

PARENT HANDBOOK
Early Learning Academy at Bay Area Christian School

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to extend the ministry of the church by providing a safe, Christ-centered, and developmentally appropriate education for young children.

We do not discriminate regarding race, creed, or origin.

Welcome

We want all families to feel welcome at the Early Learning Academy at Bay Area Christian School. Orientation will be offered to all part-time and full-time families prior to the first day of school. We have an open door policy and are available at any time to discuss questions and concerns regarding your child.

Registration and Enrollment

A child is considered enrolled in the program once his/her registration form has been completed online, the availability has been confirmed by the director, assistant director, or registrar, and the registration fee has been paid through FACTS tuition management system.

Registration fee is due within 48 hours of notification of acceptance. **The registration fee is non-refundable under any circumstances. All students must have a Renweb account set up in order to register. The Health Form, shot record, birth certificate, and Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form, must be turned in before the first day of school.**

As per Texas law, children that are 4 years old and above by Sept. 1 of the current school year must have a vision and hearing screening before the beginning of school.

FACTS is our tuition management system. All tuition and fees are paid through FACTS. After enrollment is confirmed, you will be instructed to set up an account with FACTS.

The Parent Handbook is subject to change as needed, and parents will be notified in writing of any changes.

Programs

PS2 / EK3 Classes

A child must be 2 years old on or before Sept. 1 to be enrolled in either of these classes. A child must turn 3 years old on or before Jan. 31 to be enrolled in EK3. There is a maximum of 12 children per class with a teacher and an assistant.

K3 Classes

A child must be 3 years old on or before September 1 and independently potty trained to enroll in a three-year-old class. There is a maximum of 16 children per class with a teacher and an assistant.

K4 Classes

A child must be 4 years old on or before September 1 and independently potty trained to enroll in a four-year-old class. There is a maximum of 16 children per class with a teacher and an assistant.

Bridge Classes

A child must be 5 years old by Dec. 31 to be enrolled in the Bridge class. There is a maximum of 16 children per class with a teacher and an assistant.

Staff

- All of our teachers are experienced in teaching young children.
- Throughout the year our staff participates in conferences and workshops specifically designed for teachers of preschoolers. Our staff brings years of education, training, and experience to our program.
- Each staff member is required to have 24 hours of training each school year.
- All staff has received CPR and first aide training.
- All staff participates in annual training on preventing and responding to child abuse and neglect. This includes awareness of child symptoms and warning signs that a child may be a victim.
- Teacher and assistant in all classes
- We do not hire temporary staff from any outside source.
- The ELA does not require vaccines for our employees.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition: For current tuition rates and fees, see the **PROGRAM** section of our **website**, www.bacschool.org/preschool

Hours of Operation 7:00a.m. – 6:00p.m.

- **Part-time classes** are held Monday - Thursday 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM. Late pick-up charge begins at 12:10p.m. at the rate of \$1 per minute. Check our program options on the Tuition and Fees page. Check calendar for holidays.

Stay & Play hours are 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM Late pick-up charges begin at 2:10 at the rate of \$1 per minute.

- **Full-time classes** are held Monday through Friday 8:30AM - 2:30PM Late pick-up fee begins at 2:40p.m. at the rate of \$1 per minute.
A.M. Plus care is 7:00a.m. - 8:30a.m.
P.M. Plus care is 2:30p.m. - 6:00p.m. Late pick-up fee begins at **6:01** at the rate of \$1 per minute

Check our program options on our Tuition and Fees page. Check calendar for holidays.

- Parents will sign children in/out at the classroom door. Late arrivals / early pick-ups will sign-in/out with the receptionist and the child will be escorted to/from class.

Parents/guardians may not enter the classroom without checking in at the office. This includes those requesting early pickup. Failure to comply with this safety measure will result in dismissal from the program. Parents are welcome as long as this safety procedure is followed.

