



Parent Handbook
2023-2024

Clermont Campus
1501 Steve's Road
Clermont, FL 34711
School Number: (352) 394-5575

Lower School Principal & Preschool Director: Amy Lowry

Real Beginnings. Real Faith. Real Life.

Welcome!

On behalf of **Justin Miller**-Lead Pastor of Real Life Christian Church, **Dr. Dawn Engle**, Head of School, and **Amy Lowry**-Lower School Principal & Preschool Program Director, our teachers and staff, we welcome you to Real Life Christian Academy Preschool, the Clermont Campus. We are excited to have you as part of our school family!

As a school family, we must team together to create a positive and quality educational environment. We take the responsibility of early education earnestly and the policies in this handbook provide the functional framework for our preschool. We hope you find us to be a safe, quality, and positive educational environment for you and your family.

Real Life Christian Church

The Academy-Preschool is a ministry of Real Life Christian Church, one of the fastest growing churches in America. Real Life is a church for real people.

If you are new to Clermont or if you are looking for a church home, please visit our website <https://real.life/>. You are invited to attend one of the weekend worship services:

Sunday morning at 9:30am or 11:15am.

The Real Life Christian Academy Preschool in Clermont is a ministry of Real Life Christian Church. The church and preschool shall have a racially non-discriminatory policy and, therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color or national or ethnic origin.

General Information About Our School

School History

In 2006, the Christian school at our main campus in Clermont became Real Life Christian Academy. The academy has been providing students in preschool through twelfth grade with an outstanding education in a wholesome environment that encourages and empowers students to discover their God-given potential, passionately pursue their dreams, and positively change the world.

Real Life Church is one church with multiple locations, and now we are one school with multiple locations.

Our Beliefs

At Real Life Christian Academy Preschool, our focus is on teaching the Bible to our students, not forcing theology on them. At the same time, it is important for parents to understand that we are a Christian school and a ministry of Real Life Christian Church – those distinctions guide all that we do.

Our teachers and administrators are evangelical Christians and each have signed our statement of faith. Each student in the preschool will be taught the Bible, and its teachings are integrated into the curriculum. We acknowledge the Bible as our authority; the following statements should help you

understand the nonnegotiable biblical ideas that fundamentally define who we are.

We Believe

- ❖ There is one sovereign God eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is the creator of all things. (1 Chronicles 29:1-12, Psalm 135:6, Acts 2:32-33, Mark 12:29-30)
- ❖ That Jesus Christ, God's only Son was born of a virgin, lived a perfect life, died as a substitute for us, and rose from the grave. (Colossians 2:9, Luke 1:30-35, 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- ❖ In the Holy Spirit who convicts the world in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment, and indwells every believer and equips them for personal growth and service to Jesus Christ. (John 16:8, Acts 2:38, Ephesians 1:13-14)
- ❖ The Bible is the inspired Word of God and the final authority for all matters of faith and practice. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- ❖ Man, created by God in His image, willfully sinned and as a result, is lost and without hope apart from Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1:27, Romans 3:23, 6:23, Acts 4:12)
- ❖ That salvation—the forgiveness of sins—is available only by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus Christ. This free gift of salvation is offered to all who receive Christ as Lord and Savior through faith. (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, Colossians 2:6, Acts 2:38)
- ❖ Those accepting Christ should repent of sin, confess their faith, and be baptized into Him. (Romans 10:9, Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, Acts 8:36-38, Galatians 3:26-27).
- ❖ That death seals the eternal destiny of each person. When Christ returns, he will pronounce the eternal fate of each individual—the saved to eternal life in heaven, the unsaved to eternal separation from God in hell. (Acts 1:10 -11, John 5:28-29, Daniel 12:2, 2 Corinthians 4:14)

Real Life Core Values

At Real Life we strive to be...

