Valley Christian Preschool

Parent Handbook

**Table of Contents**

[**Mission**](#_m2vh85yik1b3) **6**

[**Statement Of Faith**](#_8uvckk1ycu3s) **6**

[**License And Affiliations**](#_7871frvawepa) **6**

[**Preschool-Family Relationship**](#_prkp6lqmmjrx) **6**

[**Educational Philosophy And Goals**](#_i65aueo7ndmr) **7**

[**Programs / Classes**](#_jkhtjjo8nknz) **8**

[Toileting Requirements](#_oceunfokryz5) 9

[Enrichment Classes](#_u5fmgkybwmwz) 9

[Preschool Summer Camp](#_4yhd5prkb67u) 9

[**CURRICULUM**](#_ocmk4dzewieq) **10**

[**OPERATING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**](#_oi1umu9u02g1) **10**

[Hours of Operation](#_bd3tifzgteoo) 10

[Holiday and Vacation Breaks, School Closures](#_ug7qol2kjpml) 10

[Admissions](#_jzrq1tita3rg) 10

[Program Changes](#_kyd8789v75ts) 11

[Registration and Enrollment](#_8g575uhedlyx) 11

[Sign-In/Sign Out Procedures](#_xihhvjmauju0) 11

[Pick up Authorization](#_68zzzajcdlbz) 11

[Emergency Card](#_dk5q0kawgomh) 11

[Court Orders](#_ccvm4bqylu96) 12

[Arrival](#_ocuzhmuqg7ht) 12

[Vacation, Illness, and Absence](#_16rm21tzbm62) 12

[Student Placement and Progress](#_8u5opgsgvjcs) 13

[Parent Orientation](#_lub05wsk10yp) 13

[Open Door Policy](#_luheb4qjmt75) 13

[Adjustment Period](#_8b3h0iuuo4ai) 13

[Redirection and Discipline](#_a2zpg0qctns) 14

[Biting Policy](#_heq1ifedhzn8) 15

[Snack and Lunch Information](#_aqjitz17sqgm) 15

[Lunch Bunch](#_hz54ipk1ddy6) 15

[Snack Menus](#_gausqhd6pm8a) 15

[Naptime](#_if4ylcx9d6zh) 15

[Extra Clothes](#_2zdbscgotpbv) 16

[**FINANCIAL POLICIES**](#_y4g96hwkq3uy) **16**

[Tuition](#_fufbqr9dxhy3) 16

[Veracross Billing](#_irbzc54y5x94) 16

[Summer Program Tuition](#_j1zdnaieirvr) 16

[General Fees](#_bsa68rre8g6r) 16

[Credits / Refunds](#_gfon6faudstj) 17

[Withdrawal](#_3ps34xr4gt02) 17

[**Health And Safety Information**](#_6x7jjbhtv9uq) **17**

[Daily Health Checks](#_8h4owa1l4kse) 17

[Absences / Illness](#_av8vgvulbuut) 17

[Accidents](#_u78k8wc15aab) 18

[Communicable Diseases](#_xb58q6b0454m) 18

[Sunscreen](#_wxroypo3wk9u) 20

[Accidents and Minor Injuries](#_eqk04kn0t5qw) 20

[State Mandate on Reporting Child Abuse](#_x3b937jovutf) 20

[California Department of Justice Background Check and Megan’s Law](#_qn5nhjynkoky) 21

[Dress](#_zpmb11pncgk) 21

[Inclement or Excessively Hot Weather](#_9nbz3kcfiqos) 21

[Playground](#_f7aywvqqlcl6) 21

[**Emergency Information And Procedures**](#_bo361f4s2ci0) **21**

[**Rights Of State Of California Licensing Agency**](#_he3nli8xzwzc) **22**

[**Access To Information In Child’s File**](#_2ldlebspcaoh) **22**

[**Opportunities To Participate**](#_mirgtq4frzkr) **22**

[Family Events](#_9hunrh9h4ob6) 23

[Fundraising and Donations](#_ptxhqsgbiq1r) 23

[**Grievance Procedures**](#_x1f2oi3y4xdg) **23**

[**Parent Communication Procedures**](#_l064c4euap47) **24**

[**Staff**](#_fg6go7wk5aiw) **24**

[**General Information And Guidelines**](#_3apalv9yqoir) **24**

[Field Trips](#_lh8v8k4fqj0e) 24

[Toy Policy and Sharing](#_sy37mfv9nl9v) 25

[Birthday Celebrations](#_1jvpj6aoz4ko) 25

[Scholastic Book Club](#_kwgwe9oyla0x) 26

[Lost and Found](#_jfxf2ilggim1) 26

[School Pictures](#_bsyos0iaqncg) 26

[Child’s Cubby](#_rhs3f5yl05r8) 26

[Class Celebrations](#_ucdr61ch2h1r) 26

[Pledges in the Classroom](#_7k0ufrskewyb) 26

[**A Day in the Life of A Preschooler**](#_hssdcwvuc2uz) **27**

[**Disclaimer**](#_c72go4x8bhoc) **28**

[**Notice Of Nondiscrimination Policy**](#_wro4uch8ae6b) **28**

Dear Valley Christian Preschool Parents and Students,

Any successful organization communicates and abides by a set of guidelines for its members. It is our aim to develop young leaders by engaging young hearts and minds. This handbook equips students and families with the information necessary to navigate normal situations that arise in a school atmosphere. It serves as a written document for how we agree to act toward one another and toward our Lord as members of the Valley Christian community.

The handbook is not exhaustive, and cannot address all possible situations that may arise. Rather, it strives to provide necessary rules and principles to live by to uphold a sustainable, growing, and loving Christian culture. When a particular issue arises that is not outlined in the following pages, the school will make every effort to respond in a manner that upholds Biblical truth and maintains the order necessary for the school to thrive as a Christian community.

For His purposes,

Valley Christian Schools

**Valley Christian Preschool** is part of the Valley Christian Schools system in Dublin, California. Valley Christian Schools-Dublin serves over 300 families throughout the Tri-Valley area. At Valley Christian Schools- East Bay families can enjoy continuing Christian care and education for their children from ages 6 weeks through Grade 12.

## Mission

Valley Christian Preschool develops hearts and minds of future leaders through a discovery of God’s world and His ways.

