarrhea, vomiting, etc.) it is better to keep them home. **They must be fever free and no diarrhea or vomiting for 24 hours.** If a child should develop these symptoms during the day, the parent will be contacted to make arrangements to pick up their child. If we are unable to reach you, or if you have not made arrangements to pick up your child within the hour, we will call your emergency contact person. **A child may not come back to the program for 24 hours after being sent home. A child must be free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.**

No child will be kept inside while the class is on the playground. If a child is too ill to play outside, they are too ill to come to school.

MEDICATIONS

Medication may be administered to children under the following condition:

- ✓ Prescription medications must be in the original container labeled with the child's name, date, directions and the physician's name. The office staff will administer the medication as stated on the label directions.
- ✓ The office staff must ensure that non-prescription medication be labeled with the child's name and the date the medication was brought to the facility. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container. The office staff will administer it according to label directions if approved in writing by the child's parent or guardian.
- ✓ The office staff must document each dose of medication administered showing the child's name; the name of the medication; date, time & amount administered and the name of the staff administering the medicine.
- ✓ If a child has a periodic and recurring medical problem, such as headaches, asthma attacks, or allergic reactions, the parent or the child's health-care professional may sign a medication authorization form allowing us to administer the medication when symptoms occur for up to a six-month period. The authorization must include information on symptoms to watch for. Please bring

all medications to the Early Education office. **Do not leave medications in your child's bag/backpack or with their teacher.** All medication can be picked up at the end of the day in the Preschool office.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If a child receives an injury while in the care of Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education we will notify parents. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact list will be utilized. When the injury or illness consists of uncontrollable bleeding, broken bones, head injury, seizures, or any other medical situation that we feel is in need of medical attention we will call 911. After calling 911, if parents are unable to make it to the center, the EMT'S will transport the child. A Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education representative will stay with the child until a parent arrives at the hospital. Medical expenses incurred during this emergency will be the responsibility of the parents.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Daily notes for children under the age of 2 will include the diaper changes, child's mood, food intake, supplies needed, teacher notes and activities for the day. Check your child's folder **daily** for any communication from the teacher or the office. During normal play children might receive an injury. If this occurs the teacher will write an accident/illness report. If the injury is substantial we will follow the Medical Emergencies part of the handbook. If your child has an illness we will fill out the same form.

REST TIME

Except for K-3 children will participate in a time of rest or sleeping. Each child is assigned a mat and will be asked to remain quiet during rest time. Children will be allowed to read at their mat after others have fallen asleep. Children should bring a small blanket, and may bring any quiet and soft toy they wish to sleep with.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Our goal is to build a positive self-image. We believe that our attitude will have a great influence on the children. Discipline and guidance will be based on an understanding of individual needs and development. Methods used will center on communication, stressing positive behavior, verbalization, redirection, or possible removal from a negative situation. Physical punishment will not be used. No child will be shamed or humiliated; left unsupervised, shouted at, or denied food for inappropriate behavior. No child will be punished for lapses in toilet training.

Supervision

The children in our care will have proper supervision at all times. Being actively involved with our children, not simply babysitting, is our very important responsibility.

Guidance

Guidance of children in our care will be appropriate for their age. Rules are established carried out. Children need structure and it is important that they understand what is expected of them.

Discipline

Our teachers will use calm voices and give positive direction, not negative. When a child's behavior is disruptive, they will be removed from the group for a short time. Teachers will help them understand why they are being withdrawn from the group

DRESS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We ask that your child wear comfortable play clothes to the center. We will be going outside each day weather permitting. Due to Texas State Licensing, **all children** are required to go outside every day unless it is very inclement weather. Because our playground is full of playground mulch, **sandals are not appropriate footwear**. Please put a **complete change of clothing** (*including socks and underwear*) for your child in their backpack. Remember to change these out seasonally. Clothes will be changed if they become soiled during the day. Soiled clothes will be placed in a bag for you to launder when you go home. Disposable diapers and pull-ups must be sent with all non-potty trained children.

MEALS AND SNACKS

All children will need to bring a lunch for each day.

