



# **Preschool Handbook 2023-2024**

**School Policy, Rules, and Procedures**

## **Fort Collins Christian School**

2040 Nancy Gray Ave.  
Fort Collins, CO 80525  
970-893-2925

[www.fcchristianschool.com](http://www.fcchristianschool.com)



Dear Parents,

We are pleased that you are interested in or have chosen our preschool at Fort Collins Christian School. Our preschool provides quality early childhood services for the community of Fort Collins. We are excited to be serving your family and look forward to building many happy memories with you and your children!

Parents are a vital part of our program. We encourage all parents to play an active role in their child's daily activities. We also need your cooperation to help ensure a healthy, safe, and educational environment for all the children in our care. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to read and comply with the guidelines in this handbook, as well as to understand that policies and procedures may change at any time. If changes occur, Fort Collins Christian School will communicate the details of those changes with families as soon as possible.

Thank you for entrusting your children and their education to us. Our deepest desire is that the children would, of course, learn and grow, but most of all, experience Jesus as their Friend!

Jessica Reeder  
Preschool Program Director  
Fort Collins Christian School  
[j.reeder@fcchristianschool.com](mailto:j.reeder@fcchristianschool.com)

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me.  
Don’t stop them! God’s kingdom is made up of people like these.’”  
Matthew 19:14

## OUR MISSION

It is our purpose to provide a safe, Christ-centered learning environment to empower students to become respectful and responsible individuals with a lifelong desire to learn.

## OUR VISION

Our aim is the harmonious development of the physical, mental, and spiritual powers of the individual student through Christ-centered instruction, the preparation for successful citizenship in this world and the world to come, and to instill the joy of unselfish service for others within the child.

## OUR CORE VALUES - CHERISH

1. **Christ-centered Living**: Reflecting God’s character in attitudes and actions. “You come to Him as living stones, a spiritual house that is being built into a holy priesthood. So offer spiritual sacrifices that God accepts through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:5 (God’s Word Translation)
2. **Honor**: Showing value, dignity, and high respect for people and property. “Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.” 1 Peter 2:17 (Holman Christian Standard Bible)
3. **Exploration**: Discovering new information to gain a deep understanding of God and His creation. “For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature.” Romans 1:20 (New Living Translation)
4. **Responsibility**: Following directions, completing tasks, and taking ownership of choices, words, and actions. “In all the work you are given, do the best you can. Work as though you are working for the Lord, not any earthly master.” Colossians 3:23 (Easy to Read Version)
5. **Integrity**: Being truthful, fair, and deserving of the trust of others and encouraging them to tell the truth. “Even young people are known by their actions, whether their conduct is pure and upright.” Proverbs 20:11(CEB)
6. **Service**: Working for the benefit of others. “Use your freedom to serve one another in love.” Galatians 5:13
7. **Heroism**: Making decisions that align with convictions and beliefs, even if it means standing alone. “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

The central focus of the early education program is to enrich each child’s personal relationship with their Creator. In doing so, we hope to tap into some of their spiritual gifts and help develop those gifts as we learn and study together about the Creator, maximizing the innate ability and potential God has created in each child.

We desire that each child become comfortable in the school setting, feels learning is fun, and finds joy in who they are. We strive to provide each child with a smooth transition and firm foundation for the rest of his or her education. Our program combines academic and developmental growth. Our teachers will promote positive attitudes toward learning while guiding the development of early language, literacy and numeracy skills, as well as soft skills, such as teamwork, problem solving, and resilience.