## Statement Of Faith

Valley Christian Schools are interdenominational in attitude and emphasis. We exist as a ministry under Valley Christian Center, and Assembly of God church. Each School Board and staff member subscribes and adheres to the changeless Word of God as expressed in the following statement of historic evangelical Christianity:

* The Bible is the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God and is considered to be the guideline for daily Christian living
* There is one God, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
* Valley Christian Schools affirm faith in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His ultimate personal return to this world in power and glory. Salvation is received through repentance of sin and through a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Educators We Aim:

* To ensure that every student is known and loved
* To model an active faith through a life of wisdom and service
* To be a blessing to our local, regional, and global communities
* To be innovative and intentional in our educational approach
* To embrace diversity
* To be well-equipped for educational and vocational excellence

## License And Affiliations

Valley Christian Preschool is licensed by the State of California, License No. 010205821. Valley Christian Infant/Toddler License No. is 013421979. The Preschool is also a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

## 

## Preschool-Family Relationship

We believe God has charged parents with the primary responsibility for the training of their child. You have chosen to *partner* with us in the education of your child and we count it a privilege to do so. We take this responsibility seriously and desire the same level of support from you. Your support is essential to the success of our school programs and vital for your child’s growth emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually.

As an Early Education program, we will:

* Provide a safe and caring environment
* Be clear and consistent in all we do
* Provide a broad and balanced curriculum to develop the whole child
* Acknowledge that each and every child is a unique individual, created by God
* Have clear goals and learning objectives for the children
* Inform parents at an early stage of any concerns we have regarding a child’s learning or behaviors
* Ensure that we are available, by prior arrangement, to discuss progress, behavior, or any concerns that you might have about your child
* Provide a consistently Biblical foundation for all teaching, striving to communicate God’s love and His desire for a personal relationship with each child and his/her family

As the parent of a child attending Valley Christian Preschool, we ask that you:

* Support the school’s philosophy, programs, policies, and procedures
* Ensure that your child attends school regularly
* Ensure that your child is at school on time; the half day morning program begins at 8:15am; the full day classes begin their morning schedule at 8:15am also
* Inform the school about the reason for your child’s absence
* Inform the school about any problems or situations that might affect your child’s learning or behavior
* Encourage and support your child in completion of his/her “schoolwork” and home reinforcement activities, being aware that expectations are different depending on the age of the child
* Make every effort to attend meetings and events, showing your child a desire to participate in his/her education
* Encourage your child to obey the teachers, rules, and play safely, with pride in his/her actions and learning
* Cooperate with the school in the guidance and discipline of your child
* Reach out directly to school leadership with programmatic concerns and avoid posting disputes in a public forum

*Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old,*

*he will not depart from it*. (Proverbs 22:6)

## Educational Philosophy And Goals

We view our preschool ministry as a service to the families and children of our community who desire quality Christian preschool and academic enrichment for their children beginning with 6 weeks old through our Pre-kindergarten program.

We believe that each child is a unique and special gift from God and should be encouraged to progress at his or her own rate of speed toward enriched experiences, self-discipline, and the ability to make good choices. Our goal is to provide an early education program that develops the whole child by providing a preschool experience of lasting value with biblical values and principles woven throughout.

* **Intellectually**: by encouraging an enthusiasm for learning through exploring and hands-on experiences
* **Physically**: by encouraging experiences that will develop large and small muscle coordination and motor skills
* **Socially / Emotionally**: by encouraging whole group participation activities, getting along with others, and developing a feeling of security and belonging
* **Spiritually**: by providing a Bible time, and by integrating a biblical worldview throughout the curriculum and learning environment; we model Christ-centered character qualities through the love of our staff and the responses given to the children in our care; Bible stories, songs, and prayer give children an awareness of God’s love for them
* **Creatively**: by encouraging the exploration of art mediums, creative experiences, and music

The term Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) is often used in early childhood education programs and is part of the philosophy of Valley Christian Preschool. It is our goal to provide children with an environment that will allow them to grow in all developmental areas. God tells us through scripture that children need time to grow. *“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and Man.”* (Luke 2:52) Different levels of activity, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted, and used to design appropriate activities. Our program includes a variety of activities allowing for differences in young children. There is a balance of free choice and planned activities. In all activities we strive to build the child’s self-concept in a loving, secure, and accepting environment.

## Programs / Classes

**Infant/Toddler**

* 6 weeks of age to 24 months

**Preschool Twos:**

* 2.0 years of age by the first day of school.

**Preschool Threes:**

* 3.0 years of age by December 1 of the academic school year

**Pre-Kindergarten Fours**:

* 4.0 years of age by December 1 of the academic school year

Valley Christian Preschool offers both half-day and full-day programs for Preschool Threes, Pre-Kindergarten Fours, and full day programs *only* for our Infant, Toddler and Twos programs. All programs include school readiness curriculum and skills, visual and motor perception activities, Bible, art, science, music, and Spanish.

**Each child should be ready for the type of group experience that our preschool has to offer**. Children with special needs such as emotionally, physically, or cognitively challenged will be accepted if it is determined that they will benefit from the program and the staff is able to meet the needs of the individual in addition to the needs of the other children in the class.

### **Toileting Requirements**

**Preschool Twos** - Children enrolled in our two year old program are **not** required to be potty trained to participate in this class, but should be demonstrating developmental readiness for toilet training and should be sent to school in pull-ups or other training-type underwear. Once you have begun toilet training at home we will work with you and your child to provide him/her the assistance and support needed through the various stages of toilet training.

**Preschool Threes** - Children enrolled in our three year old program must be toilet trained. However, we understand that it is a difficult process for some of our little ones. We will allow pull ups during nap time while transitioning. We define being toilet trained as:

* No longer wear diapers or pull ups
* Can tell the teacher when they need to use the bathroom
* Can attend to their own hygiene, with the teacher’s reminders and assistance
* Have less than 5 accidents in 2 weeks

If your child is still needing diapers and toilet training in the 3’s program, we have an additional charge of $150.00 per month for full day students and $75.00 per month for half day students. We will re-evaluate your student at the beginning of each month.

**Preschool Fours** - Children enrolled in our four year old program must be fully toilet trained and not need pull ups during the day or rest time.

