MESSIAH'S KIDS

PARENT HANDBOOK



A Christ-Centered Family of Learners

A ministry of Messiah Lutheran Church 9401 Dietz Elkhorn, Boerne TX 78015 (830) 755-2460 www.messiahkidstx.org

PARENT HANDBOOK

This handbook outlines the policies and procedures we follow for the protection, safety, and well-being of your child. We are also here to love, support and guard each child's tender faith in Jesus at all times.



Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:8

We currently offer developmental enrichment in a caring, creative Christian environment for children ages 18 months through 5 years of age on Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., August through May.



We are licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. (DFPS)

Our Staff

Messiah's professional staff is experienced in early childhood education, state certified and committed to ongoing training. Lead teachers have at least a BA/BS in Early Childhood Education, a CDA certification or are in the process of completing their CDA. The director holds a Master's Degree in Educational Management, a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Education and a Director's Certificate with DFPS.

Gina Huskey, Preschool Director

Email address: messiahskidsboerne@outlook.com

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30-3:30 (Appointments by request)

Office Phone: 830-755-2460
Website: www.messiahkidstx.org



TO OUR FAMILIES

Messiah's Kids Preschool is a Christ-Centered Family of Learners. This is our fundamental foundation and vision for the school. In all areas; staffing, teaching, families, relationships as examples, this is our focus. In everything we do at Messiah's Kids Preschool, we do it with our vision in mind and our vision in focus.



Mission Statement

Messiah's Kids Preschool seeks to share the Gospel and the caring love of Jesus in a developmentally appropriate learning environment for young children and their families.

Position Statement

Our position on Early Childhood Ministries is that children need to hear and experience the love of Jesus on a regular basis. Our relationship with children is established by Christ - Whoever welcomes one of these little children in My name welcomes Me ~ Mark 9:37

The baptismal community is an inclusive community - we are all called children and adults together, to join God in enhancing and enlivening each other's faith. It is then our responsibility to tell and retell the Biblical story, empowering both children and adults for ministry together.

Messiah's Kids Preschool's primary purpose is to extend the Gospel to young children and their families through a comprehensive ministry of care and education. As such, it is an integral part of the congregation's mission and total ministry program.

Parents are recognized as children's primary teachers and are supported by the early childhood program in their nurturing role. Families are ministered to in the name of Jesus and brought into contact with His saving Word.

We Believe

- Early childhood education is an integral part of congregational mission and ministry.
- The young child is a gift from God and learns best about God's world through experimentation and exploration.
- Each child is a unique and special child of God and we encourage the development of Christ-esteem and individuality.
- Children learn best through play and by developmentally appropriate activities provided as avenues for learning.
- Early childhood education provides a warm and loving Christ-centered environment where children can develop to their fullest potential spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually.
- Early childhood education is a ministry to young children and their families.
- Early childhood education is a joint ministry that involves the congregation, the community, the staff, the family and the child.

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GOALS FOR CHILDREN IN THE PROGRAM

Spiritual

- 1. To foster awareness that the Bible is the Word of God that tells of His love through Jesus Christ
- 2. To provide age and developmentally appropriate worship experiences for the children
- 3. To engage children in life application of the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22)
- 4. To show love to the children so they can begin to understand God's love

Cognitive

- 1. To increase understanding that God gives us a mind to learn about all areas of His creation
- 2. To provide reading readiness and language development opportunities
- 3. To provide experiences in social studies
- 4. To provide experiences in math readiness
- 5. To allow exploration in areas of science, health, and discovery
- 6. To provide opportunities for children to express themselves through the arts
- 7. To provide opportunities for musical expression and art appreciation
- 8. To stimulate cognitive development through change of environment

Social

- 1. To increase understanding that God gives us other people and ways to live with them in harmony
- 2. To provide individual, small group, and large group experiences
- 3. To mold Christian character
- 4. To develop positive social interaction
- 5. To give appropriate praise, approval, and affection
- 6. To provide boundaries and set limits
- 7. To develop and encourage the use of interpersonal skills

Emotional

- 1. To increase understanding that God has given us our feelings and that they are natural
- 2. To help children recognize their expressions of feelings
- 3. To direct children in learning acceptable expressions of their feelings
- 4. To provide security and stability for all children
- 5. To teach children to respect others

Physical

- 1. To accept each child as God's individual creation with regard to their growth and development
- 2. To provide space and facilities for activities
- 3. To provide age and developmentally appropriate materials
- 4. To offer nutritious and appealing snacks
- 5. To provide a variety of activities which alternate between stimulation and quiet
- 6. To encourage physical development through indoor / outdoor play
- 7. To provide a rest / quiet time for all children
- 8. To provide a quality motor lab throughout each week to build gross motor and body awareness skills



Our Church Programs

Sunday School Purpose

To partner with parents in providing a support system for faith nurture. It is our privilege to walk alongside parents in strengthening their child's spiritual foundation that began in the waters of Holy baptism.

We do this by teaching creatively, engaging passionately, and serving boldly!

We inspire kids to know God loves them unconditionally, to grow in the Word and in relationships with others and to love God enthusiastically in response to His grace!



Sunday School at 9:15 a.m. Worship at 10:30

Nursery through High School

Our Sunday school program is the cornerstone of our Bible study and discipleship at Messiah. We offer Sunday school for children birth through High School each Sunday from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Our teaching teams are experienced teachers of God's word and faithful servants of the Lord.

Nursery

Messiah's nursery is offered to children birth through 3 years during the Sunday school hour and late worship service. Taught by professional childcare workers and parent volunteers, the children learn about Jesus, how to praise Him and how to pray to Him. They also learn how much God unconditionally loves each one of them.

Children of Jesus

Children's faith development begins in the water of Holy Baptism through the power of the Holy Spirit. Watching a child's faith grow is as exciting as watching their first steps! Infants and toddlers are constantly learning. They learn about God through their relations hips with adults and their environment. They reach out actively exploring God's world with their all their senses. Everything is new and fascinating! What better time to start nurturing the seeds of faith planted in baptism? Jesus himself knew the importance of cultivating the faith of very young children.