## ADMISSION POLICY

It is the policy of Fort Collins Christian School to admit students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to a student at the school, and to make no discrimination on the basis of race, gender, handicap, ethnic background, or national origin in administration of the educational policies, application for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs. It is also a policy of the school to observe state laws applicable to education so long as they do not conflict with the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Enrollment at Fort Collins Christian School is a privilege, not a right. In order to safeguard the scholastic, spiritual, and moral atmosphere, the school reserves the right to refuse admittance of any student whose presence is deemed detrimental. Furthermore, upon registering, parents or guardians will be given a copy of the Preschool Handbook which states school policies, rules, and procedures, and are asked to read them, and agree to follow and accept them by signing the policies and procedure document. Fort Collins Christian School reserves the right to add to, change, or modify the information and policies in this handbook at any time. If such a change occurs, parents will be notified.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Application: Submit a completed application form.
2. Age for Early Childhood Program: Children ages 2.5 – 5 years  
A child has to be at least 2.5 years old for admittance into the preschool program. The number of 2.5-year-olds allowed in the program is limited, and each 2.5-year-old application will be handled on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the child's readiness for a school setting.
3. Birth Certificate: A copy of the child's birth certificate is required for the student's file.
4. Medical Examination: Medical examination, including an eye examination, is required for all students entering the program (the General Health Appraisal form must be used – a copy can be obtained on our website or by contacting the FCCS staff). Please note that the medical examination and General Health Appraisal form must be renewed annually within one month of the expiration date, which is one year from the date of the previous exam.
5. Immunization Records: Parents are required to provide proof of current immunization according to Colorado State law at the time of registration. Parents who have chosen not to immunize their children must complete an immunization exemption form, which can be obtained online at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions> , or from the FCCS staff.
6. Registration Fee and Tuition: Satisfactory financial arrangement must be made and the registration fee and first month's tuition must be paid at the time of registration.
7. Completion of all Necessary Forms  
*All forms in the application packet must be filled out and all medical documentation (including the birth certificate) provided to and approved by FCCS staff before a child may begin attending preschool. Immunization records and the General Health Appraisal form must be received at least one week before the child's anticipated start date. Failure to do so may result in a delayed start date for the child.*

The necessary documents for admission include:

- Enrollment Application Form
- Emergency Information and Consent to Treatment Form
- Financial Agreement Form
- Schedule of Fees and Tuition Form
- Child Pick-up Information Form
- Activities and Transportation Consent Form
- Image Release Form
- Sunscreen and Lotion Permission Form
- General Health Appraisal (must be completed and signed by both a parent and the child's doctor and must be renewed annually within one month of the expiration date, which is one year from the date of the previous exam)
- Copy of immunization records from the doctor's office or a completed Immunization Exemption Form
- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Policies and Procedure Document
- Illness Policies Compliance Form
- Video Viewing Permission Form
- Volunteer Training and Background Check Acknowledgment Form

FCCS staff is happy to assist you with any questions you may have regarding any of these forms or records.

## **ACADEMICS AND CURRICULUM**

Our early childhood program is designed for students (ages 2.5 - 5) who are ready for an academic school readiness program. Academics are a function of ability, not age, though age does play a factor in readiness. God created each child special and unique. Readiness is a primary criterion for accepting a child into the formal school program and often requires input from parents/guardians as well as the program director and teacher. Readiness skills that the child must possess include, but may not be limited to:

- Ability to speak English at an age-appropriate level.
- Being toilet-trained and able to use the restroom without assistance.
- Ability to feed self at snack and lunch (the staff will help open containers and warm up the food, but the child must be able to feed him or herself).
- Ability to sit quietly for short stories and activities (up to 15-minute increments).
- Ability to "dress" him or herself (i.e., putting on a jacket or shoes – staff will help with zippers and shoelaces).

Our program is designed to meet the individual needs of each student through individual instruction, various hands-on learning activities, and social interaction.

As a Christian school, our students participate in worship and Bible activities daily, as our foremost goal and desire is for them to know Jesus and how much He loves them. Academic lessons are planned by our state-certified preschool teacher, with input from the preschool director. Social and emotional

development is also an important part of our curriculum. Students develop these skills through a variety of indoor/outdoor play activities and group activities in a multi-aged setting.

As a private school, Fort Collins Christian School Preschool Center complies with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through collaboration with the Poudre School District. For more information on IDEA and how it applies in private schools, please visit <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>.