### **Enrichment Classes**

Valley Christian Preschool also offers a variety of enrichment opportunities for an additional fee paid to the vendor. Parents will be notified prior to the beginning of a new school year the program selections currently being offered.Some of our offerings have included dance, soccer, computer, science, languages, and music.

### **Preschool Summer Camp**

In addition to our academic school year programs, Valley Christian Preschool offers a summer camp program. The dates for the summer program, themes, and tuition rates will be provided to the parents in March/April before the summer session begins. Summer Camp is a 10 week theme based program, a 5 week minimum registration is required. The Summer Day Camp program is available to all VCP students enrolled in the current school year or new students registered to join us in the next school year.There is a $75 activity fee for sessions 1-5 and $75 for 6 or more weeks. Summer tuition is non refundable once the payment is made. Summer session payment one is due May 1st and session two is due June 1st.

## CURRICULUM

“Curriculum” is a term used to describe all of the components or elements used in our early education program. Curriculum includes directed activities, play and exploration centers, outdoor physical development, thematic activities, instructional materials, and texts. Valley Christian Preschool also believes in fostering the creative side for the child. Art is offered in the classroom daily.

Bible is integrated throughout the day. We will use Bible stories, character building stories, music, and prayer as part of our curriculum. We want the children to know God loves us, Jesus is our friend, the Bible is God’s Word, and prayer is our time to talk to God. Doctrine from any particular denomination is not taught. All preschool children attend a weekly chapel in the WAPAC. Your child will experience singing songs and will hear a Bible story each week.

Our core curriculum consists of Learning Without Tears, Kimochis, Orange Bible Curriculum, and Frog Street in our Infant/Toddler program.

**Development of the whole child is a team effort, with instruction and experience in the classroom being supported and reinforced at home.**

You can help your child get the most out of his/her learning opportunities as well as continue the learning experience at home by talking with your child about class activities. Ask your child’s teacher for suggestions or activities to reinforce what is being stressed in the classroom. Your child’s teacher will also provide a weekly or monthly newsletter describing class activities.

## OPERATING PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

### **Hours of Operation**

Valley Christian Preschool operates from 7:00AM to 6:00PM Monday through Friday during the school year with the exception of holiday childcare and summer hours being 7:30am-5:30pm. Summer hours are 7:30am-6:00pm.

### **Holiday and Vacation Breaks, School Closures**

School breaks, and observed holidays are similar to those of a traditional academic calendar. Please refer to the school calendar in the registration packet for all school closures as well as the school’s monthly newsletter. We have five weeks scheduled off during the school year. We have one full week at Thanksgiving, two weeks at Christmas, Winter Break in February and Spring Break near Easter. During these breaks, we offer childcare at an additional daily rate based on need.

### **Admissions**

Valley Christian Schools’ admissions policies shall not be influenced or affected by an applicant’s race, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. The School does not discriminate in the admission of its students on the basis of religious belief.

### **Program Changes**

Please note that each child is enrolled for a specific program schedule. Due to capacity limitations and staffing needs, it is not possible to rotate days within a program throughout the school year. For example, if a child scheduled for a 4-day program on Monday, Tuesday,Wednesday, and Thursday’s, they must attend those days and per the program- morning.You cannot switch the days weekly. If a permanent change is needed, this must be requested in an email writing to the preschool director *in advance of any change being made.* Changes are made only as space is available. There will be a $25.00 administrative fee for each program change.

### **Registration and Enrollment**

Registration is on a first come-first served basis beginning in January for current students and alumni families. February, we open enrollment to the public. .

### **Sign-In/Sign Out Procedures**

As required by the State of California - Health and Human Services Agency all CA licensed Child care facilities must have every student signed in/out each day. The time and full legal signature must be used to sign in/out. A $50.00 fee may be charged for each missed signature or time on the Sign in/out attendance sheets.

Authorized adults must be 18 years or older. It is each authorized adult’s responsibility to be sure the teacher acknowledges the child’s arrival and departure from class.

*Please do not leave any child unattended in the classroom or on the playground*

The Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing requires an **authorized adult (18 years or older)** to **SIGN each child in and out of the preschool daily, noting the arrival and departure time of the child.**

### **Pick up Authorization**

If someone other than the parent will be picking up your child, we must have ***written*** permission (using the blue Pick- Up Authorization form in the Preschool office) from you **prior** to releasing your child to an authorized person- **even if that person’s name is listed on your child’s emergency card**. The person picking up your child **must** have photo identification. We will ask to see photo identification for any person we do not confidently recognize, including parents.

Parents listed on the back of the emergency card are authorized to pick in case of an emergency. The blue forms need to be filled out if someone other than the parents will be picking up the child one time or throughout the school year.

### **Emergency Card**

Emergency cards need to be fully filled out with up to date information. Persons listed on the emergency card are the only people able to pick your child up in an emergency.

### **Court Orders**

Valley Christian Preschool **must have a certified court order on file regarding parental custody matters.** We cannot and will not refuse a parent pick-up rights unless we have a court order on file about those rights**. Please notify us immediately of any changes in custody orders**.

**Divorced and Separated Parent Involvement**: Valley Christian School’s administration recognizes that while the parents of some students may be divorced or estranged, both have the right to be informed of, and involved in, their child’s educational process. Despite such estrangement, both parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the child's education, to the extent appropriate. Generally both parents have the right to attend school programs open to parents and patrons, volunteer in their child's classroom, or eat lunch with the student. The parent's right is not negated solely by the fact that he/she is the non-custodial parent. Such visitation will be limited only if the school has received a copy of a court order specifically restricting the parent's visitation with the child by: 1) denying the parent's visitation rights or 2) requiring supervision of the parent's visitation with the child. The school does not have the responsibility to supervise visitation between a parent and his/her child and, thus, will not allow parent access in the school setting.

**Release of Student to Someone Other than Custodial Parent:**Only the custodial parent has the right to authorize removal of the child from school property during school hours. If the custodial parent desires the student to be removed by another individual, he/she must inform the school in writing that such party is authorized to pick-up the student. Such authorization shall be assumed to be generally applicable, unless the custodial parent specifies that it is limited to a specific date and time.