TEACHER / CHILD RATIOS

We offer classes for children 18 months (1½) through 6 years. The following ratios apply and are based on National Association for the Education of Young Children. (NAEYC) Children should be the age stated below by 8/31.

Classroom	Age of Child	Messiah	NAEYC	Texas State Licensing
18 month class	18 - 30 months	1:6	1:6	1:9
Toddler Class	2.5 yrs to 3.5 yrs (30-48 months)	1:6	1:6	1:11-13
Preschool	3.5 to 4.5 yrs	1:8	1:8	1:15
Transitional Kindergarten	4.5 years by Aug. 31	1:10	1:15	1:22
Kinder Bridge	5 years by Sept. 1	1:10	1:15	1:22
Extended Care	18 months - Kinder Bridge	1:15	**The director may use professional discretion regarding class placement.	



Communication

We all know that effective two - way communication is paramount to any good working relationship. Messiah's Kids strives to establish and maintain effective, Christ-centered communication when relating with children, parents, administrative staff and teachers. We believe this communication will only be successful if Messiah's staff and parents strive to accomplish this goal together. Together we can make Messiah's Kids a better school by keeping the "lines" of communication open.

Teachers communicate with parents using the methods listed below:

How	When	Where
Written newsletter (email included)	Every 2 weeks	In each child's folder, emailed, or posted in classrooms
Written health notices	As necessary to meet Texas Department of Health and Texas Child Care Licensing standards	Emailed and/or in each child's folder
Written informational notices	As needed	Emailed, posted on bulletin boards inside classrooms, or placed in child's folder
Email	As needed; frequently	To email address supplied by parent
Oral discussion	Daily	In classroom or by appointment

General Grievance Procedures

Parents are encouraged to first discuss questions or concerns with their child's teacher. If further discussion is needed, parents are welcome to contact the Director at (830) 755-2460. If parents are unsatisfied after conferring with the Director, they should express their concerns to the Senior Pastor and/or the Messiah Preschool Committee.

Parents can reach the director:

Email: messiahskidsboerne@outlook.com

Phone: 830-755-2460

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Messiah's Kids Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin with all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational or admissions policies.

Enrollment Requirements

The following is necessary for enrollment:

- 1. Registration Form (Admission Information)
- 2. Authorization for Emergency Medical Care (on Admission Form)
- 3. Current Immunization Record (Hearing/Vision Screening ages 4+)
- 4. Signed Physician's Health Statement (included in Admission Forms)
- 5. Signed Discipline Policy
- 6. Completed Tuition Agreement Form/Cover sheet
- 7. Signed Parent Handbook Policies Agreement and Photo Release
- 8. Child Assessment Form



These forms must be completed 48 hours PRIOR to admission into the program.

Children in the Preschools and older classes MUST be toilet trained.

The Preschool Director is responsible for assuring the overall welfare of the program. Acceptance and ongoing enrollment of any child in the facility is contingent upon approval of the Preschool Director. Children with special medical conditions or developmental needs may be enrolled with the permission of the Preschool Director after a screening process is completed to make sure we can meet the child's special needs.

Waiting List Policy

Messiah's Kids Preschool maintains a waiting list for those who desire enrollment of their child(ren) in the program. It is the responsibility of each parent/legal guardian to contact the director when they desire to be placed on the waiting list. A tour of the facility is encouraged. Messiah's staff uses the waiting list as a guideline for allocation of slots in the program. We will use professional care when placing children according to his/her developmental stage when an opening is available.

The director will contact the parent/legal guardian of a child on the waiting list when an opening becomes available. At the time of notification families will have 24 hours in which to reach a decision concerning acceptance of the opening. If no answer is received, we will move to the next eligible family for allocation of the opening.



It is the responsibility of each family on the waiting list to notify the office of any changes in their location and phone number.

PROGRAM FEES

- Tuition: Due by the 7th of each month
- Tuition is the same monthly regardless of days attended.

The preschool is a non-profit ministry of Messiah Lutheran Church.

The Preschool fees are established by the Director and Preschool Committee to cover program expenses and are subject to change, as conditions require. As a Christian school, it is our desire to look for ways to concentrate our available human and financial resources on our primary mission – the love, care, and nurturing of your children.

Discounted Fees

A discount of \$25.00 is offered when a sibling is enrolled in the program. Discounts are not applied to the registration fee or supply fee. Discounts will be offered to the eligible sibling whose tuition is the lowest.

Registration Fee

All families are required to pay a non-refundable \$160.00 yearly registration fee per child upon enrollment. This covers consumable items such as snacks, art supplies, and administrative costs. It also assists in determining staffing needs for the different classrooms. This fee is required to secure your child's place on the class list. There are no discounts offered off the registration fee.

Withdrawal or Change Notification

Tuition fees must be paid for the two weeks following the last day of attendance in the written notification of withdrawal or change of enrollment from the parent or legal guardian, even if the child is no longer enrolled in the program.

Late Pick-up Fee

Parents who pick-up their children later than 5 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute. Payment will be automatically recorded and charged with the following month's tuition. Messiah's Kids Preschool uses the time on attendance tablets when signing in or signing out.



# of Days	Tuition	Supply Fee
3 (18 month & 2s)	\$392.00	\$ 135.00
4 (2s)	\$472.00	\$180.00
3 Preschool	\$367.00	\$115.00
4 Preschool	\$422.00	\$150.00
4 TK & KB	\$457.00	\$160.00

Late Payment Fee

Monthly tuition payments received after the 7th of the month are considered late. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for late payment. If the tuition fee is more than 2 weeks late, the director will contact the parents to make special arrangements. If the bill is still outstanding after one month and no special arrangements have been made, the delinquent account will be presented to Messiah's Preschool Committee for possible removal of the child from the program.

Returned Check Fee

If a check is returned or withdrawal denied or returned from a credit card or bank account for any reason, a \$25.00 penalty per check or EFT will be charged. The check will be held until the amount of said check and all penalty fees are paid.

Policy Agreement

All parents/guardians must sign the Policy Agreement form at the back of the registration packet and in the admission forms agreeing to the policies in this handbook. It must be signed and returned with the registration papers. Any policy changes will be reflected in a new Parent Handbook that will be emailed out to all parents upon any change.