## **ADJUSTING TIME**

Beginning the academic journey at Fort Collins Christian School is an exciting experience for a young child! Our staff is dedicated to helping children adjust to the school setting, as well as to working with parents to make the transition from home to school a smooth one. There is a 30-day adjusting period for all preschool children. We realize that in some situations, children may not be ready for a structured environment or that Fort Collins Christian School may not be the perfect fit for each child. In such cases, the parent may choose to withdraw the child from our program, per their own decision or at the recommendation of FCCS staff. Tuition must be paid for each month that the student attended any portion of, but if the parent pre-paid for additional months, that money will be refunded to the family after the child has been withdrawn.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance at school is an important factor for children's academic and social development (attendance requirements align with the days for which you have registered your child). For half-day students, school starts at 8:00 a.m. and runs until 12:00 p.m. The schedule for full day students is 8:00 a.m. – 3:00/4:00 p.m. Children should arrive on time and early pick-ups should be kept to a minimum. Tardiness and early pickups disrupt not only that specific child, but all of the other children as well. If your child requires an early pick-up due to an appointment, please let the teacher know a day in advance. If your child is staying home due to illness, please let the teacher know by 7:30 on the morning of your student's absence. Due to ratio requirements and for the consistency of the schedule and educational experience for each child, we are not able to offer make-up days for when your child is sick or absent. Please note that snow days, teacher in-service days, and school breaks are considered and worked into the tuition, so you are not paying for days when school is closed for those reasons.

## **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

PROVIDED THEY MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE TEACHER, parents are welcome to bring a special treat to the classroom to celebrate their child's birthday. Potential food allergies will be communicated with all families. We ask that treats be small, keeping in mind that sugar affects children's health, mood, and behavior. We do request, but not require, that the celebratory treat be a toy or party favor item as opposed to food. Parents should contact the teacher in advance to determine how many children are scheduled to be present on the day of the celebration, and to schedule a time to bring the treats that will be the least disruptive to the day's schedule. Due to fire safety concerns, burning birthday candles is not allowed. In the event that a birthday party is scheduled outside of school time, please give the invitations directly to the parents of invited children to avoid miscommunication and hurt feelings.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Staff members who have reasonable cause to believe or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect will immediately report such facts to the Department of Social Services (Division of Childcare). Investigators from the Department of Social Services shall be given the right to interview staff and children, and obtain the name, address, and telephone number(s) (along with any other information they deem necessary) of children and parents/guardians of children enrolled in the preschool program.

Department of Social Services: 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203, 303-866-5700.

## **CHILD'S PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Each child will be given a place in the classroom to keep his/her backpack, jacket/coat, lunch box (the refrigerator may be used if your child's lunch needs to be kept cold), extra change of clothes (including underwear, pants, shirt, socks, and shoes), school supplies, and nap time items (sheet, blanket, and pillow). The center will not be responsible for any breakage or loss of items brought from home to the center. Gum and candy should not be brought to school. Please do not allow your child to bring money to the school.

## **CLOSINGS/SNOW DAYS**

In case of weather-related, safety concerns, or other closures, please remember that we follow Poudre School District's (PSD) schedule. When they cancel, we cancel, and if they start late, we start late (at the same time as PSD). Please check your TV or online news. Occasionally, we may feel the need to make a decision which is separate from PSD in order to best care for our students. In such cases, we will contact parents via email, phone call, or text.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Complaints pertinent to the Preschool Center at Fort Collins Christian School should be directed to the teacher, director, principal, and school board, in that order. Also, complaints about this child care facility can be made by contacting the Department of Human Services (Child Care Licensing) at 303-866-5948.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between parents and teachers/school is a vital part of a child's education. FCCS will communicate with families in the following ways:

1. School Newsletter: A school newsletter will be emailed to parents once or twice per month. This newsletter will serve to inform parents/guardians of what is happening in our classrooms and school.
2. Classroom Newsletter: A weekly classroom newsletter pertaining specifically to events and happenings in the preschool classroom will be provided to families.
3. Social Media: School Website ([www.fortcollinschristianschool.org](http://www.fortcollinschristianschool.org)) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Fort-Collins-Christian-School-1758817827752632/>) will be used to communicate with families as well.