- **People-Centered** | We put others first. How we represent Christ's love to each other and our surrounding communities matters more than any personal preference, program, or institution. We reach beyond the four walls of our church and never give up on those who are far from Jesus.
 - **Life-Giving** | We breathe life and encourage hope with intentional joy and positivity. We are inviting, extend grace, believe the best of each other, and make it our goal to lighten burdens and leave people in a better place than we find them.
 - **Open-handed** | We grow living open-handed and open-hearted with the gifts we've been given. From a place of overflow, we show up generously with our time, talents, resources, words and money.
 - **Faith-filled** | We believe God does big things in and through us and trust His leading in our lives. Uncomfortable with empty religion, we spur each other on, overcome obstacles, and find real faith in our everyday life, struggles, and opportunities.

Accreditation and Affiliation

Real Life Christian Academy Preschool is accredited by Christian Schools of Florida.

Our Purpose and Philosophy

Proverbs 22:6- "Train up a child in the way they should go, and when they are old, they will not depart from it."

Mission

Real Life Christian Academy Preschool is a great ministry of Real Life Christian Church and an integral part of its community. As a program providing preschool to children ages three and four years old, we strive to meet the needs of our community for early education and support. Children at RLCA Preschool will begin with a feeling of safety, security, and love along with meaningful experiences to interact and learn. They will learn that God is crazy about them and their families. We aim to equip children and their families with a strong foundation so they may discover their interests, talents and find real faith.

Vision

As a vital ministry of Real Life Christian Church, Real Life Christian Academy Preschool exists to change the lives of children and their parents.

Philosophy of Education

Our philosophy of education is built upon four cornerstone values:

1. High-Quality Academics: We believe every child should have the opportunity to succeed in life by excelling scholastically. Providing an effective early educational experience is imperative.
2. Genuine Compassion: We believe every child matters. Love and respect must govern the actions and attitudes of each person at our school.
3. Structured & Responsive Environment: We believe that children learn best in a structured environment that provides routines, clear expectations, and a safe place while also allowing for flexibility and teachable moments. All students are unique learners and our teachers and staff will work to help each student meet with success.
4. Christian Perspective: We believe that all "truth" must be measured against the truth of the Bible, which is the most important guide for life.

These principles determine our total approach to education, the people we hire, and our classroom environment.

**The elders of the church approve all school policies and they are the final authority.*

Programs of Study

At Real Life Christian Academy Preschool, we provide a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, allowing children to learn through exploration as well as carefully planned learning activities. Our instruction teaches students a Christian worldview, while meeting all instructional requirements for our early childhood education programs. Our program fosters student growth in physical development, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and communication, and cognitive development.

Our Administration and Teachers

At RLCA Preschool we have dedicated teachers and staff that are highly qualified, hardworking, and caring. Good communication is foundational, the cornerstone for a solid relationship. We are here for you with fidelity. We are grateful for the opportunity to know you and your children. We love what we do and thank Jesus for the opportunity to teach, love and connect every day!

Communication and Sharing

Phone and Email

- Clermont Campus phone number (352) 394-5575
- Amy Lowry/ Lower School Principal & Preschool Director- alowry@getreallife.com
- Teachers email: first name.lastname@real.life

Connecting with Administration

Your administrator is Amy Lowry. Remember we are a school, we prioritize the health and safety of all who are on campus. We strive to answer promptly and/or return messages in a timely manner. Please, direct all programmatic questions to administrators.

Parent-Teacher Connection

Please, message your teacher within school hours. Teachers will share information such as classroom activities, notice of an incident/accident, classroom newsletter, reminders and anything helpful to your child's learning journey. Teachers also share their classroom newsletter via email, and it is also posted in the classroom.

Photo and Video

The use of photo and video are an integral part of what we do. Parents/guardians give Real Life Christian Academy Preschool permission to take and use their child's photograph and/or video image while he/she is in the care of RLCA Preschool personnel. Pictures and videos are used in our classrooms for assessments, documentation and sharing with families, visual schedules, class projects, learning activities, and special fun days; shared on RLCA's Facebook page and/or social media.

Parent Code of Conduct

Parents are an integral part of Real Life Christian Academy Preschool. This partnership depends as much on parent cooperation and support as it does faculty excellence. In order to communicate expectations to each preschool parent and their families, we adopt the following Parent Code of Conduct.

