

St. Timothy's Christian Preschool



2023-2024 Parent Handbook

"Start your children off on the way they should go,
And even when they are old they will not depart from it."
Proverbs 22:6

St Timothy's Christian Preschool Handbook

St. Timothy's Christian Preschool educates children in a nurturing learning environment that helps them to develop to their full potential- academically, socially and spiritually. The staff and faculty partner with parents to prepare their children with the academic skills and moral integrity to have a positive impact on the world for the Lord Jesus Christ.

St Timothy's Christian Church:

All students and families are welcome to participate in the life of St. Timothy's Lutheran Church. You can check service times on our website www.stlcsj.org. The pastors welcome inquiries and are happy to meet with parents with any questions or who are looking for a church to call home.

Our Staff:

St Timothy's Christian Preschool Staff is a compassionate group gifted with energy and creativity and passion for guiding and teaching young children. Our staff holds current CPR and first aid certificates and meets the State of California requirements for preschool education. Our staff exemplifies their faith and love for God in their teaching and interactions with the children, parents and other staff members.

Admission Policy:

St Timothy's Christian Preschool admits students of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin. St Timothy's is designed for 2-year-old – Kindergarten Readiness age children who are developmentally prepared to attend school. If it is determined that our program is not benefiting your child, our school staff will work together with you to determine the best course of action for him/her.

All children, including those presently enrolled must reapply each school year. Our preschool program is offered from the mid of August to the beginning of June. We also offer a weekly summer camp program in June and July that is a separate enrollment process.

Enrollment Requirements:

- **Pre 2's:** A child must be 2 years old by his/her first day of school of the enrollment year.
- **Pre 3's:** A child must be 3 years old on or before December 2 of the enrollment year and potty trained by his/her first day of school.
 - **Junior Kindergarten:** A child must turn 4 years old by the end of the calendar year.

Fees:

- There is a one-time, non-refundable, application fee of \$150 for all first-time applicants.
- There is a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$400 to hold your child's class spot.

Forms required to enroll and hold your child's spot:

- Application Form
- Contract Agreement
- Deposit
- Completion of FACTS Account set-up

The following forms are required before your child's first day:

- CA State Licensing Forms
- Handbook Agreement
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- School Diaper Policy
- Covid-19 Parent Acknowledgment and Disclosure

Preschool License:

The state of California Department of Social Services Licenses our preschool. Our Facility Number is 430701997. Our preschool is licensed for a maximum of 85 children in attendance at any given time.

Hours:

Regular Preschool hours are: Half day, 8:45 am - 12:00 pm; Full day, 8:45 am - 3:00 pm. Preschool daycare is available through our Preschool Full Day Plus program. The hours are 7:30 am - 8:45 am and 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm. Extended Care: Drop in extended care is available for \$15.00/hour per child with prior reservation.

Please refer to the school calendar for when the preschool is closed.

Tuition:

See St. Timothy's Christian Preschool Tuition and Cost for 2023-2024 for current year's tuition cost and fees. St. Timothy's Christian Preschool enrolls your child with the expectation that your child will remain in the program for the entire school year.

Temporary Absences:

In the event a child is absent due to illness, personal vacation, personal holiday observance, or disciplinary dismissal, no portion of your paid or outstanding tuition will be refunded, canceled or pro-rated.

Preschool Closure for COVID-19 or Similar Events:

In the event of school closure for COVID-19 or similar situations, the school will endeavor to continue providing virtual programs to facilitate ongoing learning and student socialization (video conferencing, emailed activities and other outreach from teachers to your child). Beginning 30 calendar days after the initiation of a facility closure, tuition will be reduced by 50% until school facilities are reopened.

Withdrawal from Preschool Program:

Withdrawal is accomplished by completing the following:

- 1) providing withdrawal notice to the Preschool Office via email or in writing
- 2) paying a tuition charge as determined by the date the notice is received:
 - A. Withdrawal prior to July 1st will not incur a tuition charge.
 - B. Withdrawal after July 1st will require one month's tuition to be paid.
 - C. Withdrawal after Orientation Day will require a 30-day notice to the Admissions Office during which your child may still attend school. An **additional** month's tuition will be charged upon completion of your 30-day period.
 - D. Withdrawal after May 30th will require payment in full of the remaining tuition through the end of the school year.

Discounts: Members of St. Timothy's Lutheran Church receive a discount of 20% for eligible families (upon completion of the Tuition Discount Application). We also offer a sibling discount of 15%. (Only ONE discount offered per family)

Attendance:

It is our goal to maintain a safe and secure campus at all times. All preschoolers must be signed in and out upon arrival and departure.