4. Sign-in/out Form: Per state regulation, parents and guardians are required to sign their child in and out daily on the sign-in form that will be provided at drop-off and pick-up.
5. Event Posting: Upcoming events, activities and reminders will be posted at the sign-in communication station in the classroom, and sent home via email and/or newsletter.
6. Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences: Official conferences are scheduled twice a year (after the first and third quarters). This is a special time for teachers to provide parents with detailed, meaningful insight on their child's development. Further discussion may be required and can be scheduled with the teacher as appropriate.
7. Communication with Teachers: Parents are encouraged to communicate with the teacher regarding their child's progress or other concerns and questions. Conferences with the teacher should be pre-arranged outside of class time, preferably before or after school.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In today's world, privacy is of the utmost importance. Therefore, we strive to keep information about children confidential in the child care setting. There are licensing regulations from the state to ensure confidentiality. We will not share information about your child with any other parent, and we request that you not ask for information about other children at the center.

## **DRESS CODE**

Fort Collins Christian School believes that the dress of an individual says a lot about the individual and the organization with which they are associated. The dress code for the school applies from the time the students arrive until they have left the campus. It is our desire to encourage each student to be Christ-centered, choosing a manner of dress that would be modest, neat, and bring glory to God rather than to the wearer.

### Preschool Dress Code:

- Footwear – All footwear must have closed toes. No flip-flops or beach sandals.
- Socks are required unless wearing close-toed, strapped sandals.
- No hats/caps/hoods may be worn within the school building.
- No belts may be worn.
- No jewelry may be worn (If the child's ears are pierced, specific clear studs may be worn to prevent the piercing holes from closing; please contact the teacher or director for more information on the specific studs that are dress-code compliant and where to purchase them.)
- Girls must wear shorts or tights under skirts or dresses for warmth and modesty.
- Any clothing not covering the midriff and ripped, torn, or frayed clothing is not acceptable.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS**

The director will ensure that all applicable safety standards are met and maintained. We will have periodical facility reviews with the Fort Collins Fire Department and Larimer County Health Department. All deficiencies noted in the review will be brought to the director. The director will set up periodic drills and will maintain a record of each drill.

Should the building require emergency evacuation, the staff-child ratio will be maintained and children will be evacuated to a nearby location. Staff members will take students' emergency contact information



with them to the evacuation site. Parents/guardians will be contacted by telephone, text, and/or email as to the location of their child. Depending on the circumstances, parents/guardians may be requested to pick up their children, or to arrange for the emergency contact person to pick up their child.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

There will be adequate notification of scheduled field trips with a permission slip outlining the details of the field trip. All children must be secured in a child restraint system that is appropriate for the age and development of that child. The child restraint must conform to all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Colorado Child Passenger Safety Laws. Students are only allowed to travel in their parent's car or school transportation. Parents are responsible for getting their child to the school on time in order to facilitate a timely departure for scheduled trips. Parents of children who arrive after the departure time will need to make alternative care arrangements for that day.

Children will be actively supervised by teachers and staff members at all times. Supervising teachers will have a cell phone, consent to treatment form, parent contact information, and a first aid kit on the field trip.

## **GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE**

Should children violate the trust placed upon them to abide by the rules of the school, guidance action may be necessary. This action is not a condemnation of the child, but of the undesirable behavior. It is the desire of the school to hold children responsible for their actions. It is the purpose of the guidance action to:

- Cultivate positive child, staff, and family relationships by creating and maintaining a socially and emotionally respectful early learning and care environment.
- Implement teaching strategies supporting positive behavior, pro-social peer interaction, and overall social and emotional competence in young children.
- Provide individualized social and emotional intervention support for children who need it, including methods for understanding child behavior and developing, adopting, and implementing a team-based (i.e., family, director, teacher, developmental specialist, mental health or other consultant, etc.) positive behavior support plan with the intent to reduce challenging behavior and prevent suspensions and expulsions.
- Access an early childhood mental health consultant or other specialists as needed.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

The Fort Collins Christian School Preschool program is offered for children ages 2.5 -5 years of age. This program operates Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 3:00/4:00 p.m. and Friday, 8:00 – 3:00. The preschool program follows the school schedule for holidays, vacations, and breaks. Because of the difference in preschool children's readiness for school, we offer a variety of attendance options for the parent/guardian to choose for their child. If you have questions regarding attendance options, please contact your child's teacher or the preschool director.