School Closure / Bad Weather Days

We follow BACS's lead or recommendation concerning bad weather days or cancellation of school days. You can check the website www.bacschool.org for updates. *We will not make up any days missed for bad weather at the end of the year, nor will any adjustments be made to tuition.*

School Calendar and School Holidays

The ELA school calendar is based on the Bay Area Christian School and CCISD calendars. The monthly newsletter will highlight non-school days and holidays for that month. A complete school calendar can be found on our website at www.bacpreschool.org. You may also pick up a paper copy from the ELA office.

Dress Code / School Supplies

Bay Area Christian Preschool has no dress code for students. We want your child to be comfortable while at school. Please keep in mind that in order to use the restroom independently, buttons and snaps (especially on jeans) can be hard to manipulate. Straps on overalls tend to fall into the toilet. Belts are cute, but if your child tends to wait until the last minute to use the restroom, this could prove very frustrating. Also remember, although we use washable paints and markers, clothes can get soiled. Play clothes are a good choice for preschool.

We have a fantastic playground! In order for your child to run, climb, and play safely, we recommend closed toed shoes, like tennis shoes. Crocs and flip flops can be hazardous for children as they climb, run, or slide.

All of the school supplies your child needs are included in the registration fee. We would, however, ask that your child bring a backpack and a pocket folder (without brads) to school each day. Most children are very excited about getting a new backpack for school. A lunch kit is needed if your child is staying for Stay & Play or is enrolled in our full-time program. **PUT YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON EVERYTHING PLEASE.** Put your child's **FIRST NAME** and **LAST INITIAL** on all of your child's items.

Withdrawals and Services Discontinued

The Early Learning Academy at Bay Area Christian reserves the right to remove a child from our program or discontinue services if:

- Parents refuse to pay tuition obligations in a timely manner
- Tuition is two months behind
- Parents fail to provide all required documents listed for enrollment
- Discipline challenges cannot be resolved
- Our staff/director feels the child is unable to function in our program
- Parents refuse to follow school policies and/or cooperate with staff regarding safety and/or security

Curriculum

A child's growth and development is viewed as a process, not an event. The foundation of our curriculum is the *Wee Learn* curriculum.

The *Wee Learn Program* provides a range of activities designed to meet the needs of preschool children at their level of development along the growth continuum.

We supplement with Abeka readiness workbooks to reinforce readiness skills and academics. *Handwriting Without Tears* is used to promote fine motor development.

♪♪♪ *Music classes* are held several days each week. Our music teacher shares her love of music with the children using a variety of fun activities.

† *Chapel* is held each week in our Student Center. This is led by our teachers as they take great joy in telling the children Bible stories and leading them in prayer.

Lunches and Snacks

The ELA does not have a cafeteria; students must provide their own lunches. *The ELA is not responsible for its nutritional value or for meeting the child's daily food needs.* Here are some helpful things you can do so that mealtime at ELA can be a pleasant, satisfying experience for your child.

- Include only finger foods that your child can eat without assistance.
- **We are unable to heat lunches**
- **Plastic forks and spoons are not provided**
- Any items that need to be cut up (grapes, hotdogs, etc.) should be cut up at home.
- Box type juices or milk drinks are nice and don't leak like a thermos sometimes does.
- No glass containers of any type, please.
- Label everything with **FIRST NAME AND LAST INITIAL** that you want to come back home – including: lunch box, thermos, utensils, etc.
- Sippy cups are not allowed in the three, four, or bridge classrooms.
- **MEDICATION MUST NOT BE PUT IN LUNCHBOX OR BACKPACK.** This includes vitamins and cough drops.
- Gum is prohibited for ELA students. Please have your child discard his / her gum in a trashcan prior to entering the classroom.
- Breakfast is not served at the ELA and students arriving for A.M. Plus care should finish breakfast before arriving to school.

Morning snacks will be provided by the ELA in the regular classrooms. There are no snacks provided in the A.M. Plus Care, but a snack will be provided by the ELA in the P.M Plus Care program.

Students with severe allergies must bring their own snacks or have their doctor sign off on the snacks ELA supplies.