**Your children are very precious to us. These rules are here to protect them and to ensure their safety.**

### **Arrival**

We ask that children arrive at school on time. Because of the nature and design of our programs, we value and reserve these times for the children and their experiences. Late arrival makes this difficult to maintain because of the disruption of the continuity and flow for the children in the classroom. However, we are aware that there are circumstances that may necessitate a late arrival. When that happens, we ask that you please call the preschool office and let us know when to expect your child so we can prepare for and transition your child in the best possible manner to already occurring activities.

### **Vacation, Illness, and Absence**

We ask that parents notify the teacher or call the preschool office when their child is absent from school and, if at all possible, at least one week in advance of planned vacations. Absences due to vacation or illness on a scheduled school day do not reduce tuition payments.

### **Student Placement and Progress**

We view each child placement very seriously. When deciding in which class to place a child, we review numerous criteria and evaluate what is best for the individual child and for the group as a whole. Criteria include but are not limited to age of the child, developmental readiness, schedule, gender, and social development. Parent feedback is welcomed and considered but is not necessarily a determining factor. **As advocates for young children, our main goal is to provide placement that is best for the individual child in the preschool setting.**

Classroom teachers do observations of the children throughout the year. A progress report will be provided to you and will address a variety of aspects of your child’s development. Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in the Fall. Please check the school calendar for dates. Conferences can, however, be requested anytime by the parent, child’s teacher, or Director. It is our desire to keep the lines of communication open at all times, so please feel free to talk with your child’s teacher or the Director. **Please be mindful that when children are present, the teacher’s primary responsibility is the safety and well being of the children.** Please make conversations *brief* or schedule an appointment to talk at a later time.

### **Parent Orientation**

The Director will set aside time before the first day of school for a Parent Orientation evening. There will be a brief overview of policies and procedures as well as an opportunity to meet the preschool staff and our enrichment staff. You will also be able to visit your child’s classroom. At that time your child’s teacher will provide you with a daily schedule and curriculum overview. There will also be time to answer any questions you may have.

### **Open Door Policy**

It is our desire to be available to parents’ questions and concerns. Parents are welcome to visit their child’s classroom at any time. In fact, we encourage you to visit at least once.When visiting the school for any reason, please check-in at the office **prior** to entering a classroom.

According to California State Licensing, any adult over the age of 18 that volunteers in the classroom or attends chapel must submit immunization records to the office. These are the immunization records that we need proof of in your child’s file: Tdap, MMR, negative TB test within the last year, and the flu shot or flu shot waiver.

### **Adjustment Period**

Starting school for the first time can cause anxiety in some children and in some parents as well. We recommend that you visit our school before the first day of school with your child, allowing him/her to meet the teacher and see the environment. **Time will be made available in August for “Meet Your Teacher Day.”**  Please check the preschool calendar for dates. For those children entering our school mid-year, we suggest you visit the school with your child before leaving him/her for the day. We will make every effort to work with you to make this adjustment period a positive experience. **We recommend that you give your child at least one month to adjust to the preschool experience. Two months is recommended if your child attends a part time program or our Infant/Toddler/2’s programs.**

For our younger preschool classrooms (two and three year olds) we ask that parents not volunteer in the classrooms for at least 3-4 weeks after the start of school so the children are able to adjust to their new school experience.

### **Redirection and Discipline**

Redirection and discipline has an important place in an early childhood education program. Parents and teachers need to work together in order to be consistent and effective in training young children to make appropriate choices in a classroom setting. Questions or concerns should be addressed ***first*** with the appropriate staff member, then if further interaction is needed for resolution, with the Director. We want to be compassionate to our young children and their families knowing that the children bring into the classroom what they are familiar with from home

We believe our program provides a formula for discipline that is appropriate in shaping and encouraging responsible behavior. We strongly believe in and practice assertive discipline and prevention. Positive reinforcement, praise and modeling are the main methods used to maintain a child’s behavior. In cases where a child needs to regain self-control or is in danger of hurting themselves or others, the child may be momentarily separated from the group for a “quiet space” No child shall be shamed, humiliated or otherwise intimidated as a part of correction. Corporal punishment is not practiced at Valley Christian Preschool. We strive to facilitate conversation and communication among the children even in discipline issues. Our goal is to be proactive in preventing potential problems by redirecting a child or helping children resolve conflicts by using their words to communicate their feelings and thoughts.

**It is important to remember that at times *mildl*y aggressive feelings in young children are a normal part of the developmental process of growing.** Each teacher has a goal to help the child develop self-control over those feelings while still helping to build positive self-esteem. Most aggressive tendencies at preschool can be controlled using various techniques. Teachers are trained to be alert to potential areas of frustration both in the classroom and outdoors. When possible, teachers intervene before physical disruption takes place.

Biting, scratching, kicking, and hitting behaviors can jeopardize the safety of all children. If aggressive behavior becomes excessive or extreme with a child in our care, the preschool staff will communicate with parents through verbal conversations and an “incident” report. We will also initiate a discussion with parents regarding the inappropriate behavior, redirection that has been effective at home, and agreed upon procedures for when the child is at school. Continued occurrences may necessitate picking up your child from school immediately following an incident. Also, we may request that the child stay home from school the following day. If, however, after efforts between home and school are exhausted and the pattern of behavior continues, we may require that you withdraw your child from the preschool.

### **Biting Policy**

We understand that there are different circumstances that can lead to a child biting. If your child bites another child we will investigate the incident and determine accordingly. We will determine the consequence based on the child’s age and how serious the bite was. Here are some of the consequences: removing the child to another area of the classroom, calling parents, sending the child home, removing the child from the program or whatever we see fit for the safety of the children in the classroom. As we work together, if your child breaks the skin of another child we may request appropriate testing from a doctor.

### **Snack and Lunch Information**

A nutritious snack is served to all children in our twos, threes, and fours classrooms. The infant and toddler program families provide all food items. Children who attend full day programs are provided two snacks on a daily basis, one in the morning and one in the afternoon after rest or naptime. Children who attend half days are provided one snack (*included in tuition*). All children will be served milk unless otherwise arranged by parents and/or if the child has an allergy to milk.

Children who attend all-day may purchase a hot lunch from Choice Lunch at an additional cost or to bring a cold lunch from home. Please pack a healthy lunch for your child.

We encourage the children to *try* the foods they are provided.

Food is never denied to a child as a form of punishment or redirection. Conversation is encouraged, self-help skills are fostered, and good nutrition habits are promoted.