Children may be dropped off starting at 7:45 a.m. and must be picked up by 4:15 p.m. (3:00 on Fridays). Children not picked up by 4:15 p.m. will be placed in the after-school care program. After-school care runs until 5:00 Monday-Thursday (no after-school care is available on Friday) and there is a daily charge per child that will be added to your bill.

## **ILLNESS, INJURIES, AND EMERGENCY CONTACT**

All children experience childhood illnesses, which may, at times, be contagious. In our quest to stop all germs, we require that parents safeguard their child and other children by keeping children at home if signs of illness are present. FCCS follows the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment “How Sick is Too Sick?” document to determine if a child should stay home or may come to school. Each case of illness is different, and meets different requirements for returning to school safely. Please contact the preschool teacher or director if your child is ill, and we will work with you and our school nurse consultant to facilitate your child’s return to school as soon as is possible while still keeping everyone as safe and healthy as possible.

If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, immediate action will be taken to ensure the student’s safety and wellbeing. If a child received a minor injury (i.e., scrapes, etc.) while at school, the teacher or staff member will administer first aid in the form of water, soap, bandage, or ice pack. Children at school with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or any other symptoms of illness will be observed in an isolated area for 30 minutes. If symptoms do not improve, or if they worsen, the child will be sent home and may not return until the criteria in the “How Sick Is Too Sick?” document have been met. A doctor’s note stating that the child is well enough to return to school may be required. Parents of children who become ill at school (if the child does not improve in 30 minutes) will be contacted and required to pick up their children as soon as is possible. The emergency contact on file will be called if parents cannot be reached. *Please keep emergency contacts current.*

Please notify the school if your child is diagnosed with or exposed to an infectious disease, particularly COVID-19. Notice will be posted if exposure to an infectious disease occurs at the school. The preschool center is required by law to report such occurrences to the state and will also report to their governing body, the Rocky Mountain Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

In the case of a severe emergency, 911 will be notified first, followed by the notification of parents or guardians. An emergency release must be signed by the parent/guardian in order to authorize staff to take appropriate steps on behalf of a child.

## **IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH RECORDS**

Colorado law requires every child enrolled in preschool to have a physical examination form signed by an approved health official. A specific form, the General Health Appraisal Form, must be used. This examination may not have taken place more than 6 months prior to, nor more than 30 days after, the child’s first day of attendance. Yearly physicals will be required for every child under the age of seven. An immunization document with the dates of all shots is also required. If you have chosen to refrain from vaccinating your child, an immunization exemption form must be completed yearly (see Admission Requirements #5). If you have chosen to refrain from vaccinating your child, there may be times when a certain illness is present at school, and school personnel, with the input of the school health consultant,

may deem it safest for your child to stay home as opposed to being exposed to the illness at school. In such cases, the child must remain at home until the threat of illness has passed. We cannot reimburse the fees for those days missed, and are not able to provide make-up days.

Per state law, children may not attend school until immunization records are received, and if the General Health Appraisal form is not properly filled out within 30 days of the child's first day of attendance, the child will be excluded from school until the form is properly completed and received by the staff.

## **INSURANCE**

Each student is covered by an accident policy which covers a portion of medical bills incurred as a result of accidents at school. Insurance coverage begins one hour before school starts and ends one hour after school ends. Students who have accidents while at school must report them immediately to their teacher. Specifics about the costs and coverage limits are explained in a brochure available from FCCS staff.

## **MASKS**

Masks are no longer a blanket requirement for all students, but we do ask that if your child is returning to school from being ill, that they wear a mask for a day or two to minimize the spread of infection of any illness.

## **MEDIA/TECHNOLOGY**

We have implemented the use of media/technology to take advantage of the vast amount of educational resources available to student. However, television, recorded media, and video time will be limited to thirty (30) minutes per week. The computer/tablet time will be limited to non-consecutive fifteen (15) minutes increments not exceeding thirty (30) minutes per day. There may occasionally be a few exceptions to this policy for special occasions, such as described in the Video Viewing Permission Form.