Playground Application

Your child's tuition edger is available on the Playground App. This will have the most up to date information regarding your fees. These fees can be easily paid online or you can submit a check each month.



Program Overview

Young children make sense of their world through actively engaging in sensory experiences. A variety of thematic activities are planned weekly to help children and their parents discover the joy of celebrating faith together. (All plans are flexible and sensitive to the needs of the children at all times.) A weekly chapel activity sheet is sent home to give parents an opportunity to build upon the theme as they talk, sing and play with their children during the week. Lesson plans are always available in the classrooms. Messiah's Kids Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten (referred to as TK) follow the curriculum for early childhood education adopted by Group Publishing, Dig in curriculum. Additionally, we implement central elements of the High Scope preschool daily routine which includes the plan-do-review sequence, small and large group times, greeting time and outside Without Tears, Reading the Alphabet, Creative Curriculum, and the TEKS.

Sample Preschool Schedule - Monday-Thursday

9:20-9:35 a.m. Arrival/Hand washing/Check-in/Snack/Circle Theme Introduction

9:45-10:00a.m. All School Chapel

10:00-11:00 a.m. Active work/play period; self-selected activities/interest centers/Creative Arts

11:00-11:45 a.m. Outdoor / large motor activities

11:45-12:00 p.m. Toileting/ Hand washing

12:00-12:30 p.m. Lunch

12:30 –12:45 p.m. Story time/Circle/recall

12:45-1:00 p.m. Motor Lab 1:00-1:45 p.m. Rest Time

1:45-2:00 p.m. Individual Reading/Activity Time

2:00-2:20 p.m. Afternoon Activity/Snack

2:20 p.m. Dismissal

Developmental Observation

Messiah's preschool teachers use the observation method of evaluating children's development in the following areas: spiritual, social, emotional, physical, aesthetic, cognitive and language. This is done by watching children interact with each other, teachers, and materials. Parents will be provided with progress reports upon request and once a year during teacher conferences.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Messiah's Kids Preschool admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, policies, scholarship and local programs, and other school-administered programs.

Calendar

Messiah follows the Boerne ISD and Geneva school year calendar closely but NOT exactly. Please keep Messiah's Kids calendar in a prominent location.



Daily Operational Policies

Messiah's Kids is open Mondays through Thursdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (including extended care hours), August/September through May. Parents should allow themselves adequate time to talk with the staff and gather their child's belongings before closing time. Doors will remain locked until ten minutes before the start and end of school.

Daily Entry and Departure Procedures Entry

- The doors to the preschool are opened promptly at 9:20 a.m. It is very important the children
 arrive on time for school, as we are shaping our children's attitudes and habits at this early
 age. A child's tardiness disrupts the class schedule and many times the child misses out on
 instructions for the day's activities.
- For the safety of the children, they must be escorted into the foyer or the back door of the building, and a staff member will escort them to their assigned classroom and sign them in on a sign in sheet. Parents will not enter the Preschool hallway for arrival unless necessary. All sign in will be completed by the escorting staff member.

Departure

- No child will be allowed to leave with a person without prior authorization on record.
 Identification will be required any time the staff does not recognize the person picking up your child. Any deviation from the regular authorized person(s) will require a written note/email from the parent to the director's office prior to departure.
- For the safety of the children, parents will sign their child out from the classroom at the end of the school day. Children are expected to remain with their class while at the playground or attending activities in the building.
- If your child's regular transportation is unavailable, please send a note to the director, and we will communicate these instructions to the appropriate teacher. If a last minute situation arises, you may email the director—messiahskidsboerne@outlook.com. The designated person will be required to show picture identification upon pickup.
- Please be prompt in picking up your child at dismissal time starting at 2:20 pm. Dismissal ends at 2:35 pm, and late fees will be assessed after 2:35 pm.

Procedures for Release of Children & Safety

The safety of children is our highest priority. The following measures have been implemented:

- Preschool personnel will be with your children at all times until they are released from the classroom to the parents, legal guardian, or authorized person(s) identified on the release portion of the enrollment form. Driver's licenses will be checked. Children must be signed in and out daily at/in the classrooms using *Playground*.
- Preschool staff will monitor individuals entering and exiting the facility.
- All teaching staff, office personnel, and ministry staff have completed background checks.
- For the safety of the children while outside of the building, parents will be required to pick up
 their children from the classrooms prior to or after playground activities. Children are
 expected to remain with their class while at the playground or attending activities in the
 building.
- All doors accessible to the early childhood buildings remain locked during school hours. This includes gates into and out of our playground facilities.
- **DO NOT** prop doors open that offer accessibility to the preschool facility or hold any door open for individuals you do not recognize as this could compromise the safety and security of the children.
- Please be aware of your surroundings AT ALL TIMES and report anything suspicious to the Messiah's Kids Preschool office, Messiah Lutheran Church office, or the Bexar County Sheriff's Department immediately. (911)
- Messiah's Kids Preschool (within 1,000 feet of the school) is a gang-free zone!

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Breastfeeding

Mothers have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in the care of Messiah's Kids Preschool.

A private area with a chair is provided in the women's restroom and in any of the classrooms. Seating is also provided in the fellowship hall of the main church building, the gymnasium of the Family Life Center, and the adult fellowship room in the Family Life Center.

Calendar

Messiah's Kids follows the Boerne ISD school year calendar closely. Please keep the school calendar in a prominent location.

Community Service Project

Messiah believes in teaching children to be good stewards of the community at an early age. Parents and children will have the opportunity at various times throughout the year to share God's blessings with those not as fortunate. Hill Country Daily Bread and Hill country Pregnancy Center are our current partners in ministry and service through collection drives.

Diaper Changing Policies

Diapers will only be allowed for children enrolled in the 18-Month, 2 Day Classes. Twos classes will allow Pull-Ups. Diapers, Pull-Ups, and wipes will be provided by the families and may be stored in the child's classrooms. Teachers will communicate with the families when additional supplies are needed. A permission slip to apply diaper cream will be signed by each parent before the child's first day in the program. Diaper cream will only be applied upon the request or permission of a parent or guardian and will be reported to the parent daily at pick up.