### **Lunch Bunch**

Lunch bunch is available for any child attending our half day program**.** Bring a cold lunch from home (or purchase a hot lunch) to eat with friends and spend a little more time on the playground. Join us from 11:15am – 12:30pm immediately following the morning class. Payment for Lunch Bunch ($10.00 per day) is due at the time of registration and is separate from the monthly tuition payments.

### **Snack Menus**

Menus for snacks are posted in advance on the Parent Board. The food items are kids friendly and will change throughout the different seasons. We are a nut-free school so no nut items will be offered.

### **Naptime**

Naptime is approximately between 12:30pm and 2:30pm. Each child has their own nap mat. We require every family to bring a crib size fitted sheet and a blanket on Mondays and we send them home on Fridays to be washed. We also provide a nap bag to put all your items in. Children that do not sleep are required to lie quietly on their mats during the napping period. The teacher may choose to give the child a book or quiet activity as long as they do not disrupt their peers.

### **Extra Clothes**

We ask that each child has a full set of extra clothes. If your child is potty training the teacher will request for more. Extra clothes will be kept in the bathroom in a labeled ziplock bag. Your child will also participate in different activities throughout the day that may get their clothes a little messy. Please dress your children in clothes that are comfortable.

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

### **Tuition**

Tuition is based on a school year amount and is a set daily rate. Tuition for children starting ***afte****r* the first day of school is calculated based on a prorated daily rate based on the number of days remaining in the school year.

Families are offered three tuition payment schedules:

* Full payment due by July 1
* Two installments July 1 and December 1
* Ten monthly installments July 1 through April 1

Summer Day Camp tuition is paid in two installments May 1 and June 1.

### **Veracross Billing**

All families must use the Veracross parent portal for billing. You will be billed on the 1st of each month. Billing will occur from July through April for the 10 month school year and May and June payments are for the summer program. Instructions for enrollment in Veracross billing will be sent to the email address on account prior to the start of the School year.

### **Summer Program Tuition**

Tuition for Valley Christian Preschool’s summer session is paid in two payments due May 1 and June 1. You will be billed as a separate invoice from Veracross. We offer 10 weeks of care in the summer. To attend the summer program you must sign up for 5 or more weeks. There is an activity fee for 5 sessions of the summer program at $75 and or $150 activity fee for 6 or more sessions. There is no activity fee for children in the infant and toddler program. This fee is due at the time of summer registration.

### **General Fees**

* Registration Fee – Returning student fee (Annual and non-refundable)
* New student fee (Annual and non-refundable)
* Supply and Activity Fee (Annual and non-refundable)
* Change of Schedule Fee - $50.00 (per change)
* Monthly Potty Training Fee - $150 (Applies to 3’s program only)
* Late Pick Up Fee - $5.00 per minute (after 11:15 AM for half-day program -or- after 6:00 PM for full day program)

### **Credits / Refunds**

No tuition credit is given for any days a child is absent due to illness or vacation on regularly scheduled school days. Tuition is not charged for regularly scheduled school holidays according to the preschool calendar. Registration fees and back-to-school fees are non-refundable in the event your child is withdrawn from the preschool.

### **Withdrawal**

In order to initiate a withdrawal a written notice is required 60 days in advance of the final date of the child’s attendance. This written notice must be provided to the Preschool Director in email form. **Tuition is payable for the entire sixty days for any child whose enrollment covers any portion of that 60-day period**. All charges related to the child’s enrollment must be paid current to the date of withdrawal.

Parent acknowledges that the School has the right to suspend or terminate the enrollment of Student at any time, or to nullify this enrollment Contract prior to the beginning of the School year at its sole discretion. Such suspension or termination may result where: (1) Student disregards or does not abide by the rules and regulations of the School; (2) a parent, guardian, or other individual closely associated with the Student fails to cooperate with the School or disregards or does not abide by the rules and regulations of the School; (3) other reasons as determined by the sole discretion of the School.

## Health And Safety Information

Upon enrollment, Community Care Licensing requires the submission of LIC 701, Physicians Report signed by the child’s physician.

### **Daily Health Checks**

We are required by the State of California to make a daily observation of each child on arrival at our school for signs of communicable diseases or other evidence of ill health. If we see signs of suspected illness, you will be asked to take your child home or to pick-up your child from school. You may also be asked to provide us with a doctor’s note.

### **Absences / Illness**

If your child is unable to attend class, please notify the preschool office by calling (925) 560-6235. If your child is absent due to illness with a communicable disease such as Chicken Pox or Strep infection, please let us know as soon as possible. We are required by the State of California to notify all parents that their children may have been exposed to a communicable disease. With any infectious disease, we ask that you seek your physician’s advice and always notify us of the disease.

If your child becomes ill while at preschool, you will be contacted. A parent or authorized adult is **expected to pick-up the child within 60 minutes of a call from the school.** Sick children will be separated from other children until the parent’s arrival. A cot or mat will be provided so that a sick child may rest comfortably until the parent arrives. The sick child will be properly supervised by the administration of Valley Christian Preschool.

**We will do our best to keep our school healthy, but we need your help, too!**  If your child displays any of the following symptoms, he/she **must** be kept at home:

* Fever of 100 degrees or higher within the past 24 hours
* Diarrhea – two or more watery stools within the past 24 hours
* Nasal secretion that is thick, yellow or green, which is an indication of infection
* Cloudy or colored nasal secretions may indicate an allergy; please check with your child’s doctor
* Sore throat with fever or throat spots
* Cough accompanied by fever, chills, or coughing up of green or yellow mucus
* Vomiting or nausea
* Eye drainage of any type should be checked by your physician to rule out bacterial infection
* Unusual rashes
* Child is not feeling well, such as lethargic behavior and increased crying

If a child is fussy, cranky, and generally not him/herself it is **recommended** that the child stay home. Rest during these times may prevent the development of serious illnesses and prevent the spread of potential infection to others.

Your child may return to school after illness when:

* The child is fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication
* Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours without the use of medication.
* Antibiotic has been given over a 24-hour period for any type of strep or bacterial infection
* Child is feeling well again and normal behavior has returned so the child can participate in school activities

If a child has been absent due to surgery, broken bones or other atypical medical conditions/symptoms, a physician’s release is required.