## **MEDIA RELEASE/PARTICIPATION POLICY**

FCCS utilizes many media and advertising platforms to promote our school. One of the forms in the application packet is a media/image release. This form indicates that the school may use the child's image on promotional materials, such as flyers, as well as in social media posts (including, but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, and school and church websites). Additionally, the form indicates that any school activity or performance may be videotaped and live streamed on social media, or posted on social media after it is over. Parents may decline to give permission for their child's image to be used, however, this may mean that the child's participation in the event may need to be altered. We do not wish to exclude any child; however, social media is a way of life in our world today, and it is one of our best tools for promoting our school. FCCS staff will be happy to work with families who wish to decline permission for their child's image to appear on social media to find ways to have the children involved in activities and performances as much as possible, while still sharing the event on social media. These alterations will be handled on a case-by-case basis. FCCS is not responsible for other people at an event (including families of other students) recording or taking pictures and posting them online.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

All prescription and non-prescription medication given in the preschool setting requires written authorization from a health care provider, as well as parental written consent. This is a childcare licensing requirement. The medication authorization forms are available from the director. The instructions from your health care provider must include information regarding the medication, reason for the medication, the specific time of administration, route of medication, and the length of time the medication needs to be given. All medication must be brought in the original labeled container with prescription number, name of medication, date filled, name of physician, child's name, and directions for dosage. It is essential that a medication measuring spoon or other device be sent with the child's medication to ensure proper dosage.

Pursuant to and in compliance with the Colorado Nurse Practice Act section 12-38-103(10), preschool staff involved in medication administration receive special training and are supervised by our School Nurse Consultant. Preschool staff are not authorized to determine when an "as needed" medication is to be administered; even over-the-counter medications must have a written doctor's order provided.

In the case of a student requiring regular medication administration at school, and/or a student having a medical condition, an individualized health care plan must be created for the child and updated every 12 months from the date of the initial plan, as well as when changes occur. The plan must include all information needed to care for the child, must be signed by the health care provider, and should include (as applicable), but is not limited to, the following:

- Medication schedule
- Nutrition and feeding instructions
- Medical equipment or adaptive devices, including instructions
- Medical emergency instructions
- Toileting and personal hygiene instructions
- Behavioral interventions
- Medical procedure and intervention orders

All medications are stored where they are inaccessible to students and kept under the conditions directed by the health care provider or pharmacist.

## **NAPTIME**

Learning and playing are hard work, especially when little bodies are growing! Therefore, FCCS has a naptime built into the afternoon schedule each day. Each child will be provided a mat for use at the school. Parents must purchase 2 cot sheets (fitted crib sheets fit the cot best) to be kept at the school (one to be used, and one to have on hand in case of an accident). Each week, the sheet/s used will be sent home to be laundered, per health requirements. The sheets should be returned the first day the child attends school the next week. Parents should also send a blanket and, if desired, a pillow (that can either be laundered or has a removable pillowcase), for their child to use during nap time. These will be sent home weekly to be laundered as well. We understand that some children do not nap, but we are required to provide a rest time for all students enrolled for full-day school. All students will be required to lay down quietly on their mat for approximately half an hour, after which time, students will be permitted to sit up and participate in a quiet activity once they awake.

## **NUTRITION**

It is a proven fact that students function much better if they eat healthful, nutritious meals. A good breakfast will help students to start the day well, and a good lunch will keep them going through the day. Our school does not provide breakfast, lunch, or snack, so please ensure that your child eats breakfast and brings a snack and lunch to school. If your child attends school for the full day (until 4:00), there will be two snack times, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon. Please make sure that if your child is at school until 4:00, that you send two snacks with your child.

Healthy snacks for snack time are encouraged. Excessive sweets are discouraged and caffeinated beverages are not allowed. Chips, candy, and sugary treats should not be consumed for morning snack. Such treats should be sent for lunch or afternoon snack. Some great options for morning snack are fruit, crackers, granola bars, and other similar items. In order to keep our schedule moving and keep on learning, each snack time will be limited to about 20 minutes. Please keep this in mind when packing your child's portion sizes for snack time.