- It is against the law not to sign in/out the enrolled child of St. Timothy's Christian Preschool. There is a \$25.00 fine per occurrence when a child is not signed in and out properly.
- When entering and exiting the preschool building, close the gate between the parking lot and the preschool courtyard.
- Drive SLOWLY! Children sometimes get away from parents in the parking lot and are hard to see if an adult isn't by their side.
- Please be on time as tardiness disrupts the class.
- Children will only be released to parents and other authorized individuals listed on that child's emergency information form. Authorized individuals need to provide a picture ID until known by the staff. Please notify the office of any changes in authorization or emergency information. We do this for the protection of all children. The safety of all the children at St. Timothy's is of the utmost importance to us.
- NO child will be released to an individual who smells of alcohol OR who appears to be impaired in any way (at the discretion of school staff). In such a case, the child's next authorized pick-up will be contacted to transport the child.
- Families that pick up their child midday are asked to leave the campus within 15 minutes of their child's dismissal.
- The Department of Social Services requires that staff are present when the children are on the playground, therefore our playground is closed before/after school.
- Please pick-up your students on time as teachers need to take breaks and our schedule is based on remaining within ratio. We offer a 10 minute grace period before charging your FACTS account.

Illness and Absence:

Please call the school office at 408-265-0244 if your child is ill or cannot attend school that day. Each morning as children enter their classrooms, teachers will observe students for the following signs/symptoms:

- Runny nose that is green or yellow
- Fever of 99 or above
- General signs of malaise/lethargy
- Swollen eyes, accompanied by discharge
- Rash of any kind
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Persistent cough

All students displaying any of the above symptoms will be sent home. The child may return to school when they have been free of the above symptoms for 24 hours and are feeling better.

Head Lice Policy:

St Timothy's Christian Preschool has a "no nit" policy. If St. Timothy's is notified of head lice exposure the following procedures will take place:

- The child that shows signs of head lice or nits will be sent home along with their personal belongings and an information sheet on how to treat head lice.
- A head lice check of all children and staff will be performed.
- Jackets and sweatshirts will be sent home for cleaning.
- All carpets, stuffed animals or toys will be cleaned and disinfected.
- After treatment the exposed child returning to school will be checked for nits or lice before being allowed back to class.

****If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease (i.e. Strep throat, Hand/Foot/Mouth, Scarlet fever, Chicken pox, Lice, Fifth disease, Impetigo, Pink eye) please notify the school office immediately so that an exposure notice may be sent to classmates.**

COVID Protocol & Procedures

Our desire and goal at St. Timothy's Christian Preschool is to keep our students and staff healthy and safe at all times. We are practicing COVID safety protocols such as frequent hand washing, sanitizing, disinfecting, respectful social distancing and encouraging students to wear a mask.

We encourage parents to have a conversation with their child on wearing a mask at school. The staff are considered providers so we cannot force, make, threaten or physically assist with putting a mask on a child. This would infringe on your child's rights and personal safety.

*Please refer to the licensing form LIC613A

Our goal is to support and encourage the children to wear a mask properly, to practice proper hygiene and to respect each other's personal space. We will do our best to continue to reinforce your wishes on wearing their mask and we do have child size masks available in each classroom if a child asks or desires to wear one.

Below is an outline of how we currently handle and notify the families of St. Timothy's Christian Preschool if there is an exposure or confirmed case of COVID-19 on campus.

- Notify the parents of all children that were in direct contact with the exposure.
- Ask parents of direct-contact students to monitor their child for symptoms and test for covid after 3 days from exposure.
- Staff member or student with Covid will be required to stay home for 5 days and obtain a negative COVID test before returning to school.
- The county will be notified if 3 or more individuals test positive.

**Number of days required in quarantine and some other info above depends upon current state/county recommendations.

Our goal in relaying this information is to be as transparent and informative as possible and to provide a sense of peace knowing that we are working to keep all staff and children safe.

We continue to ask for prayers and support as we navigate through these challenging times. Our desire as a staff is to be able to provide a learning environment that allows children to grow and develop in a healthy Christlike manner.

Behavior Policies/Discipline:

The children in our preschool range from age 2.0 years to 6 years. They come to us at various stages of development. They are learning to share, to play well with others, to acquire new knowledge, to use their words rather than hands and feet to express how they feel, to be kind and respectful of others, and to love God. Here at St Timothy's, we approach discipline in a loving, positive, Christian manner. We model for the children what it means to be a Christian through words and deeds. We do our best to instill in them responsibility, kindness, gentleness and a sense of respect for self and others.

