



SUNSET HEIGHTS
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Parent Preschool Handbook

SUNSET HEIGHTS
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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2024

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About Us:

Welcome to Sunset Heights Christian School, nurturing young hearts and minds of pre-K and Kindergarten students for God's glory. With over five decades of service by Iglesia Bautista Estrella de Belen and under Dr. Javier Sotolongo's guidance, we're committed to quality education and spreading the gospel. Our teachers inspire academic excellence, Christian character, and servant leadership, aiming to develop Godly leaders. Join us to empower your child to make a meaningful difference for Jesus Christ.



I. Introducing to SUNSET CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Vision:

Our Vision is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world by offering quality education to young girls and boys in our neighborhood.

Mission:

Our Mission is to raise up effective Godly leaders with the tools necessary to continue to serve God and their communities throughout their education and life in the name of Jesus Christ.

Statement of Faith:

Our Philosophy is to provide our students with Christlike teachers that will challenge them to academic excellence, Christian character, and servant leadership.

Programs offered:

Traditional School-Year Programs (August – May):

Pre-Kindergarten (VPK): Age 4 by September 1st

Kindergarten: Age 5 by September 1st

Hours and Days:

The school is open August – May 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. VPK Hours vary depending on enrollment option.

Morning care:

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

VPK Half day enrollment:

8:30AM to 11:30 AM

VPK Full Day enrollment:

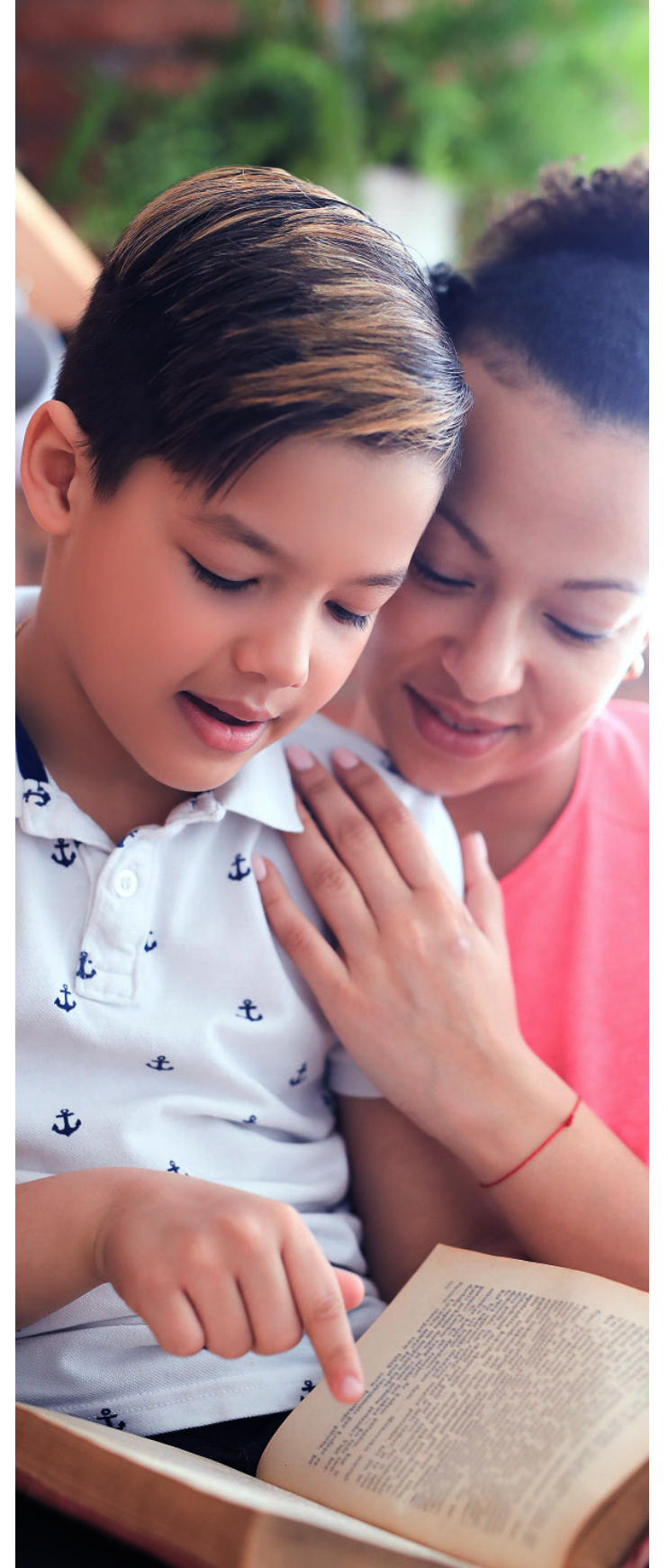
8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

Kindergarten enrollment:

8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

Aftercare Program:

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM



Curriculum

The school actively works with teachers to promote age-appropriate educational activities throughout our programs. Extensive resources and materials are provided to help teachers create a stimulating learning environment. Teachers work to provide a good balance of child and teacher-initiated activities. Children are provided with a variety of open-ended activities and materials that promote creativity through:

- Language Development
- Creative Art
- Math, Science, and Sensory Experiences
- Music and Movement
- Learning Centers and Manipulative Exploration
- Fine and Gross Motor Development

A wide selection of developmentally appropriate materials is available for children throughout our programs. Teachers provide alternating activities using different materials daily. Time is scheduled for children to interact with one another and with the materials provided. Curriculum expectations and academic focus expand as the children transition into other grade levels.