The children will always have access to fresh drinking water.

Health of Children

In order for your child to be enrolled in our preschool, we must have a current immunization record and a Statement of Health on file.

A vision and hearing screening is required for age 4 and above.

Medications that need to be administered while at school will be handled through Bay Area Christian School nurse's office. The nurse will come to the ELA to administer medicine if needed.

Quick visual health checks are done as the children arrive each morning.

We want to provide a healthy environment for your child. When deciding to send your child to school, please consider if you would want your child to be exposed to a child with similar symptoms.

Please be aware of symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, upset stomach, skin rash, flushed face, paleness etc. If in doubt about the health of your child, please check with your child's physician to see if it is appropriate to send your child to school.

State licensing requires that you must keep your child home if he/she has had any of the following symptoms 24 hours prior to the start of class:

- **Fever**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Vomiting**
- **An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in ELA activities including outdoor play**
- **The illness results in a greater need for care than the caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in their care.**

Please make sure you keep us posted of any changes in phone numbers. If your child does become sick while at school, we need to be able to contact you.

If your child has an accident during school, an accident report will be filled out and put in your child's home folder. Most of our accidents only require simple first aid (band-aid or ice pack for a bump or scrape).

Parents will always be notified if a child sustains a significant injury, is running fever, or vomits. There is a nurse available in the main school office and we all have access to 911 in the event of an emergency.

All staff has training in CPR and first aid.

SECURITY

A SECURITY NUMBER is assigned to every child in our school. This number may be picked up by the child's parent or guardian during orientation. When you pick your child up at the end of the school day, your child's teacher, or staff member, will ask you for this number BEFORE your child will be released. **No number, no child!** These numbers are not given out over the phone. It is a big deal to keep this number with you. If a relative or friend will be picking up your child, notify your child's teacher in writing AND give him/her the security number. Remember, **NO NUMBER, NO CHILD, NO KIDDING.**

Emergency and Evacuation Relocation Plan

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the ELA building, we will relocate to the new gym located on the southeast corner of our property.

If it becomes necessary to evacuate from our property at 4800 W. Main St., we will relocate to Kid's R Kid's Learning Academy located at 170 West Bay Area Blvd - League City 281-332-6611.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Separation anxiety is a normal response for preschoolers. We find that it helps to keep goodbyes short, matter of fact, and cheerful! Then leave without looking back – go well out of sight. Do not go back for one last look or one more goodbye. If you are concerned, ask the director or another staff member to check on your child for you. If you have found that your child responds best when you can come in for a minute and get them involved before leaving, please do so.

State licensing requires that the children are **SIGNED IN AND OUT DAILY by the person dropping them off and picking them up.**

Late arrival and early pick-up procedures

Late arrivals (after 8:50a.m) must sign in at the reception desk and a staff member will take your child to the classroom.

For early pick-up (more than 15 minutes before your child's scheduled time), you must stop by the reception desk to sign your child out. A staff member will go to your child's class and get him / her for you. You (or designated pick-up person) must provide your child's security number in order to pick-up your child. We have found that if one parents shows up at the door, the other children think that it is time to go too!

Plus Care Program A.M and P.M.

The Plus Care option is available only to full-time students (M-F). Monthly advanced sign-up is mandatory and is not available as a drop-in. We **do not** receive children before 7:00a.m.

Plus Care A.M. option may arrive anytime between 7:00a.m. and 8:30a.m.

Plus Care P.M. option may stay anytime between 2:30p.m. and 6:00p.m.

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute begins at 6:01.

Rest Time

All children enrolled in our full-time program will have the opportunity to lie quietly on their mats for approximately 60 minutes. Quiet music is played and the lights are dimmed. It is a period of relaxation for both nappers and non-nappers. For those children that don't fall asleep during the initial quiet time, they will be given opportunities for independent quiet activities.