Diapers will be checked/changed a minimum of three times in the 5-hour school day and when soiled. Pull-Ups will be changed at least once during the school day or when soiled. Caregivers are trained on proper handling, disposal, sanitizing, and handwashing in the diaper changing procedure to prevent the spread of bacteria and disease.

Dress Code

Use good judgment in dressing your child for class activities. Children should come to school comfortably dressed in washable play clothes. Please send your child to school in closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes (i.e. tennis shoes). We have found tennis shoes to be the safest shoes for your child. Cowboy boots and "flip-flops" are safety hazards and are not permitted.

Please label all outer wear (coats, hats, mittens, etc.) Take into consideration the current weather conditions when assisting your child in dressing for the school day. We also require that you keep an extra change of clothes for your child in his / her backpack at all times. This is helpful in case an accident should occur where your child's clothes get extremely wet or dirty.

Enrichment Activities

Enrichment activities may be scheduled during the school year.

- Fall Family Fest & Trunk or Treat
- Family Christmas Event
- Dinosaur George
- Cowboy Breakfast/Rodeo Day/Happy Tails
- Easter Jubilee
- Butterfly
- Community Helpers Presentations

Open Door Policy

Messiah has an Open Door Policy. Parents are welcome to visit the program at any time during our hours of operation to observe their child, the program's operation, and program activities, without having to secure prior approval. Parents are asked to be sympathetic to any transitions a child may be experiencing and to delay their visit if it is disruptive to the child. Please ring the doorbell or see front desk staff, and our staff will unlock the doors for entrance to the center.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to share their talents with the children. This will enhance the program and in turn, benefit all students. There are a wide variety of opportunities to support the program either in the classroom or through various committees.

Parents and staff are encouraged to exchange daily feedback concerning the children's day both in the program and at home.

Parents may contact teachers or the directors at any time through phone, apps, text, email, or in person at the center. A conference can be scheduled with any member of the MKP Staff to review or discuss policies, procedures, parent participation, and/or how to review a copy of our licensing inspection.

Pets

Pets may NOT come into the school at any time, including drop off and pick up, in order to maintain the safety of our students.



Animals on School Grounds

In accordance with DFPS standard 746.3901, any animal or class pet in school will have a record on file of immunizations or a statement of health from a licensed veterinarian. The animal will not create unsafe or unsanitary conditions, a notice of the animal will be sent to all parents, children will not handle any animal that shows signs of illness, and all caregivers and children will practice good hygiene and hand washing. As per standard 746.3905, children will not have contact with chickens, ducks, reptiles, amphibians, harmful animals, or any animal unknown to the school and Preschool Director.

Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited while at the Messiah's Kids Preschool campus. This applies to staff, parents, visitors, and contractors anywhere on campus.

Traffic Flow and Parking Lot

The following traffic patterns have been deliberately designed to provide the safest drop-off and pick-up conditions for our children. It is the responsibility of every parent to maintain a safe environment for the children by adhering to the following traffic regulations:

- The speed limit in the parking lot is 10 MPH or less at ALL times.
- Proceed SLOWLY, watching for children who may dart into the parking lot.
- Never leave children unattended in your vehicle.
- Enter from Old Fredericksburg Road.
- Exit onto Dietz Elkhorn.
- Only right turns may be made into and out of the Family Life Center parking lot.
- Please use ONE DIRECTION of traffic flow into and out of the Family Life Center parking lot.
 Enter from the church parking lot, drive up and/or park, proceed in the same direction
 around the turn around at the back of the building, and then exit back into the church
 parking lot. *Church lot may be used.



Transportation

Messiah's Kids Staff will not transport any child.

**In an emergency, teachers/director may use discretion to transport children in order to provide them with a safe(r) location.

Water activities:

All water activities will be reserved to only water table activities that are supervised. Children must wash hands before AND after using the water table.



Weather Guidelines

Please dress your child according to the weather. The children will remain inside or in the gymnasium during inclement weather such as rain, sleet, hail, thunderstorms, severe heat/cold, or other such conditions.

We will adhere to the following:

- Cold Temperatures / Wind Chills As the outdoor temperature dips, outdoor activities may continue provided the children have adequate cold weather clothing. This includes a warm coat, hat and long pants. When children do not have adequate clothing, their parents will be notified to bring the items to school. When temperatures are 40 ° F or below, including the wind chill factors, outdoor activities will be discontinued.
- Hot Temperatures / Heat Index In temperatures ranging from 96 ° F to 100 ° F, including the heat index, outdoor activities may be limited to a 15 minute period of time and the total amount of outdoor time for the day will not exceed one hour. Children will be kept in shaded areas and out of the midday heat as much as possible. Water will be offered prior to, during, and after outdoor play. Sunscreen should be applied prior to outdoor play by the parents. Staff are not permitted by state regulations, to apply sunscreen. In the event temperatures reach or exceed 100 ° F, including the heat index; children will be kept indoors.

School Closings Due to Weather

The preschool will be closed for weather related problems if Boerne Independent School District is closed, or if Kendall and Bexar Counties are making storm preparations. Notice of closing will be posted on the Messiah web site, Facebook and / or may be confirmed with the Director through email.



Tornados

In case of severe weather such as a tornado, the children will be taken to the hallways outside of the classrooms, away from windows and remain until the threat warning is lifted.



School Safety

Building Evacuation

The following is the evacuation plan in case of a fire or explosion:

If the building is on fire or becomes damaged or compromised, children will be taken out the nearest exit to the Dietz Elkhorn parking lot as far away from both buildings as possible. Teachers will take the class roster taking roll before, during, and after the evacuation. A caregiver will lead the children while the other takes the end of the line making sure all children are accounted for.

If necessary, 911 will be called and injured children will be taken to Boerne Methodist Emergency Hospital. Parents will be notified of the relocation within a reasonable time period. Children will be supervised by staff member or emergency personnel until a parent or designated adult arrives.

Lock Down

During a lock-down, parents trying to enter the Preschool will only be allowed entry if it does not threaten the safety of the children; and persons already in the facility will only be allowed to exit if it does not threaten the safety of the children or until an all - clear is issued, signifying that the lock-down is over.