Each parent enrolling their child in RLCA Preschool agrees to the following commitments:

- 1.** I will treat my child's teachers and administrators with respect as dedicated professionals, called by God to this school and ministry. I will work hard to demonstrate support, cooperation, appropriate conduct and appreciation for them in written and oral communication.
- 2.** I will make sure my child arrives on time each day, prepared to learn with the required items for school.
- 3.** I will provide and keep RLCA Preschool up to date with my current email, address and phone numbers. I will promptly respond to all communication from preschool personnel.
- 4.** I will promptly share any and all pertinent information regarding my child's health and safety.
- 5.** I will maintain perspective and retain control of my emotions even when I may feel anger or disagree with a teacher or an administrator. I will never take a threatening tone of voice or posture with school staff/administration or do anything that feels intimidating to a preschool student, parent, staff/administration.
- 6.** I will correspond with my child's teacher if I have a concern, and follow-up with the preschool administrator(s) to ensure my concern is acknowledged and addressed.
- 7.** I will not approach or engage other preschool parents, families, or students about daily classroom routines, incidents/accidents or concerns involving the children's behavior or actions.
- 8.** I will keep all students safe by following the campus safety and security protocols while on the campus. Honoring the background check policy, signing in/out each day, keeping locked doors shut, and complying with all school property safety and driving regulations.
- 9.** I will dress modestly and respectfully as appropriate for a Christian school environment, refraining from inappropriate attire that exposes body parts or depicts vulgar, crude or scary images. Shoes are required.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

RLCA Preschool is a non-smoking facility. Smoking is prohibited on our campus and outdoor areas.

School Safety and Security

Campus Security

- **School safety is the responsibility of all Real Life personnel and families.**
- Please, **DO NOT** open the door, unlock a door, or hold the door open for anyone you do not know.
- Please, **DO NOT** give anyone access to our building.
- All visitors should report directly to the front (main) Academy office.
- Please, **DO NOT** assume anyone is Real Life personnel. All Real Life personnel have the appropriate access to the building.
- All PreK parents who are dropping off/picking up students within normal drop-off/pick-up times, must wear their PreK Parent Pass badge.
- Parents coming to campus within school hours (8:00am-3:00pm) should report to the front office.

Parking Lot Safety

- Please, hold your child's hand/keep them within arm's reach, walking in the parking lot
- Practice safety when entering and exiting the car
- Drive slowly and be aware on campus

Entry to the school

Parents are provided with, and are responsible for, **two** PreK Parent Pass badges at the beginning of the school year. Parents may request if they need extra. Parents are required to wear the badge in order to enter the building for morning drop-off/afternoon pick-up. Parents attempting to enter the PreK entrance without a badge will be directed to the front office, and must show I.D. in order to receive a visitors pass to walk the student to class.

We teach that only an adult opens and closes doors at school, please practice this safety measure with your child. All parents and families are to enter and exit only through the PreK double doors during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up.

Please, be prepared by wearing your PreK Parent Pass badge.

Report lost, stolen or damaged cards immediately.

- Badge access is only for morning drop-off (7:45am-8:00am) and afternoon pick-up (12:00-12:15 and 3:00-3:15).
- Children of any age are not permitted to **use** or play with the door.
- **We teach that only an adult opens and closes doors at school, please practice this safety measure with your child.**

- Parents coming to campus outside of morning drop-off/afternoon pick-up times are to report directly to the front (main) Academy office.

Child Safety

- If you have a person on your Emergency Contact List who is picking up your child, but does not or will not normally pick up, that person will use the doorbell and must show ID prior to entering and/or picking up your child.
- Lockdown - If we are conducting a practice drill or having a lockdown, no one will be permitted to enter the building.
- While on the Real Life campus (outside or inside the building) your child must stay with you. Children must be within arms reach of their parent/authorized pick-up at all times. Children may not be left alone at any time, for any reason during school hours, regardless of enrollment. This includes car safety.
- ***Failure to cooperate with our campus school safety and security may result in suspension or dismissal from our program.***

Emergency Plans and Procedures

In all emergency situations, the safety and security of all children and personnel is the first priority. Emergency dispatch is our first call and once cleared, parents will be notified.