### **Accidents**

In the event of an accident or injury requiring immediate medical attention, an ambulance will be called. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached immediately, the school will attempt to reach the physician listed on the child’s health form and the next emergency contacts. Other minor injuries or accidents will be appropriately treated by the faculty and staff.

### **Communicable Diseases**

From time to time, it may be difficult to make an early morning decision as to whether to send your child to school. Minor physical symptoms may be indicative of allergies, contagious illness, or even school avoidance. Please abide by the following procedures when deciding whether or not to send your child to school.

***Conjunctivitis:*** Pink-eye can be extremely contagious, and is common among young children. Please seek the advice of your child’s pediatrician when you notice red, weepy eyes. Many children will develop these symptoms as a result of allergies, though others may need treatment for bacterial conjunctivitis. Generally, children who awaken with yellow crust or discharge from their reddened eyes will require a pediatrician’s intervention. If antibiotic drops or ointment is required, your child should remain home for a 24-hour period after treatment is initiated.

***Coughs:*** Frequent or productive coughs can be significant physical symptoms. It can indicate the worsening of a cold or allergy, or it could be a sign of secondary infection. If your child’s cough is worse than you might expect with a common cold, you need to consult the pediatrician. A severe cough can distract your child and those around her in a classroom setting.

***Diarrhea:*** A single episode of watery diarrhea DOES warrant exclusion from school. It would be uncomfortable and embarrassing for your child to have another episode while at school, and there are infection control issues to consider as well. If diarrhea is persistent or accompanied by fever, rash, or general weakness, consult your child’s pediatrician and keep your child out of school until the illness passes.

***Fever:*** A temperature greater than 100 degrees is an important symptom that should not be overlooked. Children should not attend school with a fever and MUST BE WITHOUT FEVER FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. Students should not be given fever-reducing medications (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen) and sent to school.

***Head Lice:*** Head lice are common among young children. They are not a health hazard or a sign of being dirty, and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. The most common symptom is itching. Lice do not jump or fly. Most often they are passed through head-to-head contact as a result of sharing personal items (combs, brushes, hats, pillows, etc.). Parents are asked to notify the school if their child becomes infected with lice. If lice are found on a student during the school day, the front office will notify the parents. It is best to consult with your child’s pediatrician, pharmacist or lice specialist for treatment instructions. Your child should not return to school until treatment is completed.

***Sore Throat:*** Many children will experience a sore throat from allergies, a cold, or sinus drainage. This is not a reason to keep your child home. Unfortunately, it is often difficult to discern a minor symptom from a serious strep infection. Strep is highly contagious and often makes its presence known with a sudden complaint of sore throat, fever, and many times a stomach ache, and/or headache. A child with these symptoms should see the pediatrician for diagnosis and treatment, and should not return to school until he is without fever and has been on antibiotics (if necessary) for 24 hours.

***Vomiting:*** A single episode of vomiting, in the absence of other symptoms, may not be a reason to exclude a child from school. If you elect to send your child to school, please make sure that you leave a number where you can be reached should symptoms recur.

**Medication**

We frequently receive requests from parents to administer medication to their child. There are certain requirements mandated by the State of California that must be met before we are permitted to assist you. Valley Christian Preschool shall administer the medication if the following conditions are met:

* Parent’s or guardian’s permission for the school to administer medication; you must read, complete, and sign the LIC. 9221, Parent Consent for Administration of Medications and Medication Chart AND hand medication to preschool office personnel; medication forms are available at the preschool office.
* All medication must be in original containers with physician’s name, medication name, dosage, time to be given, what the medication is for, and any side effects to watch for
* Over-the-counter medicine must also include the name of the medication clearly visible in the original container, the child’s name, amount to be given, and time to be given must also be written and signed by the parent
* All medications must be in the original container

**Under no circumstances will Valley Christian Preschool administer the FIRST dose of medication. NO medication, vitamins, ointments, lotions, over-the-counter treatments, or homeopathic remedies of any kind may be left in a child’s backpack or cubby. Please help us keep all of our children safe.**

### **Sunscreen**

We will apply sunscreen after nap if we have written permission from you and the sunscreen is labeled with your child’s name. Please apply sunscreen before arriving at school in the morning. Sunscreen must be kept in the preschool office.

### **Accidents and Minor Injuries**

Minor bumps and scrapes are an everyday part of your child exploring and learning through experience. Minor injuries sustained at school are reported to parents on an “accident” report. A copy of the report is given to the parent and one copy is retained

in the child’s file. Parents are called immediately in the event of any serious or questionable injury or injury to the head or face.

### **State Mandate on Reporting Child Abuse**

All staff of Valley Christian Preschool is required by California State Law to report any sign of or suspicion of child abuse.

### **California Department of Justice Background Check and Megan’s Law**

In keeping with the policies and procedures of Valley Christian Schools and Community Care Licensing to protect our students, staff, and families, and to promote a safe school environment, we will utilize publicly available search engines, databases and websites such as the Megan’s law website (convicted sex offenders) and the Department of Justice databases.

### **Dress**

Please dress your child in comfortable, easily washable play clothing. Young children can get messy and dirty in the course of activity and active learning. Play is their “work.” **For safety reasons, open-toed shoes, flip-flops or plastic type footwear are not permitted.** Please send your child in sturdy play shoes with non-slick soles. Please be certain that all items are clearly labeled with your child’s name. We ask that children not wear clothing representing violence, sorcery, or supernatural powers.

Since we are located up on a hill and the weather can be unpredictable, dressing your child in layers is most helpful. Layers will help keep your child comfortable in any type of weather.

### **Inclement or Excessively Hot Weather**

On days of inclement or excessively cold or hot weather, children’s activities will be kept inside the classrooms and/or Fireside Room as appropriate. Special activities will keep children involved and comfortable. The preschool building has both heating and air conditioning for your child’s comfort.

### **Playground**

Students are allowed on the playground with adult supervision. Outdoor recess provides students with time to be physically active and to socialize with peers. Only on rainy and/or extremely hot or cold days will indoor recess be held. Outdoor and indoor recesses are supervised for the safety and well being of every student. Times for recesses are noted in the Daily Schedule for each classroom.