Children also have opportunities to interact in large and small groups throughout the school day. We use the following curriculum:
VPK/Kindergarten – Abeka (Reading, Math, Science/Social Studies) Deep Roots (Bible)



Chapel Services

As part of our curriculum, students will be participating in a weekly Chapel service led by our campus pastor/classroom teachers. This will be a time where classes can get together to worship and spend time learning about God outside of their usual classroom routine.

Our Faculty and Staff

We take great pride in the special qualities, experience, and talents of our faculty and staff. They are selected not only for their educational background and work experience in the field of early childhood education, but also for their personal qualities of warmth, empathy, and the ability to relate positively to others.

All prospective teachers go through an interview process with both the Director of School and Administrator, as well as undergo several working interviews. Applicants are evaluated on their teaching skills, interactions with children, enthusiasm, and overall ability as a classroom teacher. We check references, perform thorough background checks, and require staff to maintain CPR and First Aid certifications.



II. FAMILIES AND COMMUNICATION



Parent Involvement/Communication

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in supporting their child's early education. Families are encouraged to participate in school activities and provide input on a regular basis.

The connection between home and school is essential. We ask that you share information with us; including any changes at home that may affect your child at school. Information you share about your family is kept confidential. Changes that may seem routine or ordinary to an adult may be regarded as unusual by a young child who has not had as many years of experience in dealing with changes. These changes and others often lead to different behavior in the classroom. We can teach and work better with your child if we are aware of any changes at home.

Parents have a variety of options when it comes to learning about their child's day at school. Some avenues used daily include verbally speaking with a teacher, reading posted information on the parent board at the classroom door, emails, ClassDojo/ClassTag, and phone calls. Teachers dedicate time to ensure that these avenues are updated, both for the classroom, as well as individual children

Cell Phones

Please do not use your cell phone while inside the school. Staff and children need your full attention as you arrive at school and when you pick-up your child. Children are not permitted to bring a cell phone to school.

Electronic Communication

Our website, www.sunsetheightscs.org, offers many useful resources. You may download forms and current monthly items such as lunch menus and student applications

Parents are required to provide their email addresses so that we may send regular news, updates, and important messages in the event of an emergency. We also encourage you to follow us on Instagram.

Morning Care

Morning care will be available for students that need to be dropped off early for an additional fee. This service is provided from 7:00 am- 8:00 am. See Tuition fee schedule for detailed information and pricing.

Drop-Off Procedure

Parents may drop off students as early as 8:00 am. Students are to be dropped off at the entrance of the school where a teacher or staff member will guide them to their designated classrooms. For VPK students, the person who drops off the child must sign the child every day with a complete (full legal) signature and time of arrival. If there is information on any changes in the child's daily routine, it should be shared with teachers. Our staff will communicate any policies, procedures, or concerns regarding the child to the person dropping off at this time. It is imperative that the teacher/staff member acknowledges your child's arrival. Never leave your child unattended.

It is important to remember, to benefit from the learning program children are expected to arrive by 8:30 AM. When children are late, it disrupts the learning process not only for that child, but for their classmates as well. If we find a child is frequently arriving at school late, we will require a parent conference to address the issue.



Pick up Procedure

Parents must pick up their children by driving up to the designated pick-up area.

Your child must be picked up promptly according to your program's hours. Children will only be released to adults (18 and older) previously authorized, and picture identification is required for anyone not recognized by our staff.

If the person is not on the authorized pick-up list, please communicate this to the school beforehand so they can be added, otherwise the school will have to contact you before releasing the child to the person picking them up (please read "release of child" section for further detail). Your complete (full legal) signature and time of departure is required to sign your child out each day if they are in VPK. You must always make sure that your child's teacher acknowledges that you are taking your child from the designated pick-up area.

It is unlawful for a person under the age of 18 (other than a parent), to sign in or out, regardless of their relationship to the child. Therefore, children will not be released to siblings, relatives, or friends under the age of 18.

We take the safety of all children on campus seriously. While children are in the care of our staff, we supervise them carefully and enforce rules that pertain to safety. It is important for parents to follow and enforce the same safety rules when picking up their children and moving outside the classrooms, since the children are no longer in the presence of our staff.

Unaccompanied children are not permitted in the office or anywhere on campus. Children must be in the company of their parents or guardians when exiting the building. They may not run ahead of their parents when leaving and must have their hand held while in the parking lot. Please make sure that your children are properly supervised, so as not to endanger themselves.

Release of Child

We maintain a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child. Enrollment forms require a parent to specify individuals to whom the child may be released.

Advance authorization is required for a child to be released to an individual other than those already listed. It is recommended that parents name everyone who might pick up their child when enrolling and update this information regularly. Only in cases of necessity or emergency should a change be made over the telephone. When notified by telephone, we may request that certain family information be confirmed for verification. The person picking-up the child will be required to present identification when arriving at school. Should a person other than the child's parent(s) or those indicated arrive to pick up the child, a parent and/or the first available person on the emergency contact form will be notified and the child will not be released until proper authorization is received. Should an unauthorized person become confrontational or uncooperative with our staff, we will immediately notify the police. We will not release a child to

any parent, relative or other authorized adult who appears to be impaired using drugs or alcohol. In the event this situation occurs, a telephone call will be made to an alternate emergency contact person or the police.