Shelter In Place

A shelter in place requires a lockdown of the entire Messiah facility to protect the children from threats usually associated with, but not limited to, chemical or environmental disasters or suspicious persons. A shelter in place is designed to maintain a safe environment within the building by preventing outside air or intruders from entering the facility. The shelter in place requires the Messiah staff to allow no one, including parents, visitors and personnel, to enter or leave the building until further instructions are received from emergency personnel, law enforcement and/or civil authorities.

Cameras

There are several security cameras located throughout the Family Life Center. The cameras have been placed strategically for the **sole purpose** of adding an extra layer of school security. The cameras will NOT be used to monitor student behavior. Footage from the cameras will **ONLY be used** when the security of the building has been breached.

Follow-Up Once the Situation is Contained

The highest priority of Messiah is the safety of the children. Once the environment is secure and through the lead of law enforcement and/or civil authorities, our staff will contact parents/ legal guardians. Law enforcement and/or civil authorities will coordinate a written statement with the Preschool Director.



MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN

18 Months & Twos Programs

- A complete change of labeled clothes, including socks
- Toddler Class—Pull-Ups and Baby Wipes if necessary; Diapers only for 18-month class
- "Kinder Mat", fitted crib sheet, small blanket and special toy to sleep with (if needed)
- A backpack and lunch in an appropriate lunch bag or box
- Healthy, cold lunch (We are not able to heat or refrigerate food.)
- · Water bottle or cup that is labeled and can be refilled throughout the day

3 & 4 Day Preschool, , Transitional Kindergarten & Kinder Bridge

- One complete change of labeled clothes, including socks
- Backpack for carrying home class work and program information
- Small blanket or stuffed animal for rest time.
- Healthy, cold lunch (We are not able to heat or refrigerate food.)
- A pocket folder is required for Transitional Kindergarten.
- "Kinder Mat"; (no cots or raised beds) and fitted crib sheet
- Water bottle or cup with a lid that is labeled and can be refilled throughout the day.



- A mid-morning snack and mid-afternoon snack are provided for all children.
- Parents should make sure that their child eats breakfast prior to coming to school, as we do not have our snack until mid-morning.
- Lunches must be brought from home and should be in a lunch kit, labeled with child's name, and include a thermos or boxed drink.
- Lunch will be served around 12:00 Noon.
- Parents understand that Messiah is not responsible for the nutritional value or meeting the child's daily food needs for any food provided by the parent.

Parents are encouraged to include a variety of foods from the four major food groups: cereal or bread, dairy, fruit or vegetable, and meats. Please DO NOT send soft drinks, gum, hard candy, or sugary treats.

Alternative snacks can be given to the teachers (stored in the classroom) if the child has a documented intolerance, allergy, or other health condition that prevents their child from eating our snack options. *Please discuss any changes or alternatives snacks with the director or assistant director PRIOR to teachers.

Food Allergies

Our staff will work with children that have a food allergy. Please notify the Director immediately if your child has been diagnosed with any food related allergy. Notification of allergies will be posted in the classrooms, kitchen, and in your child's file. We do not serve peanuts. A Food Allergy Emergency Care Plan MUST be completed and signed by the parent and a medical professional.

Children with food allergies are at risk when they eat foods which have not been prepared or served by their own parent or a preschool employee who has knowledge of the food ingredients and individual children's needs. Food provided by a parent and shared with other children MUST meet the needs of children who require special diets and MAY NOT be baked/cooked/prepared in the home. All food shared must be store bought.



Discipline Policies

Behavior and Guidance Procedure

Each child enrolled in our Preschool is loved by God and valued by our staff. Staff members are genuinely concerned that the most positive environment possible be maintained at all times. A Christ-centered atmosphere of love and acceptance of individual personalities prevails.

The goals of the disciplinary techniques will be:

- 1. To ensure that the classroom is a safe, secure environment for all of the children
- 2. To teach the children that our society has acceptable and unacceptable social behaviors
- 3. To teach love for God, love of self and love for others
- 4. To teach children self-control, fruits of the spirit and inner discipline
- 5. To teach the children to take responsibility for their actions and the consequences of their behavior
- 6. To strengthen the children's self-esteem by teaching that they are a loved and redeemed child of God.



Faculty members will use positive techniques of guidance including redirecting the child to participate in another activity, anticipating and eliminating potential problems; providing positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors; talking and providing reflective listening with the child; temporarily removing the child from a stressful situation; and limiting the child's participation in some activities until the child is able to cooperate and follow the rules associated with that particular activity. Activities will be appropriate for the age and a mix of active/quiet; indoor/outdoor. All techniques used will be age appropriate for the child and will be accompanied by a rational explanation of expectation on the child's level of understanding.

In order to provide a safely structured environment, general class rules are established for each classroom. The rules are frequently reviewed with the children so they will learn expected behaviors.

Management of Problem Behaviors

When a negative behavior is exhibited on a recurring basis, the teacher will discuss the situation with the parents and agree upon a strategy to help the child resolve the problem. Behavior incidences will be monitored and documented by the teacher and/or Director. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) may be implemented. The staff will need the cooperation and participation of the parents in following through with the chosen methods at home to provide consistency in the solution strategy, included but not limited to observation by a professional, teaching social-emotional skills, and making environmental modifications. If improvement in the child's behavior is not achieved in a reasonable amount of time, the Director will hold a conference with the teacher and parents to explore additional options and strategies. Referrals to special services providers such as a child psychologist, family social worker, or special education consultant may be a part of the new options.

Children, who exhibit recurring unmanageable behavior that endangers the safety of other children in the program, or significantly disrupts the educational curriculum, may be withdrawn (suspension or expulsion) from the program if the negative behavior cannot be extinguished in a reasonable period of time.

Withdrawal of a Child for Problem Behaviors

If a child does not change negative behavior, or if parents choose not to assist, the following procedure will be carried out:

- 1. Conference with parents and teacher to discuss behavior and work together on a course of action.
- 2. Follow-up conference with parents, teacher and/or Director after the initial meeting to discuss progress.
- 3. If the child is not responding to disciplinary measures, modifications, and behavior plans, the child will be dismissed from the program. Messiah will make every attempt to assist with a more suitable placement if at all possible.
- 4. Parents have the right to submit a written appeal to the Preschool Committee and Preschool Director within 10 days.