If the child does not have or forgets to bring snacks or lunch, we will contact the parents, however, we have snacks or lunch available to offer as a supplement for that meal. If the parent cannot be reached, a snack/lunch will be provided to the student by the teacher. If this happens frequently, a meeting may be requested by the teacher to help ensure that the child is bringing adequate food to school each day.

Water is such an important part of our nutrition. We encourage students to drink plenty of water throughout the day. Parents should send a water bottle to school with their child daily. To reduce spills, child-friendly water bottles with secure lids and a built-in straw should be sent. Disposable plastic water bottles, or water bottles whose caps easily open on accident should not be sent to school. The preschool center keeps some extra water bottles on hand for days when a student forgets his or her water bottle.

## **OUTSIDE PLAY**

Children will play outside on the playground at the discretion of the preschool staff. In the event that the weather is hot (above 95°F) or cold (below 32°F) (these temperatures are a guideline for instance, if it is 20°, but very sunny and not windy, staff may take children outside for a few minutes, for example), too rainy or too snowy, or, if the play area is icy or otherwise deemed unsafe by staff, we will participate in activities indoors that will help develop gross motor skills. Children are always offered water after playing outside and may have a drink anytime during the school day (the only time when water is limited is shortly before naptime and during nap time, in order to minimize accidents while sleeping). It is recommended that parents apply sunscreen on their children prior to the start of each school day. Children are allowed to wear sunglasses and hats on the playground. If parents would like a staff member to apply sunscreen to their child, this must be communicated to the director, and the sunscreen permission form filled out accordingly. If parents choose not to have sunscreen applied, the child should bring a hat and long sleeved-shirt to protect their skin from the sun while outside, per Colorado child care licensing regulations. Children who have had an illness must be well enough to play outside before returning to school. Our school is not staffed to provide both indoor and outdoor supervision at recess.

## **PICK UP AND PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION**

1. Parents/guardians must provide the school with a list of all adults who have permission to pick up their child(ren), using the pick-up authorization form (see Admission Requirements #7).
2. Only authorized adults will be allowed to pick up children. In an emergency, the child may also be released to an adult for whom the child's parent or guardian has given verbal authorization. Proper identification of an authorized adult for pick-up will be required before the release of children.
3. In the event of an attempt by an unauthorized adult to pick-up a child, parents/guardians will be called. If staff are unable to reach the parents, the child will remain in the care of the center.
4. A grace period of 15 minutes is provided for the parents to pick up their children. Children that are not picked up at the end of the grace period will stay in the after-school care program until their parents come.
5. If the parent/guardian does not pick up the child within 15 minutes after the end of the program, we will contact them. If we are not able to reach them, we will contact the person(s) on the emergency contact list or child pick-up list to ask them to come to pick up the child.
6. If the child is not picked up after 15 minutes from the end of the program, the parents/guardians are charged per hour (including a partial hour) for after-school care unless a special arrangement is made beforehand.
7. If the child is not picked up within 1 hour of the end of the program, we will contact social services.

## **PARENTAL CUSTODY**

It is the policy of Fort Collins Christian School not to become involved in custody disputes. Fort Collins Christian School will only recognize court orders which specifically say that a father or mother is not allowed to pick up the child/children from school. The school will honor that order and not release the child/children to the parent who has been prohibited from picking up the child at school.

At no time will either parent be denied access to a conference with the child's teacher regarding the progress of the student. Either parent may have access to the cumulative records of the student regardless of custody. If one of the parents of a student wishes to deny the other parent access to the student's teacher or records, then they must provide the school with a copy of the court decree denying the non-custodial parent such access.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

1. All students have the right to respectful and fair treatment from other students, teachers, and staff. Harassment, intimidation, or any other offensive behavior will not be tolerated.
2. Students must be with teachers or staff at all times. They must understand that while they are at school or school related functions, the staff has the responsibility to supervise their safety and behavior. Parents are asked to help students to understand this need.
3. Students are not allowed to use inappropriate language or engage in unsuitable conversational topics at the school.
4. Students must follow the dress code of the school.
5. Students are required to listen to the teachers and obey the school rules.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS**

