

St. Giles Children's Learning Center

Parent Handbook - 2024-2025



Pre-School and VPK

St. Giles Presbyterian Church

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Welcome to St. Giles Children's Learning Center

The Church, our staff, and administration would like to welcome you to our Children's Center. We are so excited to have your child in our program and look forward to a year full of new learning experiences, nurturing activities, physical development, and cognitive development, as well as making new friends, meeting new people, and having fun. Please keep this handbook for future reference concerning our policies, calendar, and other pertinent information regarding our Center. Thank you for making us a part of your child's life. We look forward to serving your child and your family.

Enrollment

St. Giles Children's Learning Center welcomes children of any race, religion, and ethnic background.

The Butterfly Class - This class enrolls children between the ages of fifteen (15) months and thirty-five (35) months.

- Children need to be able to walk independently and skip their morning nap.
- The Butterfly Class meets Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.
- Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- You may choose 1-2-or 3-day enrollment for this class.

The Busy Bee Class - The children enrolled in this class are three (3) years old by September 1 of the school year.

- Children have to be potty trained to attend this class.
- The Busy Bees Class meets Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday.
- Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Children will need to be enrolled 3 days per week.

VPK - The children enrolled in this class are four (4) years old by September 1 of the school year.

- Children entering VPK must be fully potty trained.
- This program is four days per week - Monday through Thursday.
- Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Children will attend class Monday through Thursday, four (4) days per week to achieve their best school preparation using the approved curriculum. Regular attendance is very important.

Health Information

All children must have both a health and immunization record at the time of enrollment.

- Health forms remain valid for two years from the date they are completed and signed by a physician.
- Immunization records must be updated as additional shots are required.

Tuition and Fees

By enrolling with St. Giles Children's Center, you are agreeing to pay the monthly tuition which holds your child's spot in his/her classroom for the entire year.

At the time of enrolling a child at St. Giles Children's Center, a **NON-REFUNDABLE** registration fee of **\$100** will be required for children enrolled in the 2-and-3-year-old classes.

Tuition is divided into equal monthly payments and will be due by the 15th of each month. There will be a pro-rated tuition for the month of August and the remainder of the year payments will remain the same for each month. A late fee of \$15.00 will be charged after the 15th of each month.

Checks are to be made payable to St. Giles Children's Center. We do not accept cash however we do accept credit and debit cards.

Withdrawal Procedures

If during the school term, a parent finds that it is necessary to withdraw their child from the program, notice must be given **two weeks** in advance. If you do not give a two-week notice, you will be responsible for the month's tuition.

Enrollment Agreement: Please remember that we expect you to honor your enrollment agreement through May of the current school year.

Arrival and Dismissal Times and Procedures

The Center opens promptly at 9:00 a.m. If you are arriving early, please wait with your child at the gate or door. Please do not bring your child to the classroom before the class is scheduled to begin. Do not leave children unattended.

If you must bring your child to St. Giles Children's Center before school starts, we provide the Before Care Program beginning at 8:30 a.m. There is an extra fee for participating in morning care.

Please arrive on time. Consistently arriving late for school is not only disruptive to your child's education, but to the other children in the class as well as the teacher.

If your child is in the Butterfly or Bumblebee class, dismissal time is 12:30 p.m. A late charge will be incurred for each minute you are late, and you will be charged a \$1/per minute late fee.

If your child is enrolled in VPK, dismissal time is 1:00 p.m. A late charge will be incurred for each minute you are late, and you will be charged a \$1/per minute late fee.

Accommodations

While our center has limited resources in helping children with special needs, we do not discriminate against any child.

All reasonable efforts/modifications will be explored to integrate any child with special needs and individualized assessments will be made to determine if our center is able to meet the needs of each child.

We encourage open communication with the parents/guardians and any other professionals who work with the child to determine if our program is the "right fit" for the child, family, and center.

Visit the Americans with Disabilities Act website for commonly asked questions regarding the rights of children with disabilities and childcare centers at: www.ada.gov

Communication Procedures and Chapel

If you have any concerns that need to be addressed, please schedule a time with your child's teacher and the director. This will allow them to fully listen and resolve any issues. We will make certain to keep conversations confidential to ensure your privacy.

We have a chapel service on Wednesday mornings beginning promptly at 9:15 a.m. During this time our Pastor meets with the children along with their teachers in the Sanctuary to sing songs and listen to a short Bible story. It is important that your child arrives at school on time for them to have the opportunity to participate in this activity.