Encouraging good behavior and healthy discipline begins with age-appropriate classroom management. Our teachers guide the children throughout the day while providing developmentally appropriate structure, healthy limitations, and engaging lessons. We believe that when children are actively involved in thoughtful learning activities, fewer behavior issues arise.

When children are given clear and firm limits, positive reinforcement, and an understanding of classroom routines and expectations, the need for discipline is far less. However, as children learn to interact with one another, conflicts do and will arise. When conflicts occur, our preschool staff will begin by attempting to redirect a child to another activity whenever that is possible. Should redirection fail to achieve the desired or appropriate behavior, other discipline strategies will be utilized as outlined below. Every effort will be made to ensure a successful experience however there may be times a different learning environment may be a better fit for that child. The Director will observe the child, speak to the parents, and make suggestions on how to encourage or address the behaviors so the child can grow and develop in a positive way. Every child has the right to a happy, successful school experience.

The following methods are used for positive discipline:

- Explaining consistent, clear rules to children
- Using positive phrases to guide behavior
- Anticipating and eliminating potential problems
- Redirecting behavior
- Encouraging the children to use their words and offer suggestions on how to resolve the conflict

Occasionally, a child's behavior becomes too disruptive for the rest of the class. When this is the case, teachers are encouraged to bring the child to the office of the Director or Administrative Assistant for some time to 'hit the reset button'. Spending time in the office is not punitive, but can give the child a chance to calm, change their perspective or simply give them the privacy they may need to express and get on top of their emotions.

Discipline NOT Allowed/Personal Rights

In accordance with our beliefs, we do NOT administer any form of corporal punishment at St. Timothy's Christian Preschool.

As well, St. Timothy's Christian Preschool allows NO violation of personal rights of staff or students.

Communication between staff and parents is very important and valuable to a child's success. We will work together with the families to help their child develop and promote positive behavior in a social environment. A child might be sent home for the remaining of the day if the child's behavior remains unsafe after appropriate corrective procedures have been taken. In the event of any issues, behavioral or otherwise, we may schedule a meeting with parents to develop a unified approach we can all work on together.

Continued behavior that warrants quick action and immediate parent/teacher conference is the following:

- Biting (see below), kicking, or hitting another child, staff member, or volunteer
- Using disrespectful language
- Running away from a teacher

Biting

Unfortunately, biting can be a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at our school is our primary concern. Toddlers bite for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overtired/frustrated. He/she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of an adult or his/her peers. Biting occurs primarily as a result of a child's inability to communicate. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for seemingly no apparent reason. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve the issue if possible. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the child that is bitten.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our school:

- If observed, the biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite!"
 - Staff will stay calm and not overreact.
 - The child bitten will be comforted.
 - The biting child will be immediately removed from the situation and redirected under supervision.
 - The wound of the child bitten shall be assessed, cleansed with soap and water and ice applied. (If skin is broken, the area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.)
 - State regulations require that both the parents of the child biting and the parents of the child bitten be contacted.
 - Names of the children involved are not shared with either family.
 - An incident report will be completed and filed.

Note: If a bite requires medical treatment, a copy of the incident report must be mailed to the Department of Human Services.

If biting continues:

- The child will be temporarily shadowed to help prevent any future biting incidents AND to help determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration/anger, etc.)
- Staff will be mindful of children who indicate a tendency to bite and attempt to head off biting situations BEFORE they occur.
- Staff will emphasize non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior.
- A conference will be held with parents of the biting child to develop a written plan of action.
- Staff will meet with the Director for advice, support and strategy planning.
- Staff will work as partners with the parents of both biting children and frequent victims to keep all informed and work towards resolution.
- If biting incidents become excessive, a student may be asked to temporarily stay home until behavior subsides.

Dismissal

Our school makes every effort to ensure the success of each student. As a last resort, we reserve the right to dismiss a child for reasons of non-cooperation, delinquency in payment of fees, or the inability of your child or family to adjust to the school program or policies as determined by the Director and/or Pastor of St. Timothy's. If the school dismisses your child, we will issue a prorated tuition refund for the current month and any subsequent prepaid months.

Clothing:

What should my child wear to preschool?

- Clothing for preschoolers should be comfortable, washable, sturdy, and manageable for the child.
- Please dress your child appropriately for the weather.
- Girls should wear shorts under their dresses.
- Children must wear shoes to school that cover the toes and heels.
- Please label all your child's belongings with their first and last name.
- Please bring a change of clothes in a zip lock bag with the child's name on it just in case your child has an accident.