Active Indoor and Outdoor Play

There are many benefits to physical activity and play (indoor and outdoor) in early childhood. Outdoor play provides for greater freedom and flexibility, fuller expression through loud talk, and a greater range of active movement. Outdoor play also extends opportunities for large muscle development, social-emotional development, and small muscle development by offering variety, challenge, and complexity in ways that are not attainable in a confined indoor space.

Messiah's Kids Preschool provides students with moderate to vigorous active play both indoors and outdoors daily. Moderate physical activity is defined as levels of activity for a child that are at intensities faster than a slow walk, but still allow the child to talk easily. Moderate physical activity increases the child's heart rate and breathing rate. Vigorous physical activity is rhythmic, repetitive physical movement for a child that uses large muscle groups, causing the child to breathe rapidly and only enabling the child to speak in short phrases. Typically, the child's heart rate is substantially increased, and the child is likely to be sweating.

Outdoor play can consist of swinging, climbing, running, jumping, balance, walking, imaginative play, slides, and ball throwing and catching. This includes climbers, swings, and large playground equipment. All outdoor play is unstructured and student led. Outdoor play happens on our playgrounds, inside of our fenced area. Indoor play can consist of center times (imaginative/dramatic play), dancing music and movement time, dancing, racing, and Motor Lab.

Messiah's Kids Preschool Motor Lab is based on a program from Ready Bodies, Learning Minds. We believe that if children's bodies are active and developing, their minds will be ready to learn in a classroom setting. Motor Lab is provided to all students in Preschool classes (3 ½ years old +) and up for 20 minutes daily in our gymnasium. In Motor Lab, students will work on structured skills such a balance, equilibrium, sensory, fine motor skills, jumping, skipping, hopping, stretching, and ball control. Motor Lab is changed weekly to practice and master gross and fine motor skills.

When there is inclement weather or extreme cold/heat or poor air quality, outdoor play will be moved indoors to our gymnasium for the same amount of time as regularly scheduled outdoor play. This will still include running, jumping, ball play, and unstructured play with peers. Equipment such as balls, riding toys, and games will be provided. Motor Lab will still be provided indoors.

18 month classes will have two outdoor play times consisting of 30-40 minutes each. All classes, from the Twos up, will have one 45 minute outdoor play time daily. All classes, from Preschool up, will have the above outdoor play time and an additional 20 minutes indoors in Motor Lab daily. Aspects of motor lab are brought into the Twos classes to promote gross motor skills during active center times in the classroom. Messiah's Kids Preschool plays indoors and outdoors every day. Please be sure to dress your child appropriately for the weather and in tennis shoes, or other athletic-type shoes, where they can run, jump, and be vigorously active outdoors.

HEALTH POLICIES

Messiah follows immunization requirements as specified by the Texas Department of Health. To obtain a list of current requirements, please see the posting on our parent bulletin board or access the Texas Department of Health Internet website at www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize.

Vaccines:

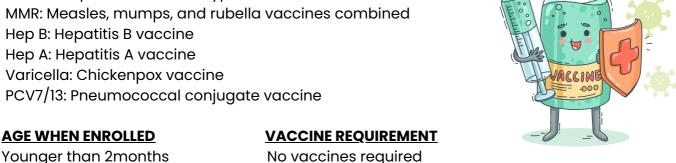
By 19 months

DTaP: Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough); (DT or QTP)

IPV: Inactivated Poliovirus

Hib: Hemophilus influenzae type b vaccine

Hep B: Hepatitis B vaccine Hep A: Hepatitis A vaccine



One dose each of polio, DTaP/DT/DTP, Hib, and hepatitis B By 3 months Two doses each of polio, DTap/DT/DTP/Hib and hepatitis B By 5 months

Three doses of DTap/DT/DTP By 7 months

Two doses each of polio, Hib, and hepatitis B

Three doses of DTap/DT/DTP By 16 months

Two doses each of polio and hepatitis B

One dose of MMR and Hib Four doses of DTap/DT/DTP

Three doses each of polio and hepatitis B

One dose each of MMR, varicella, & Hib on or after 1st birthday

Four doses of DTap/DT/DTP By 25 months

Three doses each of polio and hepatitis B

Two doses of hepatitis A

One dose each of MMR, Hib, & varicella received on or after 1st birthday

Four doses of DTaP/DT/DTP By 43 months

Three doses each of polio and hepatitis B

Two doses of hepatitis A

One dose each of MMR, Hib, & varicella received after 1st birthday

ALL Children Must have Vision/Hearing Screening Results in their file following their 4th birthday.

Pneumococcal Vaccinations:

2 months through 3 months - One dose of pneumococcal vaccine

4 months through 5 months - Two doses of pneumococcal vaccine

6 months through 11 months - Three doses of pneumococcal vaccine OR Two doses if a child received the first dose of pneumococcal vaccine from 7 months through 11 months of age.

12 months through 23 months - Four doses of pneumococcal vaccine with one dose on or after 12 months of age OR Three doses if a child received the first dose of pneumococcal vaccine from 7 months through 11 months of age, and at least one dose was administered on or after 12 months of age OR Two doses if a child received the first dose of pneumococcal vaccine from 12 months through 23 months of age.

24 months through 59 months - One dose if a child is unvaccinated or partially vaccinated OR If a child is unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and at high risk, two doses are required.

*Your physician will determine if your child is a high risk and vaccinate accordingly.

Illnesses and Accidents

To prevent and control the spread of communicable illness among children and staff, strict health policies must be followed. Cooperation between staff and parents is essential to assure a safe and healthy environment for all program participants.

All children will be visually screened by staff upon arrival for obvious symptoms of illness. Children displaying symptoms of contagious illness and children who are not well enough to participate in the daily activities will not be admitted. Parents are required to inform staff members about any symptoms of illness that the child has been exhibiting at home and to inform the staff if the child received any medication before arrival.