Late Pick-Ups

If you expect to be late picking up your child, call the school immediately. We understand circumstances can sometimes occur that will cause a parent to be late picking up a child. However, if a parent is frequently late, a meeting will be held with the parents and an Administrator to determine a plan of action. If there is no resolution, dismissal from school may be necessary. When arriving late, a late fee will be billed to your account. Exact time is determined by the clock in the office.

Half-Day Schedule (VPK)

We recognize parents may, for any number of reasons, prefer a part-time school schedule for their children. A half-day schedule option is offered from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM ONLY in our VPK Preschool program. Late fees will be charged if students are not picked up by 11:45 AM. We believe every child will benefit from their experience at SHCS. However, it is not reasonable to expect children attending with a part-time schedule to glean the same social, developmental, and academic benefits as children attending full-time. However, rest assured that teachers plan each program's weekly curriculum with this half-day schedule in mind so that those children will not miss out on any important projects or activities.

Core Programs/Aftercare

Full Day Preschool & Kindergarten Program hours are 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM. There will be a 30 minute window for parents to pick up children before they are dropped off in aftercare and a late fee will be charged. If your child remains at school past 3:00 PM, and they are not enrolled in aftercare, you will be charged \$1 per minute, starting at 3:01 PM. Aftercare will be offered from 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM for an additional fee (See tuition schedule). The school closes promptly at 6:00 PM. If your child remains at school past 6:00 PM, you will be charged \$1 per minute, starting at 6:01 PM. If your child is left at school longer than 30 minutes past the school's scheduled closing time without contact to the school and the school has exhausted all emergency options from your emergency card, the Hialeah Police Department will be contacted.

Updating of Emergency Contacts

It is important that the school maintain current and accurate records for each child so that parents can be contacted in the event of an emergency. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that the school has current contact information. If there are any changes to this information, the office must be notified promptly so that they can update their records.

Parent and Child Identification

Upon enrollment, verification of identity is required from at least one parent and the child. For identity of parent or court-appointed legal guardian, one of the following items is required:

1. **Driver's License (or government ID card)**
2. **Current Passport or Permanent Resident Card**

For identity of the child and to confirm parentage, we require an Official or Certified Copy of the child's Birth Certificate (a hospital "Record of Birth" is not acceptable). Any document containing foreign language shall be accompanied by a full English language translation which the translator has certified as complete and accurate, and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English. A child may not start without verification of identification from at least one parent. If none of the child's documents are available by the start date, the child may start, and enrollment will be considered provisional for a period of 90 days. If after 90 days we have not received verification of the child's identity, the child will be immediately withdrawn.

Parent Code of Conduct

We expect parents to observe a certain standard of conduct as a part of our school community. The following items are not acceptable while on our campus:

- **Physical or verbal punishment of their own children or any other children.**
- **Threatening, harassing or otherwise**

disrespecting staff, other parents, or children.

- **Swearing, cursing, or foul language.**
- **Threatening or obscene gestures.**
- **Quarreling with other parents or staff.**
- **Making disparaging comments regarding the school to staff, parents, or anyone other than Administration (including outside of school).**
- **Using contact information of Sunset Heights Christian School families for commercial or any other improper purpose.**
- **Not following policies designated to protect the safety and security of everyone at the school.**

Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate withdrawal of the family.

Grievance Procedure

If you have any concerns regarding school policies or the care your child is receiving, you are encouraged to speak to the appropriate person. If the concern is regarding a teacher, the classroom, or your child, you should first initiate a conversation with the teacher. Many times, this approach will result in a satisfactory outcome not requiring any further discussion.

If you feel that the issue merits the attention of the Administration, you should ask for a meeting with the Director of School or Administrator. **Please do not hesitate to express any concern at any time.** It is our goal to make sure your child's experience at SHCS is exceptional. We pride ourselves on having families who are happy and genuinely love being part of our school.



III. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND DISCIPLINE

Health Assessments

Each child is required to have a current health form on file. The health form must be completed by a physician and must have been conducted within one year prior to the date of enrollment. The form must include a record of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's physician. The form must be completed and returned before the child's first day of school. Thereafter, whenever immunization renewal information is needed, parents must update immunizations by bringing in the documentation filled out by the physician. Parents will be given 15 days to update current records. Failure to do so may result in the child being withdrawn from school.

Child Immunization Requirements

Children in Florida are required by law to receive certain immunizations in order to attend public and private elementary and secondary schools, childcare centers, family day care homes, nursery schools, day nurseries, and developmental centers.

Nut-Free Environment

To reduce the risk of severe allergic reactions, our school strives to be "nut-free". We do not serve peanuts or any nut products. Please do not bring any item into school that contains nuts. Although we make every effort to be "nut-free," we can never guarantee that outside food brought into the school does not contain nut products. If we find that your child's lunch contains nuts, we will contact you. Your child will be served a school lunch instead, and your account will be billed.

Allergies or Special Dietary Needs

If your child has severe allergies that require monitoring and intervention in case of an allergic reaction, please be sure to outline all allergies and the required treatment onto a Food Allergy Action Plan form and discuss it with both your child's teachers and office staff. The allergy information will be attached to all required medication(s) and copies made for your child's teachers and file. If there are additional items your child is allergic to, we will work with you in trying to prevent your child from encountering the item(s). Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that other parents or children will be as conscientious as we are and, therefore, cannot guarantee your child will not encounter an item that may affect him or her.