Custody Issues

The ELA Program requires a copy of custody papers, temporary or permanent (signed by the court). At time of registration, we require that the parents and or legal guardians of the student be listed. If, due to some court ordered action, access to a child is limited, restricted, or denied, the ELA program must have a copy of child custody orders, temporary or permanent. Without such orders, the information on the registration papers will be used. In the event the student has a legal guardian, the school should have a certified copy of the guardianship orders.

Parent Classroom Visits

Parents are allowed to visit their child's classroom throughout the year whenever the child is in attendance. Visits should be limited to 5 or 10 minutes, with the exception of class parties. All other visits are not permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of

instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

There are some specific guidelines that must be followed:

- Upon arrival, the parent must sign in and receive a visitor badge. They must go directly to the classroom or whatever area of the school their child is located (music, playground).
- Upon leaving the classroom, the parent should report to the office to sign out. Please do not visit other areas of the school.
- Due to privacy laws, teacher may not disclose any information about your child to anyone other than the parents or legal guardians.
- If you need to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, please contact the ELA office to set an appointment.

Parent Participation

- Each classroom has a room mom (or dad) to help plan parties and special events. Sign-up sheets for this position, or room mom assistants, will be available during orientation. These parents are extremely important for the success of the parties! Your child's teacher will be happy to give you details for these events.
- If you have a special talent you would like to share with your child's class, let the teacher know, and she will arrange a time that fits into our curriculum. This especially applies to Community Helper Week!

Communication

Weekly Teacher News /Monthly ELA Newsletter / Annual Calendar Website / Email Notifications

We strive to keep parents current on all of our events and programs as well as daily activities. Our annual calendar will list all holidays, class parties, picture days. Notices will be sent home prior to these events. As much as we try to keep our dates correct, they are subject to change. Parents are responsible for checking the child's folder daily for notices and reminders.

Each month a newsletter will be sent home (and available online) that will give specifics on the above mentioned events. Each week your child's teachers will send home a "Weekly News" on the units of study and academics your child will be learning, as well as upcoming events.

ELA policy prevents distribution of any flyers / advertisements from any outside source.

Discipline

We strive to help children be self-managing and socially responsible. Discipline is not punishment; it is the means by which children learn how to live and interact in a social world. Our teachers and staff strive for positive guidance.

Our program:

- Understands how a child develops and learns
- Knows what age-appropriate activities should be provided
- Prepares an appropriate learning environment

There are times when a child makes a choice that is not acceptable. All classrooms have behavior charts that are colored green, yellow, and red.

- Green – everyone starts here each morning
- Yellow – warning, make a better choice

- Red – go to the time-out chair for a 3 minute cooling off period (we use sand timers so the kids can visualize how much time remains).

Any child that hits, kicks, or spits on a teacher/staff member intentionally, will be removed from the classroom and taken to the office immediately. The child’s parents will be called and will be expected to come get him/her right away. Any serious behavior problems will be brought to the parents’ attention after the teacher has evaluated the situation.

Biting Policy

In the event of a biting incident in a classroom, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Parents of both children will receive a “biting incident report” in their child’s backpack.
- The parent of the child that was bitten will never be given the name of the biter by the staff of ELA. This information is confidential.
- Likewise, the parents of the child who was doing the biting will never be given the name/names of the child/children he/she bit by the staff of ELA.
- If the incident took place and the teachers are not sure who did the biting, only the parents of the child who has been bitten will receive a report.
- A copy of these reports will be placed in the child’s file in the office.

Suspending the child:

- A child who bites **three (3) times within the school year** will be suspended for one month.
- At the end of one month, the child will be permitted to return to the classroom.
- If the child bites **two (2) more times during the school year**, he/she will be suspended for the remainder of the school year.

Conflict Resolution

Occasionally misunderstandings occur. In keeping with Matthew 18:15-17, the following procedure is followed at the ELA.

- All questions, problems, or complaints should be brought promptly to the teacher, parent, or staff member involved (please do not take this to another teacher, parent, or staff member as our teachers and staff have been instructed to redirect concerns to the teacher / staff member / parent involved).
- If the situation cannot be resolved, the assistant director will be asked to become involved.
- If there is still no resolution, the issue should be taken to the director of the ELA.
- If resolution is still unattained, the Head of School for BACS may be involved.