Lunch Procedures

Each class has a thirty (30) minute lunch period. The teachers are busy during this time helping to open, distribute, and make sure the children's needs are met. We encourage the following when it comes to packing your child's lunch:

1. **Please pack plastic ware/utensils:** If your child needs utensils to eat their lunch, please pack them in their lunch container.
2. **Healthy lunches:** Please pack a nutritious lunch for your child and make sure they have some type of protein, fruit, drink, and vegetable such as carrots or celery.

Please try to stay away from sugary snacks and sending in too much food for lunch.

Encourage your child to help when deciding what type of healthy foods, they would like packed in their lunch.

3. **Fruit:** Fresh fruit is a great option for lunch. If you choose to send fresh fruit in their lunch containers, please peel fruit and cut it into slices or small pieces for your child to eat. The children have 30 minutes to eat, and the teacher will not have time to peel and slice fruit. Thank you for your help with this.

School Clothing

The children will be spending part of everyday outside, weather permitting. Please dress your child in appropriate play clothes.

Some examples of appropriate clothing are:

- closed toe shoes (tennis shoes), along with socks,
- clothing that is easy to pull up and down, and
- clothing that your child can manipulate easily.

Clothing that is difficult for a child to wear in a school setting includes:

- flip-flops, sandals, crocs, boots, shoes with no backs,
- long dresses, and
- 1-piece outfits.
- **Drawstrings on clothing proven to be dangerous.** Please keep this in mind when dressing your child for school.

Please help your child become self-sufficient by having them dressed appropriately for school. Please check the weather before leaving home so that your child will have the appropriate clothing if the weather changes suddenly during the day.

Children need at least **1 set of extra clothing (including underwear and socks)**. This extra clothing should be placed in a Zip-loc bag with your child's name printed on the Ziploc. You may also choose to label your child's clothes with your child's name or initials so that your child's clothes do not go home with another child. The extra set of clothes will remain at school and not in your child's backpack.

Other Supplies

- **Toddlers** need to have enough diapers and wipes to last an entire day.
- Your child will need to bring a **backpack** every day that is large enough for their take home folder and work.

Field Trips

The Department of Children and Families enforces strict guidelines for field trips. St. Giles Children's Center has chosen not to offer the traditional field trips. We do, however, believe that children should have extended educational experiences outside the typical classroom

environment. Therefore, to help expand your child's understanding and learning we may, at times, offer pre-arranged opportunities outside our school. As we are not licensed to transport children off school grounds, teachers will give parents the information needed to bring children to a pre-determined destination. St. Giles will have no responsibility in transportation arrangements and parents will be required to sign a waiver releasing the Center of any responsibility. These opportunities are optional, and your child is not required to participate. We do offer visits from community helpers during certain times of the year, and you will be advised of any visitors that may come to the school for learning opportunities.

Safety

We take our responsibility for caring for your child very seriously. We have established procedures and expectations to ensure safety for all children at St. Giles Children's Center.

We will not release your child to anyone who is a stranger to us. If we personally do not know the person picking up your child, even if they are on the enrollment form as an authorized person, we will need photo identification for verification.

Sanitation

- The student restrooms will be sanitized each morning prior to the students arriving at school.
- Classrooms will be cleaned/sanitized every day after school and as needed during the day.
- Toys with smaller parts will be removed as played with during the day and sanitized at the end of each day.
- A cleaning crew hired by the Church will clean our buildings every Friday.

Discipline/Expulsion

Discipline is a learning process. As adults we need to help children learn to live comfortably with themselves and others. They learn to do this by learning self-control and taking responsibility for their actions. Corporal punishment is **NEVER** appropriate and will not be used at the St. Giles Children's Center. We use a redirection approach to help guide children to acceptable behavior.

At specific stages in a young child's development, hitting and biting are not unusual. These are innate mechanisms to protect and defend oneself. Our desire is to teach children positive and acceptable ways to deal with normal feelings of fear, anger, determination, sadness, frustration, elation, and excitement. When we experience a situation in which a child is having difficulty coping with our school program and we feel we do not have the resources to handle the situation within our Center, we will do the following:

1. Ask parents or guardians to come in for a conference at a mutually convenient time.
2. Encourage the parents or guardians to discuss the situation with the staff and determine a mutual agreement on the course of action.
3. If the issues cannot be resolved within an appropriate time or cause disruption of the Center's program, and/or harm other children or staff, the child will be removed from the program.