Children's Birthdays

All children's birthdays are celebrated at school. We do not make food the focus of any birthday, instead choosing to promote special activities such as games, crafts or singing. In making sure that we adhere to our healthy food guidelines, remember we are a nut-free school. Please keep that in mind if parents decide to bring food items, goodie bags or decorations into the classroom to share with the students. Large balloons/decorations (pinatas, bounce houses, etc) will not be allowed. Parents will be allowed to participate in their child's special day; however, plans need to be made in advance and coordinated with the classroom teacher so that the celebration does not interrupt important lessons/learning time. For space and safety reasons, no more than 2 parents will be allowed to participate. Birthdays will be celebrated during the child's lunch time in the cafeteria..

Recognition of the child's special day varies by classroom, but usually includes a birthday crown and the singing of "Happy Birthday". Teachers will make sure your child feels special and celebrated on their birthday. If you are having an outside party, to prevent hurt feelings, please do not send party invitations to school unless you are inviting the entire class. To invite only a few children, please mail the invitation directly to their home or send direct emails to parents.



Incidental Medical Services & Administration of Medicine

Office staff and Administration will provide Incidental Medical Services (IMS) to children for the following:

- **Blood-Glucose Monitoring**
- **Administering inhaled medications**
- **EpiPen Jr. and EpiPen**
- **Prescribed and over-the-counter medications**

All medications (i.e. prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, lotions/ointments, lip balm, cough drops, etc.) must be in the original package, have the child's name clearly marked on it and will be stored in a medication cabinet or medication refrigerator in the school office. Parents must complete an IMS Instruction Form prior to the administration of the first service or dose. All medications must be administered in accordance with the pharmacy or manufacturer's label. Staff administering approved IMS will be trained either by the child's parent or a medical professional prior to administering any IMS. Safety precautions will be taken (i.e. using gloves, a sharps container, etc.). All necessary disposal equipment will be provided by the child's parents. Final disposal of biological materials will be the responsibility of the child's parents. An IMS log will be used to record any services given to a student and will include the date, time, dosage, and administering staff's signature.

No homeopathic ointments are allowed. Medication forms must have a beginning and ending date and can only be kept for a short period of time, except for approved long-term medications held for emergencies. A parent must personally instruct a specific staff member on how to administer the medication to their child according to the attached physician's orders, following all generally accepted safety precautions. The child's parent must communicate any new physician's orders (i.e. dosage changes, etc.) and track expiration dates and replace medicine and/or equipment/supplies as needed. **All medications should be taken and kept in the school office, where it will be administered.** Teachers will NOT be authorized to administer any medications in the classrooms, unless absolutely necessary or otherwise previously specified by parents. The office staff must be notified in advance if this is the case.

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Weapons-Free Environment

The use of cigarettes, E-cigarettes, vapor devices, and chewing tobacco is not permitted. The possession and/or use of drugs (including marijuana or cannabis infused items), alcohol, or weapons is prohibited. These restrictions apply to all persons on school grounds, including our parking lot, as well as on field trips, outdoor activities, and in school vehicles.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

All personnel working in a licensed childcare facility must report suspected child abuse or neglect. There is a criminal penalty for violation of this reporting law.

Basic First Aid

In normal supervised play, children occasionally get injured. In case of a minor injury or accident, our staff will administer basic first aid. Any cuts will be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water; ice will be applied to any bruises, bites, or other injuries. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented onto a Child Incident Report and provided to parents when the child is picked-up at the end of the day.

We may call and ask parents' permission to apply a topical antibiotic or anti-itch ointment as necessary to treat or prevent infection in minor skin wounds or alleviate itching.



Emergency Medical Care

In case of a medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), we will call 911. Our staff has been trained in Pediatric and Adult First Aid and CPR and will administer it as appropriate. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified.

In case of an injury or accident in which an ambulance is not needed, but immediate professional care is required, we will contact the child's parents. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency contacts will be notified. Our staff cannot transport children to a hospital or doctor's office. Injured children shall be transported for medical aid by parents or by calling 911 for an ambulance. The child may be transported to a hospital by ambulance for emergency treatment when necessary.

Emergency Procedures

We have emergency procedures in-place and practice regular fire, earthquake and lockdown drills with staff and children.

In case of a fire, there is a central fire alarm that may be activated. Exit routes are posted with procedures by classroom exit doors. Two fire extinguishers are located in the hallways and one in the kitchen, which are inspected regularly. Classrooms are equipped with both smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. In case of an emergency, our staff will be acting in the best interests of the children. Children's safety is always our priority. In the event of such an emergency, you will be contacted at the first opportunity and given information and instructions.

We will conduct monthly fire and lock down drills to help prepare staff and students on what to do in the event of an emergency situation.