Fire Drills / Storm Drills / Lock Down Drills

We will have a fire drill each month. All teachers and staff know where to go and how to proceed with the children during the drill.

We practice a storm drill twice each year. The main school office is kept informed about any bad weather approaching. They will in turn notify our office. In the event this should happen, the safest place for our children is the ELA hallway. All classes have security lights as well as working flashlights.

Lock down drills are practiced twice during the school year. All staff members are prepared and know how to proceed.

Gang Free Zone

Under the Texas penal code, any area within 1000 feet of the ELA is a gang free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

Minimum Standards / State Licensing

If you would like to review the Minimum Standards guiding our program, you may view them at DFPS website www.dfps.state.tx.us. The local child care licensing office phone number is 713-940-3009 Monday – Friday 8:00-5:00. All suspicions of child abuse and neglect must be reported by calling 1-800-252-5400 or on the website www.txabusehotline.org.

A copy of our most recent inspection is posted in the ELA office. If at anytime you wish to contact a member of the ELA administration, you may do so by calling 281-554-7011.

Nursing Mothers

If you have breast feeding needs, please contact the ELA office and we will direct you to a classroom that is not in use.

Transportation

The ELA does not offer transportation to or from school.

Field Trips

We do not participate in any field trips. However, we do have visits from the League City Fire Department, police officers, dentists, and other community helpers.

Water Activities

We do not provide any outdoor water activities.

Animals

As per the minimum standards, dogs and cats are not allowed on campus unless the following guidelines have been completed:

- 48 hours notice has been given to the teacher and students in the classes affected
- A copy of the current vaccination schedule has been turned in
- A health certificate from a veterinarian has been submitted

There are guidelines for other animals. Please check with the director before bringing any animal, fish, etc. to campus. **This includes show and tell.**

Holiday Parties and Birthdays

As a Christian program, we will celebrate the following holidays with the appropriate unit of study, parties, crafts, and classroom fun.

- Fall / We are thankful
- Christmas / Happy Birthday Jesus (no santas please)
- Valentines
- End of year parties

Birthday celebrations are limited to bringing a cookie cake / cookies (no ice cream, cupcakes, or cakes) to be shared with the class during snack time. The teacher **MUST** have **two days notice** if you plan to bring a special snack. You may also bring a treat bag, but it may not be opened during school.

Invitations to home or off-campus parties may only be distributed at school **IF** all students in the class are invited. Otherwise, the invitations should be mailed by the parents.

Consumer Product Safety Commission Recall Lists

Each month the ELA will print an updated list of recalled children's products as determined by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The list will be available to view in the ELA office, or you can go to www.cpsc.gov.

UPDATE TO PARENT HANDBOOK 2016 – 17

Revised 9/6/2016

The ELA Parent Handbook states on page 2 and page 3 under “Programs” that children enrolled in K3 and K4 classes must be independently potty trained.

Independently potty-trained means:

- The child is able to inform the teacher of their need to use the potty
- The child can independently take clothing on and off
- The child should not be wearing pull-ups
- The child can independently get on and off the toilet by themselves
- The child can wipe his / her own bottom
- The child can wash his / her own hands
- This policy applies to all K3 and K4 classes
- We understand that from time to time a child might wait too long before getting to the restroom, but if it happens, the following steps will be taken:
 1. After 1 bathroom accident, the parent will be notified to come to school and change the soiled clothes. If the parent is not available, the classroom assistant and an assistant from another classroom will assist the child into clean clothes. Parent will be notified in writing with our “Potty Report”.
 2. After 2 bathroom accidents, the parent will be consulted again to discuss the challenge and notified with a cumulative “Potty Report”.
 3. After 3 bathroom accidents, the child will be suspended from the program for one month to allow the child time to work on potty training. The child will remain on the class roster for the month absent, but no adjustment in tuition will be made.