Illness Criteria or Denial of Service

*See Page 23 for more information regarding COVID policies. Children may be denied admission based on the following symptoms:

- 1. Tympanic (Ear) temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater
- 2. Vomiting
- 3. Diarrhea
- 4. Mucus or puss draining from eyes
- 5. Persistent wheezing or coughing
- 6. Breathing difficulty
- 7. Lethargy that interferes with regular classroom activities



Children who become ill while in our program will be removed from the classroom activities to rest until a parent or designee arrives. When notified, the parent or designee is expected to pick up the child within one hour. If we cannot reach you on your emergency numbers, we will obtain emergency care through a clinic, hospital, or private doctor as directed by you on the Emergency Authorization Form.

Children must remain home for 24 hours after fever has broken, without the use of medication.

Children must remain at home for 24 hours after vomiting or diarrhea has ceased, unless clearance has been given by the child's physician.

Communicable Illness or Denial of Service

Children are required to stay at home until no longer contagious.

- 1. Chicken pox
- 2. Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- 3. Flu
- 4. Head lice
- 5. Pinworms
- 6. Strep throat
- 7. Viral diseases (including colds)
- 8. COVID-19/Coronavirus



Parents are required to notify the Preschool Director if their child has been exposed to a communicable illness. This will allow the staff to take appropriate precautions to prevent the spread of the illness. If we find that your child has been or may have been exposed to a communicable illness, we will notify you in writing and/or through email.

Re-Admission Following Illness

Children excluded from the program for a communicable disease may be readmitted only when they are absent for the amounts of time specified by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or Bexar County. This is to ensure that their presence will not endanger the health of the other children and that they are well enough to participate in all regularly scheduled activities.

A note from a physician or local health authority may be required upon re-admission regardless of the reason of the absence verifying that the child is no longer contagious.

Administration of Medicine

Medications should be administered by the parent prior to bringing the child to the facility if at all possible. The Preschool Director or Assistant Director will administer prescription medication in accordance with written instructions from the parents and/or the child's physician only if absolutely necessary. (rescue inhalers; epipen etc.) Written authorizations from physicians and parents must be updated regularly.

Messiah will not give medication to children who are in our program less than 5 hours except in the event of an emergency. (See Above) Medications must meet the following guidelines.

Prescription medicine must be in the original container and include:

- 1. Child's name
- 2. Type of medicine
- 3. Dosage and administration requirements
- 4. Physician's name
- 5. Purpose of medicine
- 6. Prescription number and date

Documentation of dosage and time medication was administered will be kept in the Director's Office.

The preschool staff will not apply lotions, sunscreens, or bug spray. These must be applied by the parent prior to bringing the child to the facility.



Storage of Medication

All medication must be current and stored in the original container labeled with the child's name. Medications will be stored in the Director's office, with the exception of Epipens. The preschool staff will not apply sunscreen or bug spray. These must be applied by the parent prior to bringing the child to the facility.

Emergency Medical Treatment

Messiah's Kids Preschool will not admit any child whose parents have not completed the Medical Emergency Authorization Form authorizing administration of emergency medical care to the child in an emergency situation where the child's health condition represents a serious or imminent threat to life, health, or well-being. The teaching staff has been trained in CPR / First Aid. Reasonable efforts will be made to notify a parent as soon as possible. The Preschool is required to notify the Texas Health and Human Services, Childcare Licensing (210) 337-3399 of all medical emergencies. Serious injuries requiring emergency first aid will be reported to the parents and TX HHS immediately. The parent will be notified of the injury details and summoned to the Director's Office or summoned to meet the faculty member and injured child at the designated emergency medical facility.

Conditions that require immediate medical care include but are not limited to:

- 1. Concussions
- 2. Difficulty breathing
- 3. Unconsciousness
- 4. Laceration, either significant in size or bleeding
- 5. Injury to an extremity with obvious deformity
- 6. Head trauma associated with vomiting or altered consciousness
- 7. Severe allergic reaction



Minor injuries such as small scratches, cuts, scrapes, bruises, or discolorations of the skin will be reported in writing to parents at the end of the day. If an injury is more significant (i.e. a bite that breaks the skin or head injury) the staff will notify the parent by telephone. All injuries occurring at the facility will be documented by the Director or other staff and filed in the child's permanent file. Parents are required to sign a copy of the incident report the day of the incident.

Tuberculin Testing Requirements

Texas counties vary in TB testing requirements for children. Currently Bexar County does NOT require TB testing for preschool children or Preschool Staff. Parents will be notified immediately if this requirement changes.



Vision and Hearing Screening Requirements

The Vision and Hearing Screening Program, Chapter 36 of the Health and Safety Code requires that all children enrolled for the first time in any public, private, parochial, or denominational school or in a Texas Health and Human Services licensed child care center and child care home in Texas, or who meet certain grade criteria (specified below), must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems.

The requirements for VISION AND HEARING SCREENING apply each year for children enrolled in any licensed child care center, child care home or school program at the ages or grades listed below:

WHO MUST BE SCREENED
4-years old by September 1st
Kindergartners
Any other first time entrants
(4-years* through 12th Grade)

1st-, 3rd-, 5th- and 7th-graders

WHEN SCREENING MUST BE DONE:

Within 120 days of admission

Any time within the school year (preferably within 120 days)



COVID-19 and Pandemic Policies

Exposure Procedures:

- A student or staff member that has come in close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more, regardless of mask) with someone with lab confirmed COVID-19 must self-quarantine according to current CDC guidelines from the last date of exposure, and provide the school with a doctor's note of a negative COVID test to return.
- If staff members, parents, or students believe they have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 but are not currently sick, they should monitor their health for symptoms during the CDC recommended quarantine after the last day they were in close contact with the individual with COVID-19, or be tested, after the CDC recommended amount of days, for COVID-19.
- If a family member, or someone with whom there has been close contact, is awaiting a test, the child may NOT be at school until a negative COVID test result has been confirmed.
- No one will be allowed to return with illness symptoms.
- A medical professional's note/diagnosis/confirmation (i.e. negative COVID test, doctor release to work/school) WILL BE considered and requested when allowed to return outside of the above quarantine criteria.
- All sick students and staff MUST stay home. All staff and student families must be vigilant for symptoms and communicate with MKP administration. If a staff member or student, or someone in close contact with a student or staff member, is diagnosed with COVID-19, a report MUST be made to Messiah's Kids Preschool Administration IMMEDIATELY.