Illnesses and Accidents

Parents must make other arrangements for the care of their children when they show symptoms of any deviation from normal health. Children will not be permitted at our school if they are not well or with any one or more of the following conditions:

1. **Fever of 100 degrees or higher.**
2. **Any communicable disease or contagious infection.**
3. **Vomiting within the past 24 hours.**
4. **Diarrhea – three or more loose bowel movements in a 24-hour period.**
5. **Undiagnosed rash.**
6. **Eye discharge or Pink Eye; children can be readmitted after medical diagnosis to rule out bacterial or viral infection, or after 24-hours on an antibiotic treatment.**
7. **Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.**
8. **Open sores and scabs, unless properly covered and 24-hours on an antibiotic treatment.**
9. **Head Lice – until treatment is effective and a follow-up evaluation has been made by our staff.**
10. **Any one or more of the following: earache, signs of irritability or confusion, sore throat.**

When a child becomes ill or injured at school, the staff's priority is to meet the child's physical health needs. In case of illness, we will take the child's temperature, as well as perform an overall visual health assessment. A phone call to parents will be made when the school deems it necessary. If parents are requested by the school to pick up their sick child, they must do so within one hour, and the child may not return to school for 24 hours following the time sent home and until the symptoms subside.

Parents are advised to make alternate plans for care if the child becomes ill and is not able to attend school. If a sick child is not picked up within one hour of being called, we may call your alternate contact to request pick up. Failure to pick up a sick child in a timely manner, or disregard of this policy by parents, may result in the removal of your child from school.

While a physician's note may be helpful, it does not guarantee that a child may return to school.

Final decisions on allowing a child to return are made by an Administrator.



Developmental Needs and Special Services

All children have special needs at different stages of their development and require effective accommodations to allow them to attain critical milestones in their life journeys. Certain children may have more needs due to their medical, physical as well as psychological uniqueness or disabilities.

We do our best, within the limits of our professional abilities, to work with children with special needs due to physical, linguistic, mental, and/ or emotional disabilities. Please consult with a member of the Administration prior to enrollment if your child has special needs. Despite our best efforts, however, there may be times when participation in our programs, or a group setting in general, will not be in the best interest of your child at the current time.

We are dedicated to helping children achieve their full potential. SHCS teachers have expertise in child development and occasionally identify behavioral or developmental needs in young children that parents may or may not recognize. We work in a shared approach and involve parents in the process of identifying the need and working toward possible solutions. In these instances, our staff may recommend additional observation, professional diagnosis, therapy, or services for the child or family.

We recognize some children may require one-on-one assistance during the day. If you wish to have an occupational, physical, or speech therapist and/or behavior coach work with your child, at your own expense, we will work with you to formulate a plan that is in the best interest of your child. We make decisions on whether to allow these arrangements at school on a case-by-case basis, and a limited number of these individuals are allowed on our campus at any one time. Outside support personnel must undergo a background check as required, and meet any other requirements set by SHCS and the state of Florida.

These situations take up a significant amount of administrative time to assist with coordination, scheduling, and paperwork. In addition, the required individual attention can affect the entire classroom dynamic. Unfortunately, if we determine a situation is beyond our capacity to assist, or is detrimental to the classroom, we will have to require the parents to make other arrangements and withdraw the child from school. If your child is dismissed from the program, we will assist you with resources and referrals to assess and evaluate a program that is better fit for your child's developmental needs.

Discipline

While some behaviors are typical for a specific “age and stage”, we recognize that children learn appropriate social behaviors at different rates. With that in mind, we observe and make individual behavior plans when necessary.

We believe in “positive discipline”, which focuses on positive behavior, rather than negative. We may need to redirect children and speak with them about appropriate behavior. When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove a child from the rest of the group. If a behavior persists, we will arrange a conference with the child’s parents. The following techniques are used according to age-appropriateness and the individual needs of each child:

- **Distraction and redirection:** Suggest appropriate behavior (we never use time-outs).
- **A quiet, private talk:** Showing respect for children’s feelings, getting down on the child’s level, looking at the child directly in the eye and giving him or her our undivided attention.
- **Praise:** Catch the child making “good choices”; praising the child when behaving appropriately.
- **Indirect praise:** Praise the child who is next to the child who may be having trouble.
- **By using examples:** When asking children to use calm voices, use a whisper voice.
- **Arrange contingencies (if/ then statements):** For example, we might say, “If you finish putting the blocks away, then we can...”
- **Redirection to another area:** Redirection is done in a positive manner. Teachers give a forewarning of behavior that needs to be corrected. When the child is not following direction and is demonstrating inappropriate behavior, teachers follow through with redirection to another area in the classroom or yard. If the child persists with inappropriate behavior, the teacher will shadow the child until the child is ready to resume play in an appropriate manner. Once the child is ready to resume play, the teacher will explain to the child why he or she was removed from the area and redirected to another area. The teacher will discuss with the child how to make better choices.
- Staff guide children in learning and expressing socially appropriate behavior that is individual to that child.
- Children are given a 5-minute warning when transitioning from one activity to another.
- **Questioning vs. Telling:** Teachers may ask the child a question such as, “What kind of voice should we use inside?” or “How do we treat our classmates?”.

Aggressive or Disruptive Behavior in Children

We are committed to making our environment as safe as possible for your child. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative interaction, respect for others and non-aggressive problem-solving between children. Behaviors such as biting, tantrums, defiance, sharing conflicts, or physical aggression may occasionally occur in young children. These types of undesirable behavior can sometimes occur before an adult can intervene, despite our best efforts and it is occurring right next to a supervising teacher. Aggressive Behavior includes, but is not limited to biting, hitting, pushing, sharing conflicts, other physical aggression or in any way provoking an altercation. In older children this may include verbal abuse or inappropriate language.

Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to when a child requires extensive one-on-one teacher behavioral intervention, is disrespectful to adults, has recurring tantrums, willfully does not listen or follow instruction, is frequently unkind to classmates, or regularly disrupts the atmosphere in the classroom. We will be working with you to teach your child to participate, cooperate, and be a responsible member of the group. If a child’s behavior places the child or other children in danger or interferes with the focus of the classroom, our policy includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- When necessary, we speak to a child with a firm but caring voice. At times, it may be necessary to remove the child from the rest of the group.
- If a child is brought to the front office due to their behavior and cannot return to the classroom for the safety of the other children, the child’s own welfare, or the inability of the classroom to function without disruption, the child must be picked up within one hour of the phone call notifying the parent of the need to pick up their child.
- We may ask you to pick up your child and keep him or her home for a period of one day to one week.
- Staff will document a record of behavior.
- Staff will inform and discuss with parents any child’s behavior which is persistently

disruptive and is not alleviated by individualized guidance techniques.

- If the behavior persists, a member of the Administration will notify the parent that the teacher has requested intervention.
- The Director of School or Administrator will speak with the parents, discuss possible courses of action, then a plan will be designed and agreed upon by the school and parents.

We want your child to be a successful and responsible individual and we look forward to working with you should any problem arise. If parents are unable to provide support, or even with the parent’s support the plan fails to improve the behavior, we reserve the right to withdraw the child.

If at any time we feel the behavior is a danger to other children or that the child needs more dedicated supervision, we will require the immediate withdrawal of the child until he or she is able to manage the undesirable behavior. If one child constantly harasses another, either verbally or physically, we will contact the parents of both children. It is our policy in any written or verbal report about an incident involving more than one child that we will not share the name of the other child involved with parents.

IV. ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT



Initial Registration and Annual Re-Registration

An Initial Enrollment Fee is due upon enrollment into the school. Each following year, continuing children must pay an annual Re-Enrollment Fee with their completed Re-Enrollment Commitment Form in February, in order to guarantee a place on the class list for the coming fall. These fees are listed on the current Tuition Schedule and are non-refundable.

Expectation for re-enrollment each year is neither stated nor implied and may be withheld at the discretion of the school. If a Re-Enrollment Commitment Form is not completed and returned by the specified deadline, the child cannot be guaranteed a space for the following school year.

Financial Agreement

Monthly tuition is due, in advance, on or before the first of each month. Please refer to the current Tuition Schedule for your child's tuition amount. Tuition rates change each year in the fall, or at any time with a minimum 30-day notice. A Final Balance Deposit equal to one month's tuition is due once a start date is confirmed. If the start date is changed, tuition will be charged from the original agreed start date and will not be refunded. If the child does not attend, all monies

already paid will be forfeited in full.

There will be a late charge of **\$25** for any tuition not received by the close of school on the third day of the month. **If the third day of the month falls on a weekend, payment must be received before then.** Any family account delinquent by more than one week will result in the child's immediate withdrawal. Re-enrollment is subject to availability after both the outstanding balance and an Initial Enrollment Fee are paid.

Absentee Policy

Full payment of tuition is required every month, whether or not the child attends school the full month. There is no absentee credit when school is missed because of holidays, vacations, illness, isolation, quarantine, or for any other reason. Scheduled days may not be switched to non-scheduled days, due to the school's staffing ratios and schedules. Days may be added for an additional fee, subject to availability. When a child is absent for one week and the month's tuition has not been paid, the child will automatically be withdrawn from the school. Re-enrollment is subject to availability after the outstanding balance and an Initial Family Registration Fee are paid.

Withdrawal Policy

You must give a minimum one month's written notice if you intend to withdraw your child from school. A Child Withdrawal Notice form is available online and in the office. Tuition will continue to be due for this notice period, and you will be responsible for the full month's tuition for any partial months of attendance. Your Final Balance Deposit will be applied to any outstanding balance once notice of withdrawal is given. Any remaining final balance is due and will be deducted automatically within three days of submitting the withdrawal notice.



Schedule Change Policy

We encourage parents to carefully select their child's schedule at enrollment or re-registration each year. We typically cannot accommodate schedule changes in the kindergarten program. However, in our VPK program, schedule changes (full/half days) may be requested, but are not guaranteed, and subject to availability. If you wish to change your child's schedule, you must give a written notice to the office. Schedule changes may result in a reassessment of your Final Balance Deposit, based on the tuition of the new schedule.

School-Initiated Withdrawal Policy

The school reserves the right to have any child removed from school at any time without previous notice or a corrective program being required. Any tuition or deposit refund is at the sole discretion of the school.

Returned Payment Policy

A **\$40** fee will be charged for any returned check or electronic bank debit payment. Any time there is a returned payment, a money order or cashier's check will be required for a replacement.

School Closures

The school will observe holidays, in-service, and other days during which the school will be closed, as listed on the current school calendar. These days include, but are not limited to:

- **The following Federal Holidays (or the day on which they are observed): New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving.**
- **A Winter Recess at the end of December into the start of January.**
- **Staff Development Days as specified on the school calendar.**
- **A Spring Break and Easter Break in March or April.**

On occasion the school may close earlier than 6:00 PM for special all-school events. Families will be notified of these dates in advance and must pick their child(ren) up by the specified closing time (late pick up fee will be in effect). The school reserves the right to close with or without notice in extreme weather, natural disasters, communicable illness, by government order, or any other circumstances when necessary. Every attempt will be made to notify parents by email as soon as possible when an unexpected closure is required. The school may determine, at its sole discretion and at any time, to close earlier than usual for safety reasons. A parent will be contacted and the parent and/or emergency contact should make every effort to pick up the child as soon as possible. Please see our website and online calendar for the most current closure information. Full tuition is due for your child for all months, including those with closures. There is no tuition credit for any program on days when the school is closed.



V. GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Security

We take security concerns very seriously. We regularly monitor situations that would affect the safety and security of our children and make plans accordingly. We will keep parents up to date when specific situations arise. We have evacuation and emergency response plans in place to best protect our children and staff. We conduct regular fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills.

Our main front entry door is locked to prevent unauthorized access onto the premises. For security reasons we ask that you not hold the door open for other individuals. Visitors must wait to be admitted by a staff member.

Video and audio recording devices are located throughout the school for observation and security. If you have questions about these and other security systems in place, please talk to a member of the Administration.

Parking and Speed Limit

Parents may park in any available space in our lot. Please observe any posted parking restrictions. Please follow these important rules:

- The parking lot has one entrance and one exit. Enter and exit the parking lot in the proper direction.
- Your speed limit through the parking lot should not exceed 5 miles per hour. Drive at a slow speed, allowing you to stop quickly if necessary.
- Refrain from the use of cell phones while driving in the parking lot and while loading and unloading children.
- In the event of any accident, please notify the office immediately. The parking lot is always monitored by video cameras as well as by a security guard.
- Children must always have their hands held in the parking lot and be accompanied

by the adult dropping them off or picking them up from school.

- Children may not be left unattended in the parking lot or in a car.
- Only park in designated parking spaces including within the “drop-off” zones.
- Carefully check behind and around you before backing up.
- Do not block other parking spaces and please be mindful of parking accurately within the lines.

Playground Activities and Safety

Children learn through active use of their senses and many great opportunities for learning occur outdoors. The playground is an educational environment and an extension of the classroom. Outdoor play allows children to learn about their physical capabilities and the world around them. Social skills are also developed by organized and informal play. Children will be reminded to use equipment as it is intended to be used and will never be allowed to engage in hazardous play of any kind. Redirection, distraction, praise, and other techniques of positive discipline will be used when necessary to discourage unsafe play.

Formal Child Assessments

Formal Child Assessments are conducted biannually. These assessments help parents to understand where their child is in his or her development, and what areas can be strengthened. We incorporate both informal and standardized assessments during the year, as well as noting the individuality of each child relative to his or her own progress. Teachers’ observations of a child reflect the child’s growth and needs, both as an individual and as part of a group. These assessments guide us, as educators, in developing our curriculum so that it matches the needs of the children in



each age- group. Parent-Teacher Conferences may be held if we have a concern about your child’s development, or to discuss results of any assessments given. Conferences may be requested at other times by either parents or teachers as the need arises.

Transition to a New Program or Classroom

As we follow a typical school year schedule, children in our Preschool Program normally transition to their next program at the start of the new school year in the fall. In order for children to transition they must meet the minimum age requirements in order to be approved for financial assistance/scholarships (VPK & Step Up). Full tuition payment will be required otherwise.

Parents are encouraged to meet the new teachers prior to the transition and ask any questions they may have regarding the new program. Orientations and Meet and Greets are planned annually prior to the start of the school year to help prepare the children for their transition into the next grade level.

Classroom Placement

The placement of children into classrooms for the following school year is a process that is taken seriously by teachers and administrators. We want all children to be matched with teachers and classmates who will bring out the very best in them. All placements are determined by the Administration and decisions are final. Class rosters are published in August via email.

Restroom Policy

Our VPK and Kindergarten classrooms do not offer diaper-changing and therefore, children in this age group and up may not wear diapers at school. A child must be fully potty-trained to enroll. Children in this program must be able to use the toilet independently and should be able to manage most personal hygiene needs themselves. Teachers will not be allowed to assist with any restroom needs. If we find that after admission into the preschool (or older) program the child has frequent accidents, and is therefore not fully potty-trained, parents will be contacted, and the child will not be able to attend school until they demonstrate an ability to use the toilet independently. Tuition will continue to be due in these circumstances.

Parents need to ensure that we have extra underwear, multiple changes of clothing, and a spare pair of shoes each day in case of the occasional potty accident. We ask that the child be dressed in appropriate clothing. The best items for children to wear are shorts and pants with elastic waistbands. Please avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, as these are difficult for children to remove quickly.

Dress code/Uniform Policy/Children's belongings

Students will need to comply with the following "Dress Code". No deviation will be acceptable. NO excuse will be accepted for any violation of the dress code. It is suggested that parents purchase at least two sets of uniforms. If not in regulation, a call home will be made.

- ✗ No hats, sweatbands, bandanas, or combs are to be worn.
- ✗ Uniforms must be purchased from the official uniform company.
- ✗ No pins, buttons, or clothing, considered by the administration to be of an offensive nature, will be permitted in school or at school related functions.
- ✗ The uniform shirt or blouse must be worn even if a jacket or sweatshirt is worn over it. It must be tucked in.

The child's name should be placed on all clothes either with a permanent marker or label. In addition, an extra set of clothes must be kept in each child's backpack should a change be necessary. When used, the clothing will be placed into a plastic bag to be taken home and washed, and a notice will be sent home to parents.