## Emergency Information And Procedures

All Valley Christian Preschool staff have required training in CPR as a regular professional development protocol. Additionally, our Preschool has one staff member (at minimum) at all times on campus that is certified in infant/child CPR and first aid and universal health precautions. In the case of a minor accident, assessment and treatment of the injury will be given under the supervision of the teacher and/or Director and you will be notified. If further treatment is deemed necessary, the parent, guardian, or emergency contact person will be called per the policy of Valley Christian Preschool.

**Please inform us immediately of any changes in home, work, or cell phone numbers, emergency contacts, email addresses, home address, workplace address, etc. It is your responsibility to keep your child’s emergency card current.**

In accordance with the State of California, *emergency drills* are held on a random schedule in order to familiarize the children with proper and safe procedures for emergency exit of the building. Drills include Earthquake, Fire, Lockdown, and Shelter in Place. The Preschool is prepared with food, water, and other supplies in the event of an earthquake.

In the event of an unexpected school closing or delayed opening, early dismissal, or other emergency such as fire we will implement the **Veracross** texting system which is theschool-to-parent notification service***.*** The SMS system relies on parents informing the Preschool of any change in cell numbers. This service allows us to quickly contact all preschool families in a matter of minutes with any urgent school news and other pertinent school information.

The Fire Marshal inspects our facility on a regular basis. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in each classroom as well as other areas of the facility.

**Safety Drills:** Fire drills, earthquake drills and lockdown drills will take place periodically throughout the year. At the beginning of school, teachers will review all procedures with students.

## Rights Of State Of California Licensing Agency

Valley Christian Preschool is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD). License No. 010205821 and 13421979. The State of California Department of Social Services has the right to visit Valley Christian Preschool and perform inspections of the classrooms and programs, including interviewing of students and staff, as well as to examine all childcare and facility records without prior consent.

## Access To Information In Child’s File

It is the policy and practice of Valley Christian Preschool that only the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) whose signature(s) is on the child’s Admission Application may *view* the contents of said child’s file. The term “file” is used to refer to the information inspected by the State of California Community Care Licensing that contains all enrollment paperwork and required forms including medical and contact information. Copies of custody agreements or court orders are also kept in this file. Absent any restraints placed on parental rights subsequent to enrollment application, parent/guardian signers on the Registration and Admission Application will be permitted to view child’s information as defined above.

## Opportunities To Participate

We welcome parent involvement. Parents are encouraged to participate in the classroom. Each teacher will let you know when the best times are to participate. Parents can participate in their child’s school experience in a variety of other ways, too, such as chaperoning preschool field trips, assisting teachers in prep work for activities, special themed day events, and various parent-teacher events such as Harvest Festival and Teacher Appreciation. All parent volunteers must check in at the office. This allows us to be aware of who is in the preschool at all times. Parents volunteering in the classrooms must submit immunization records required by community care licensing.

### **Family Events**

We plan several family events throughout the school year such as Ice Cream Social, our class Christmas Parties, Harvest Festival, Art Show and Science Fair, Pastries for Parents. We find these to be special, enjoyable times to spend with your child and other Valley Christian families and we encourage you and your family to take part in them.

### **Fundraising and Donations**

We strive to limit the number of fundraising activities and participation in any fundraising activity and/or donations is optional although greatly appreciated by the Preschool.

## Grievance Procedures

The parties to this Contract accept the Bible’s command to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the biblical injunctions of I Cor. 6:1-8, Matt. 5:23-24, and Matt. 18:15-20. Therefore, the parties to this Contract shall attempt in good faith to resolve any dispute arising out of or relating to this Contract promptly by negotiation. Any party may give the other party written notice of any dispute not resolved in the normal course of business. Within fifteen (15) days after delivery of the notice, the receiving party shall submit to the other a written response. The notice and response shall include with reasonable particularity (a) a statement of each party's position and a summary of arguments supporting that position, and (b) the name and title of any other person(s) who will accompany them in the negotiation. Within thirty (30) days after delivery of the notice, both parties shall meet at a mutually acceptable time and place.

1. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the negotiating parties, the above-described negotiation shall end at the close of the first meeting described above ("First Meeting"). Such closure shall not preclude continuing or later negotiations, if desired.
2. All offers, promises, conduct and statements, whether oral or written, made in the course of the negotiation by any of the parties, their agents, employees, experts and attorneys are confidential, privileged and inadmissible for any purpose, including impeachment, in arbitration or other proceeding involving the parties, provided that evidence that is otherwise admissible or discoverable shall not be rendered inadmissible or non-discoverable as a result of its use in the negotiation.
3. At no time prior to the First Meeting shall either side initiate any legal proceedings related to this Contract except to pursue a provisional remedy that is authorized by law or by agreement of the parties. However, this limitation is inapplicable to a party if the other party refuses to comply with the requirements of Paragraph XIX above.
4. All applicable statutes of limitation and defenses based upon the passage of time shall be tolled while the procedures specified in Paragraphs XIX and XIX(1.) above are pending and for fifteen (15) calendar days thereafter. The parties will take such action, if any, required to effectuate such tolling.

If you have a concern, first and foremost pray about it. Ask God to help you express your concerns in such a way that it will result in the betterment of our school. Concerns or complaints should be expressed first to the individual in question. Please set up an appointment to talk with the individual privately. **Please express your concerns only to the person(s) who should hear it. Unneeded worry, harm and hard feelings result when problems and dissatisfaction are expressed to persons other than those directly involved with the problem or situation.** If the situation cannot be worked out, the parents should meet with the teacher and/or the Director to seek resolution with a spirit of reconciliation. If another meeting is still deemed necessary, the Director will notify her immediate supervisor Valley Christian Schools’ Superintendent, who calls on all parties as deemed necessary, all in the spirit of reconciliation.

## Parent Communication Procedures

We want to do our best to keep all our families informed about what is happening at Valley Christian Preschool. Emails will be sent to parents from the director periodically with information and reminders about special events and Preschool news. Each teacher will send home a class newsletter (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly), which will include class activities and field trip information. Please check the **Parent Board** periodically for special school wide events, preschool lunch and snack menus, and other important items. **Please take the time to read everything we give you.**

Parents may communicate with teachers via email or call the Preschool office directly for any questions during the school day.