1. Guide the child from the earliest years in the development of socially acceptable standards of behavior, treating others with love and respect, exercising self-control, and being honest and accountable for his/her actions.
2. Uphold the Christian ideals (School Core Values) taught at school in the home.
3. Instill in the child a positive and enthusiastic attitude and encourage a personal desire to learn. *Take an interest in your child's progress.*
4. Recognize that criticism bruises the spirit and erodes motivation and that children need lots of encouragement to succeed in life.
5. Help your child understand that she/he has to be with the teacher or staff at all times, must listen to the teacher/staff and obey the rules at the school since the staff are in charge of the child's safety and behavior while at school.
6. Discuss with the child the home and school rules/discipline plan. Encourage and guide your child to solve problems and help them to make good choices. Establish the consequences that will result from the violation of rules.
7. Be sure your child's attendance at school is regular and punctual. Excessive absences and tardiness negatively impact your child's education, as well as the education of the other students in the classroom.
8. Keep students at home who show symptoms of being ill. Parents should notify the school before 7:30 a.m. on the morning of the child's absence. Parents must also agree to pick up the child from school promptly if the child becomes ill.
9. Sign your child into and out of school daily.
10. Take the time to inquire about your child's progress (this can be done through email, phone call, or a pre-arranged meeting with the teacher).
11. Read the school communications (including email, texts, newsletters, flyers, etc.) carefully, so that you know what is happening in the classroom and school.
12. Encourage the child to be responsible for his/her personal appearance and hygiene and comply with the dress code of the school.
13. Be aware of the importance of good, healthy habits for yourself and your child.
14. Share criticisms of the school with the teacher/director rather than with your child. Always uphold the school and teachers in the presence of your child.
15. Actively participate in school activities, such as bringing your child to program performances, attending fundraisers as often as possible, etc., since learning is a cooperative effort between the child, teacher, and parents.
16. Meet financial obligations of the school promptly.

## **STAFFING**

Fort Collins Christian School employs a state-certified director and a state-certified teacher who work diligently to make your child's transition to Kindergarten as smooth as possible by providing a developmentally appropriate social, developmental, and academic environment. When enrollment numbers and other circumstances warrant, a state-certified assistant early childhood teacher, aide, or volunteer may also work with your child at school.

## **SUNSCREEN**

It is the parent's responsibility to apply sunscreen at home on days it is likely to be needed, as an initial layer. When going outside at school, sunscreen will be applied per bottle directions by staff per the information on the sunscreen and lotion permission form.

## **SUPERVISION AND STUDENT TRACKING**

All children are expected to be in a supervised area before, during, and after school once on the school campus. Teachers check the sign-in and out sheet often and keep track of the children by doing name and document checking, counting them during activities, before and after recesses and nap-time to make sure all the children are with the staff. Should a child not be where they are expected to be, they will be assumed lost and immediate action will be taken to locate the child. When a child is lost, the teacher will immediately contact the director. They will institute a full building search for a child. If not successful within a few minutes, the parent/guardian and police will be contacted for help in finding the lost child.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

We realize that some children have special needs regarding toileting or may not be toilet trained; however, per school policy, all children attending our preschool must be toilet trained before enrolling.

## **VISITORS**

1. In general, parents and other interested adults are welcome to visit the school! All visits during school hours must be pre-arranged with the preschool teacher in order to minimize learning disruptions for our students.
2. All visitors must sign in/out on the visitor's log sheet. A written policy regarding visitors to the school can be found with the visitor's log sheet in the classroom. Proper identification will be required of all visitors prior to gaining access to the school.
3. Siblings of students, no matter their age, who are not students of Fort Collins Christian School should be accompanied by a parent whenever present on school grounds.
4. A record of all visitors will be kept at our center.

## **WELCOME**

We are so excited that you have joined our family at Fort Collins Christian School! If you have any questions regarding the information in this handbook, or any other questions pertaining to your child's education here, please feel free to reach out! We'd love to hear from you, and look forward to working with you and your child!