Uniform

- White or Royal Blue Short Sleeve Polo Shirt with SHCS School Logo.
- White Button Down shirt for Chapel day.
- Royal blue tie (boys) & cross tie (girls) for chapel days.
- Navy Blue or Khaki Pull-Up Skort (knee-length) **(Girls only)**.
- Navy Blue or Khaki Pull-Up Pants.

The school is not responsible for the safekeeping of any personal belongings brought to school, including clothing items. Clothing and any personal possessions should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Naptime

Individual cots are provided for children in our full day VPK program only. It is a licensing requirement that children under the age of 5 attending full-day programs be provided with an opportunity to nap or rest without disturbance from other activities. Nap mats should be provided for every child, by their parents for naptime (See supply list for nap mat requirements). It is the parent's responsibility to bring nap items in at the beginning of the child's week and take them home to be laundered at the week's end. Nap time is from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM. Please make sure all items sent from home are labeled with the child's name.



Meals and Snacks

Lunch may be brought from home, pre-purchased through the school office, or purchased in the cafeteria during lunch hours. **Students may only purchase alternative meals and not from the main-meal option if lunch has not been pre-purchased.** Make sure to submit the lunch registration forms **BEFORE** the date they are due, otherwise student's only option for lunch that month will be from the alternative menu. If a student has not previously paid for lunch and they did not bring food, their teacher will contact the main office and the parent as soon as possible to inform them that student will be given an alternative meal and that it will be charged to their account. The child's lunch should be in a lunch box clearly identified with the child's name on the outside as well as on any containers inside. Food and drinks should be in containers that will keep them cold or hot as needed. For safety reasons, teachers and staff are not allowed to reheat a child's meal. Extra snacks should be brought from home, especially if students are enrolled in full day & after care.

If parents would like to donate snacks/drinks to the students class, please communicate with the teacher as to what you would like to bring. Please remember we are a Nut-free school. Lunch time will be from 11:00 AM-11:30 AM.



Photography

In our classrooms, photos are an essential communication tool for teachers, parents, and staff throughout the school year. We regularly hear from parents about how much they appreciate receiving these photos from the teachers. Photos help prompt parents with talking points about their children's day, which is important because many students (especially the very young) do not always articulate what they did at school or what they are learning. So, to help parents understand the types of things their children are doing and learning, we share classroom photos with the classroom communication app, in emails, or on our Instagram/website. In order to take these photos, we need a photo waiver signed, which is why we include it on the **Admission Agreement: "I hereby grant, without limitation, permission for the use of any photographs of my child in any printed or online material for the school"**. Because photos are an essential communications tool between teachers and parents, we do not offer a general option to opt out of the photo waiver.

Consistency in this policy ensures that each child may fully participate in all our educational and social activities. In the classroom, as photos are taken of children, an "opted out" child would be required to stop what he or she is doing and be removed from the area so that they would not be in any of those photos. Additionally, photos are often taken during group activities. Most parents appreciate having pictures of their children with their friends doing fun things in school and on field trips, and it gives parents a chance to see what their child experienced that day. Again, if a child were "opted out," such photos would be impossible to take during group activities without removing that child from the group and/or the activity, which is disruptive to the group and unfair to that "opted out" child. For privacy, parents may not take photographs or videos of children other than their own at school, except when participating in large group activities together or during all-school events.



Anti-Bias/Multicultural Policy

Our programs teach children to challenge discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes while increasing respect and understanding for others. We incorporate a culturally diverse/anti-bias philosophy in our curriculum and classroom materials. Our diverse families are one of our best resources. Additionally, we encourage our children to participate in culturally relevant activities. We train staff to be culturally sensitive when interacting with children and families within our program.

Outside Engagement of Sunset Heights Christian School Staff

SHCS Preschool discourages, does not support, and does not sanction the practice of families engaging the services of any of our employees for babysitting, or any other paid or unpaid services. If a teacher or staff member is engaged by a family, we do not, in any way, warrant or guarantee the suitability of the person for this purpose. SHCS Preschool shall not be responsible, in any way, for such arrangement nor shall we be responsible, in any way, for any disputes of any kind and nature, which may arise between you – including any claims, injury, or damage to the family, the minor child/children, the employee or either's property. Teachers should not be babysitting children that are currently enrolled in their classroom. While engaged by the family, the employee shall be considered an employee of the family and not an employee of SHCS Preschool. Any conduct that occurs during such time, including but not limited to any transportation to and from school, are outside responsibilities and duties as an employee of the family.



Sunset Heights Christian School

STATEMENT OF COOPERATION

The rules and guidelines, as set forth in the Parent Handbook, are taken seriously by the administration and staff. It is expected that the parents and the students cooperate with the policies as long as the student is enrolled at Sunset Heights Christian School. A signature is required of the parent and student for continued enrollment.

In making an application for my child, I give permission for my child to participate in all school activities, that every reasonable care will be extended to my child during school hours, activities, and events. I agree to hold the school harmless for any liability in the even if my child is accidentally injured during school hours and events. If I do seek legal recourse against Sunset Heights Christian School and the school is found to be NOT at fault, I agree to pay any attorneys fees, or other costs that SHCS or its agent should incur to defend itself against such action.

I, the undersigned acknowledge that I have read and agree to cooperate with the policies stated in the Parent Handbook.

The student and parent must sign below:

Print Student Name/Grade

Parent Signature

Date