## Staff

At Valley Christian Preschool, all staff are committed believers who have a strong personal walk with Christ and a sincere love for children. All staff members meet or **exceed** the requirements of the State of California for training experience and early childhood education (additionally our Infant/Toddler teachers have completed the Infant/Toddler Developement course) are fingerprinted, and have a Child Abuse Index clearance. Our teaching staff is certified in First Aid, CPR, blood-borne pathogens and universal precautions. Our staff continues to grow professionally by participating in early childhood workshops, seminars, classes, and personal enrichment.

## General Information And Guidelines

### **Field Trips**

Field trips (both in-house and off-site) enrich the class learning themes. Teachers plan their own field trips. The teachers will give you prior notice regarding a field trip opportunity. **Children enrolled in our two-year-olds’ program will *not* participate in field trips off campus**. The main source of transportation will be from the parents of each child. Each driver must be at least 25 years of age and provide a copy of proof of current car insurance and a current driver's license. Only parents or guardians are allowed to drive children on our field trips.

If you have more than one child at Valley Christian Preschool in different classes and only one of the classes is going on a field trip, we ask if at all possible that you go with that class and leave the other sibling at school in his/her class. Younger siblings not yet in school may accompany parents on some field trips. Many destinations have their own rules and requirements for field trip visits and our teaching staff must abide by those rules. Watch the newsletters from your child’s teacher for details.

Please note that if a teacher feels a child in her class may need special attention on the field trip, she may ask a parent to accompany their child.

All safety precautions are observed on Valley Christian Preschool field trips. Car seats or booster seats must be used according to the Department of California Highway Patrol regulations.

* Children younger than eight years old or who are less than 4 feet 9 inches tall must be seated in a federally approved child passenger restraint system (car seat).
* Children under 2 years of age must be in a rear-facing seat.
* All other children and adults must wear seatbelts.
* Children may not ride in the front seat- back is best; it’s the law.
* No smoking in cars with children.
* Children/siblings cannot be left in the car unattended for any reason.

### **Toy Policy and Sharing**

Leave personal toys at home or in the car. While we realize that all children have special treasures such as stuffed toys, recent gifts, etc., we encourage these to be left at home except on “Share Days”. Each class has a scheduled time and/or theme for sharing set by your child’s teacher. Your child’s teacher will notify you in advance of share days. Remember to take your child’s share day treasure home at the end of the day. We cannot assume responsibility for items left at the school. **Please do not permit your child to bring any fragile items**. We also ask that children not bring in anything violent in nature such as toy guns, knives, swords, etc. If a child does bring in a questionable item, it will either be sent home upon arrival or be put in the cubby and not shared. Please check with your child’s teacher if you have any questions.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Each class may observe or celebrate birthdays differently. Your child’s teacher will share with you how your child’s class will celebrate birthdays. In consideration of the feelings of our young students, please do not send birthday invitations to school unless every classmate is invited. Your sensitivity in this matter will help us avoid hurt feelings.

### **Scholastic Book Club**

We strongly believe in the importance of reading and urge parents to read to their young children regularly. Offering books through Scholastic is one way to provide literature for children at a reasonable cost. However, we do not endorse

every item offered through Scholastic. We urge you to carefully screen all book orders before making selections. Your child’s teacher will provide you with monthly book order forms.

### **Lost and Found**

We place all unmarked and lost items in Lost and Found. We donate to charity items not claimed within one month.

### **School Pictures**

We hire a photographer to take individual and class pictures in the fall. The purchase of these pictures is entirely optional.

### **Child’s Cubby**

It is very important that you check your child’s cubby in the classroom on a **daily** basis. Children’s work, newsletters, and other important forms of communication will be placed in the cubby.

### **Class Celebrations**

Many classes hold special theme or holiday celebrations such as Thankful Feasts, birthday parties for Jesus, Easter celebrations, Pastries for Parents and other celebrations throughout the year. Any parent attending the celebration must have a copy of their current immunization in their child's folder.

### **Pledges in the Classroom**

***American Flag***

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

***Christian Flag***

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands; one Savior, crucified, risen, and coming again, with life and liberty for all who believe.

***Bible***

I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God’s Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path and I will hide its words in my heart that I may not sin against God.

## A Day in the Life of A Preschooler

**Block Area:** When I play with blocks I learn concepts of shape, size, length, and location, all reading and math skills. I also learn to use my imagination and cooperate with others.

**Dramatic Play:** In the dramatic play area I learn to improvise and use things in a symbolic way to represent something else. This is abstract thinking. I also am able to try on different big people roles and to solve social problems through negotiation with friends.

**Circle Time:** In circle time I learn to listen, sit still and play with and understand language. I learn to listen to others.

**Story Time:** At story time I learn that letters on a page represent words and to interpret a picture to represent words and ideas. I learn to follow the development of thoughts and ideas in the plot of a story. These are all pre-reading skills.

**Sensory Activity:** During sensory activities I learn to use new vocabulary while exploring concepts of texture, color, weight, and size. I observe differences and similarities. These are math and science skills.

**Science:** During science I use my fine motor skills and tactile senses. I learn about real-life situations and experiences, cause and effect, questioning and logic.

**Coloring/Writing:** During coloring and writing I learn to hold a crayon and a pencil. I learn to control the pressure when using writing tools. I learn to express myself through pictures and words.

**Outside Play:** When I am outside I use my energy in a constructive way. I am able to show my physical strength, coordination, and balance, I use my imagination and learn to cooperate with others when involved in group play.

**Arts and Craft:** I am able to use my imagination, creativity, and express my feelings. I learn about space, size, and concepts of symmetry, balance, and design. These are math and reading skills.

**Snack Time:** At snack time I practice using my manners. I visit with my friends and teachers as we eat snacks and when we are done I throw away my trash. I am learning to be independent and practice social skills, too.

**Clean-up Time:** At cleanup time I learn to cooperate and work with my classmates to put toys back where they belong. When putting the toys away, I learn to categorize.

## Disclaimer

Nothing in this Student Handbook should be misconstrued as a contract. Any contractual rights are set forth in the Parent/Student Contract. Valley Christian reserves the right to add, delete, or modify any policy in this Student Handbook at any time with the support of the Schools Committee and Deacon Board.

## Notice Of Nondiscrimination Policy

Valley Christian Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

Valley Christian Preschool

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