Potty Training:

Children at the age of 2 years old and in diapers will be accepted into our 2's program. Parents will be responsible for supplying their child with, but not limited to diapers and wipes (any ointments needing to be applied require a written request given to the office). Children should arrive in a clean diaper and will be changed every two hours or as needed. Potty training will be a team effort between the teacher and the parent. When your child recognizes and is able to communicate that he or she needs to use the restroom, St Timothy's will assist with the potty-training process.

****Children will be considered fully potty trained (outside of the home as well as at home) after they have been in underwear for three consecutive weeks at school without any accidents (naptime excluded). At the beginning of each month, the child will be reviewed to determine if they have met the criteria for toilet training.****

Children that are entering St Timothy's Pre-3's program are expected to be potty trained. This means, the majority of the time they are successful but may have that occasional accident. Potty training can be a stressful time for both you and your little one, but we believe that with clear communication and consistency between home and school, your child will be successful.

At St. Timothy's all children entering into our Junior Kindergarten program are required to be potty trained. Potty training implies that a child is able to use the bathroom successfully on a regular basis. This includes a child's ability to independently fasten and unfasten his/her clothing.

Self-sufficiency is such an important part of being potty trained! This includes a child's ability to wipe well after using the toilet. Also, we require that all children wash their hands thoroughly after using the bathroom at school.

We understand that children do have accidents on occasions. We recommend that all of our preschoolers wear clothing that they can manipulate easily. Please provide an extra set of clothing for your child that can be kept at school. If an accident does occur, our preschool staff will guide your child as they change into fresh clothing. Each child will be treated in a kind manner.

****If a child is entering our Pre-3's program and is not potty trained, it is the parents' responsibility to notify the school 10 days prior to the first day of school.**

Accident/Incident Reports:

All accidents are reported daily with a written and verbal notification. If the child has a head bump or an accident that needs immediate notification the director or school office will contact the parents. An incident that results in an injury or chronic disciplinary problem will be recorded as an incident report with the department of Social Services.

Dental Emergency Plan

In the event of an injury to the mouth or jaw, staff will evaluate and treat as necessary. Basic first aid protocol will be followed and parents/dentist will be contacted if necessary. In case of apparent injury to teeth or jaw or bleeding that cannot be stopped, 911 will be contacted immediately.

Childcare for Preschool Students:

Preschool Full-Day Enrichment Program is designed to be an extension of the preschool day. Preschool Enrichment begins at 12:00pm and goes till 3:00pm. Preschool Enrichment is for

our children who have registered for the FULL DAY program. Our Preschool Enrichment program does fill up fast. If you find yourself in need of childcare in the afternoon, you are welcome to call the office ahead of time to check availability for a given day for an additional cost.

Before School Care is available for our preschoolers each morning from 7:30am to 8:45am in our Full Day Plus Program. At 8:45am the children who attend early morning care will be walked to their classroom by the teacher or aide.

Late Afternoon Extended Care takes place from 3:00pm-6:00pm in the Full Day Plus Program classroom. If you pick up your child after 6:00pm you will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute/per student.

Extra-Curricular Programs:

St. Timothy's Christian Preschool offers after school and enrichment programs/activities throughout the year. (ie: Youth Soccer Shots, etc.) Parents can sign up for these for an additional cost.

St Timothy's Christian Preschool goes on different field trips throughout the year. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from the location as well as supervising their child/children while away from the school. If it is a school-wide field trip, the preschool will be closed/extended program might be available depending on the hours of the field trip.

Napping:

Children in our Preschool Enrichment Program do take a 20-30 min. rest time which begins at 1:00pm. Children who fall asleep may sleep as long as needed or until 2:30pm. Children who attend our Preschool Enrichment Program will be provided with a St. Timothy's Christian Preschool Nap Time Bag, which includes a fitted sheet, small blanket and plastic pouch to store the items for use during the school year.

*The school will wash the bedding every Friday or as necessary.

Face Masks:

Children age 2 and under, will not be permitted to wear a mask. Little ones in this age range cannot reliably adjust or remove their mask if breathing becomes difficult. For these children, unobstructed breathing takes priority over covering up.

For children over the age of 2, it is your (and their) choice! Most young children cannot help but touch their faces with unclean hands often-they are kids! A mask would be helpful only if they want to wear it and they can manage it (put on/off independently)

(PLEASE NOTE: We are not allowed to enforce, apply, or assist with a face mask for a child) Whether or not you choose for your child to wear a mask, washing hands often is your best defense.