- **Nursery:** Bottles (containing formula, breast milk or milk) and baby food will be given to babies as indicated by parents on the monthly care instruction sheet. We have a separate nursing mother's room that is available, if mom's need to nurse their babies here at school.
- **2's, 3's, K-3:** Lunch should consist of finger foods they can feed to themselves. They will also need at least 2 sippy cups. Remember: all items must be labeled with your child's name!

Summer Camp:

- **Completed Kindergarten through school age students:** Please bring a lunch each day including a drink. Make sure lunches do not need to be heated up. You will receive special instructions on field trip days.

BIRTHDAYS

Store bought items are the only treats that you may bring. Some things that we have found in the past that work great are mini-muffins, donuts, donut holes, Rice Krispy treats and cookies. **It is important that we be given a written statement of any food allergies your child might have.**

BAD WEATHER POLICY

We try to remain open during bad weather, but there may be times when we experience late openings, early closings or all-day closings. When the center needs to close because of severe weather conditions, we will follow the GISD and or FCA school closings. School closings are announced on WFAA Channel 8 television news stations. The staff will make every attempt to notify you if we have an unexpected closing. **Please make sure your work, home, and cell phone numbers are up-to-date should we need to contact you.**

LESSON PLANS

A basic outline of lesson plans for the week will be on display in each classroom. Feel free to ask the teacher about what is planned..

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

If a meeting requires the undivided attention of the teacher, please schedule a parent conference.

TOYS

The program provides an adequate selection of games, toys, art projects, and books. Items brought from home often create problems and may be lost or damaged.

PETS

The Early Education program does not allow pets to be in the building. We have many children with allergies.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

If you feel Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education has not provided the care that TDFPS requires in their minimum standards you can report us at 1-800-252-5400. We strive to provide quality care at all times and if at anytime you have a problem please talk to the director about the issue. If you feel the issue was not resolved or that you can not talk to the staff feel free to call TDFPS and ask them for assistance. They will come out and visit the school and check for any standard violations. Your name will never be disclosed to the center. When the licensing representative visits they will address any issues with the director and make sure we are following each of the standards set forth by the state of Texas.

Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education does everything in our power to follow each rule set forth and abide by higher levels of standards set forth by Child Care Group and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The minimum standards and the current inspection reports can be found outside the director's office in the shadow box. Parents are welcome to review all minimum standards documents at anytime. If you would like to learn about specific regulations please don't hesitate to ask.

For more information on Texas Childcare, review the minimum standards or to see Firewheel Christian Academy Early Education reports please visit the website at <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us>. You can also learn more about childcare in general through www.naeyc.org.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure to report it. If we suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, we are required to report it to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or to a law enforcement agency. We are required to make a report **within 48 hours** of the time we suspect the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

What is Abuse? Abuse is mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child.

What is Neglect? Neglect includes (1) failure to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter and/or medical care; and/or (2) leaving a child in a situation where the child is at risk of harm.

This report is confidential and is not subject to public release under the Open Records Act. The law provides for immunity from civil or criminal liabilities for innocent persons who report even unfounded suspicions, as long as the report is made in *good faith*.

STAFF BILL OF RIGHTS

The staff also has a Bill of Rights that we will abide for to make the program a safe place for your child.

- We have the right to follow Minimum Standards while providing care for the children.
- We have the right to call you and ask questions that will allow us to provide the highest level of care.
- We have the right to call CPS when we feel a child is in danger.
- We have the right to ask you to update your records at any time.
- We have the right to contact EMS if we feel your child is in need of immediate medical attention.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Emergency drills are held periodically to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. This might make quite an impression on your child the first time a fire drill is performed, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know what to do in the event of an emergency. Fire drills are practiced monthly.

Fire or Disaster

In case we need to evacuate, we will accompany the children and relocate to:

North: Northplace Church
2709 3rd St,
Sachse, Texas 75048

South: Naaman Forest High School
4843 Naaman Forest Blvd.
Garland, Texas 75040

Staff will then contact parents to pick up their child.