Confirmed COVID-19 in Staff or Student:

- A confirmed case of COVID-19 in staff or student MUST be reported to the school.
- The classroom will be deep cleaned, disinfected, ventilated, and will receive antimicrobial treatment.
- Messiah's Kids Preschool will report the confirmed case to our local health authority and childcare licensing and send an email notice to all parents and students of a positive case on campus.
- The infected person must self-quarantine according to the CDC guidelines.
- If a student or classroom teacher on campus tests positive for COVID-19, school administration will send an email notification about the positive test result to all parents of students who may have been directly exposed, so those who have come into contact with the infected person may selfmonitor for symptoms. The identity of the person who has tested positive will be kept confidential.
- No one will return with any illness symptoms or after a lab confirmed positive COVID test until all 3 of the following criteria are met:
- 3 days or 72 hours have passed since recovery and without fever (without the use of fever reducing medication.)
 - o Improvement in respiratory symptoms
 - At least 10 days have passed since the first symptoms appeared.
 - A medical professional's note/diagnosis/confirmation (i.e. negative COVID test, doctor release to work/school) WILL BE considered and requested when allowed to return.

If a student or staff member gets sick while at school:

- The sick individual will be isolated in an administrator's office.
- If the individual is a student, parents must be called immediately. Parents need to pick up their child within 30 minutes of the call. All pick-up and drop off procedures will be followed.
- CDC guidelines will be followed on cleaning and disinfecting areas used by the sick individual.
- A doctor's note WILL BE required to return to the center (regardless of diagnosis), or you must self-quarantine according to current CDC guidelines.
- Upon director discretion, when/if COVID numbers begin to rise in our area or state, or there are any
 recorded case(s) of COVID in the preschool, Messiah's Kids Preschool can choose to return any or all
 of the COVID policies listed in the previous COVID Handbook, including but not limited to classroom
 closures, school closures, pick up/drop off procedure changes, daily entry screenings, masks
 requirements, cancelling of school events, etc.

COVID-19 Policies—Tuition, Disruptions, Modifications to School

Providing for Disruptions and Modifications to the School Year/Calendar:

- In the event of a school calendar disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic and emergency response, MKP teachers will continue to provide home-based learning to all students and families assigned. A disruption is defined as federal, state, or local authorities closing our center, or a single classroom closure due to staff or student illness. (These will be considered weeks worked for staff and homebased learning weeks for students.)
- During disruptions, lessons will continue via SeeSaw, email, ClassTag, Marco Polo, Zoom meetings, etc.
 Teachers will send weekly lessons through one of these platforms and communicate in a way to
 continue building relationships with students and parents. Learning objectives will be provided to
 parents to continue the student's learning at home, so upon the return to school, lessons will continue
 as though the disruption weeks were weeks in school.
- Home-based learning will also be provided during the closure of a single classroom to provide for quarantine due to illness or confirmed COVID-19 case in a student or staff member.
- MKP may or may not follow school district changes or modifications in school year calendars. A
 modification is defined as a planned school year calendar change. Upon a change or modification in
 our surrounding districts' school year calendars, we will make all staff and parents aware of changes
 that Messiah's Kids Preschool will be making.
- MKP will treat modifications (days not in school according to the modified calendar) as days off and will not provide lessons for home-based learning. (These breaks will be part of the school calendar and treated like holidays.)

Tuition Agreement due to Modification or Disruptions in the School Calendar:

- Messiah's Kids Preschool tuition is calculated as an annual amount per student based on the number
 of weeks in school (weeks in school will remain the same regardless of modifications or disruptions,
 including home-based learning if necessary). This annual amount is then divided into 9 payments to
 provide ease and continuity over the school year. Tuition will continue to be paid over 9 months,
 September through May, regardless of modifications to the school calendar or disruptions due to
 closures.
- Full tuition will continue to be due and require payment if the school calendar is modified. If the school
 calendar extends into June to provide for extended breaks due to school calendar modification, tuition
 will remain September through May. (Weeks in school will remain the same regardless of
 modifications or disruptions, including home-based learning if necessary.)
- Full tuition will be due and require payment if there are delays/disruptions due to COVID-19 where our school is closed and teachers are providing home-based learning.
- Full tuition will be due and require payment if your class is closed due to confirmed COVID-19 cases or self-quarantine requirements by the school or as an individual. (Home-based learning will be provided.)
- If Messiah's Kids Preschool is required by a government agency to close for more than a continuous 30 days, the administration and Preschool Board will meet to decide if a tuition discount can be applied for the continued home based learning time during the extended closure.
- If tuition is not paid, your child will be withdrawn according to our withdrawal policy (the withdrawal policy states that tuition must be paid for two weeks from the time of written notice of withdrawal) and the spot will be relinquished.
- All families will be required to set up an automatic draft for tuition and fees through Playground to limit contact. (Setting up automatic "Bank Pay" with your banking institution and verifying with MKP administration will be accepted as well.) Playground is Messiah's Kids Preschool's automatic draft tuition system. Auto drafts can be taken from credit cards, debit cards, savings accounts, and/or checking accounts. *See Parent Handbook for other tuition policy information.

IT'S THE LAW!

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Licensing & Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting

A copy of the DFPS Licensing Requirements, the most recent inspection report and contact information is always available on the parent bulletin board in the classroom and in the Director's office. Texas state law requires the staff of Messiah's Kids to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 210-337-3399 or the Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400. Staff are trained annually in the awareness, prevention, and reporting of child abuse. Warning signs of abuse and neglect can be found online at the below website for TXDFPS. Please raise awareness and become educated on the signs of abuse and neglect and how to report it.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Web site provides more information on licensing requirements and reporting of violations at: http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child Care Licensing P.O. Box 23990 - 3635 SE Military Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78223

Office: 210-705-3139 - Fax: 210-648-2939