Emergency Procedures:

St Timothy's does have a formal emergency plan should a natural disaster or declared emergency take place. All students and staff will be evacuated to a safe area and the emergency plan implemented. Students will only be released to person's with proper identification who are listed on the child's emergency form.

St Timothy's Christian Preschool has taken the following steps to prepare if a disaster occurs:

- All Staff are First Aid and CPR certified and Health and Safety Trained
- Scheduled school wide earthquake, fire drill and code red drills
- Each room is equipped with a backpack containing emergency supplies.
- We also have an area in the shed which holds the emergency supply kits and extra water
- Prepared detailed maps of the church and school, identifying evacuation routes and utility locations can be posted around campus

Conferences:

Parent and Teacher conferences are held twice a year. If at any time a parent wishes to schedule a meeting they should feel free to contact the child's teacher or the Director. Parents and teachers working together allows the child to have a positive opportunity for growth and development throughout the year.

Allergy & Medical Care Plan

At St. Timothy's we strive to ensure the safety of every child entrusted to us. The most common food allergens we have observed in students have been peanuts, tree nuts, wheat and gluten, citrus, and dairy products, just to name a few. Reactions to food allergens in some students may be life threatening. That is why at St Timothy's Christian Preschool we are a Nut Free School. Nut products such as peanut butter, whole nuts, and food containing nuts should not be brought to school for lunch or special events. Sunflower or Soy butter is a great alternative.

Medical Treatment:

Children who are enrolled in our program with severe food allergies will be required to have two EpiPens on site; one to be kept in the classroom emergency bag which will stay with the teacher at all times, and one to be kept in the school office. Every child enrolled at St. Timothy's who has been identified as having an allergy and/or medical condition will have an Allergy & Medical Care Plan in place. It will contain the child's name, photo of the child, a description of the food allergy or condition, and a physician's instruction for medical care in the event of a reaction. This form must be updated and signed by the child's parent annually. Should a life-threatening reaction occur, our staff will always follow any emergency instructions that have been provided by the physician AND call 911. Staff is also instructed to contact parents in the event of a suspected accidental exposure to the allergen.

****Please notify the school administrator if your child has ever experienced an anaphylactic allergic reaction, and describe the circumstances.**

Snack/Meals:

St Timothy's Christian Preschool will prepare and provide one daily nutritious snack. We will provide two food groups that contain fruits, vegetables, whole grains and 1% milk or water for their snack. Meals are not provided by St. Timothy's. Children bring their own lunch to school which should include an afternoon snack. Please pack a healthy lunch that includes protein, fruits/vegetables and grains. We also have a microwave in the classroom to heat up already prepared food. Please provide utensils, a napkin and if your child is using a reusable water bottle PLEASE LABEL IT WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

Birthday Snacks & Treats:

For school birthday snacks, as well as homemade treats for special events, all parents will be asked to provide only NUT-FREE snacks or treats. If a nut-related snack is sent to school with a child, it will not be served or passed out. Parents with children who have food allergies are also asked to bring in allergen free cookies or mini cupcakes for their child to be stored in the freezer. For special events when treats are served, the child with the food allergy would be given something special from their supply of treats provided by the parent. Please plan with the teacher in advance to make sure there are no food allergies in the classroom before bringing outside food into the classroom.

****The practice of sharing birthday snacks/treats may need to be modified or discontinued during situations such as COVID.**

Invitations

Please refrain from using the cubbies for distributing party invitations unless all members of the class are invited. This will avoid hurt or left out feelings among the children and families.

Child's Name: _____

Allergen(s) or Medical Conditions: _____

____ My Child DOES NOT have any food or environmental allergies at this time. ____ I
give permission for St Timothy's Christian Preschool to provide snacks for my child. OR

____ Due to my child's severe allergy/allergies, I will supply all snacks for my child
while they are attending St. Timothy's Christian Preschool.

Permission Statements:

- To have my name, address, phone number and email in the class directory:

Yes____ No____

- To have the staff of St. Timothy's Christian Preschool take photos of my child to be
displayed for the enjoyment of all parents on the bulletin boards and then be given to
the child's family at the end of the school year:

Yes____ No____

- To have photos of my child (no names or personal info) used in email, newsletters,
and social media such as and St. Tim's Website/Instagram page:

Yes____ No____

I have read and understand the St Timothy's Christian Preschool Parent Handbook and
Allergy & Medical Care Plan for the children at St. Timothy's Christian Preschool.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____ 14