Children will practice monthly and be familiar with all drills, routes and routines for emergency preparedness.

Fire: Teachers and staff members will escort children out of the building through the safest and quickest exit and meet in the designated safe area. Teachers will take attendance and all children will be accounted for.

Lockdown/Emergency Drills: In the case of a threatening stranger or event located on or in close proximity to our campus, a lockdown will commence. All children, teachers, and staff will be brought inside our facility and follow lockdown procedures. Teachers will take attendance and all children will be accounted for. ***No one will be permitted to enter or exit the building during a Lockdown.***

Weather Concerns

We will monitor weather that could possibly impact our area in order to be proactive. In the event of lightning and thunder, all children will be brought inside. Teachers will take attendance and all children will be accounted for.

Tornado and Hurricane

If a tornado or hurricane happens during school hours, all children, teachers, and staff will shelter in place in the preschool hallway which is located along the inner walls of our building. They will be instructed to sit on the floor near the interior wall, with their heads tucked into their knees.

- Calming songs and soothing conversations will be used to keep children as calm as possible.
- Teachers and staff will be strategically positioned to ensure all students are supervised and kept safe.
- Teachers will take attendance and all children will be accounted for.

In most instances, our school will follow the Lake County Public School system with regard to closures due to inclement weather conditions, and/or statewide directives. If we experience an emergency closing, we will notify you and reopen as soon as it is safe to do so.

There are no tuition credits for emergency closings.

School Information, Hours, Attendance and Programs

Our school office is open Monday- Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Half-day students:

Monday-Friday 8:00am-12:00pm

Full-day students:

Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 8:00am-3:00pm

Wednesday 8:00am-1:30pm

- Arriving--Arrival time begins at 7:45am and school begins at 8:00am. Children arriving prior to 7:45am will be checked into the morning care program for an additional cost.
- Dismissal--Dismissal time begins at 12:00pm for students in the half-day program, and 3:00pm for students in the full-day program. Students not picked up by 12:15pm or 3:15pm, will be sent to Extended Care for an additional charge to the parent's FACTS account. *Please note that early release is at 1:30 on Wednesdays for full day students.

School Calendar/Closures

- Please reference the master calendar for the school year regarding annual closure dates and holidays.

Absence/Tardy

Regular, timely student attendance is an essential component to a successful preschool experience. We work to provide unique and meaningful experiences for our students each day. Excessive absences and tardiness can negatively impact a student's education.

Our school day starts promptly at 8am. Children must be in class ready to start their day at this time.

- A pattern of late arrival, arriving after 8am will be addressed.
- Parents are **required** to contact the school registrar via email (registrar.attendance@real.life) when their child will be absent due to illness/contagious disease.
- Parents may also communicate a student's absence to their child's teacher, however, it is not required.

We offer 2 programs:

Preschool-3 year olds, and Preschool-4 year olds

1. The Preschool Program - (ages 3 and 4 years old)- All year program (follows the Academy's school year calendar)

Re-enrollment is established every January as we plan for the fall.

We provide a complete pre-school program for children three and four years old. In this course of study our goal is the whole child approach for meeting each child's developmental, physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

- Children to arrive by 8:00am to begin the morning routines and core instruction.
- **Children may not be checked- out/picked up during nap time. Nap time is 12:30-1:30pm daily.**

Enrollment, Financial Policies, and Withdrawal

Admission to Real Life Christian Academy Preschool in Clermont has a racially non-discriminatory policy and, therefore, shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color or national or ethnic origin.

Enrolling Students

Once admission has been offered, to enroll a student, submit the following:

1. The \$450 non-refundable annual registration fee and the completed online enrollment with supporting documentation.

2. Supporting documentation required by law is: a copy of your child's birth certificate, Immunization Record/Religious Exemption, and School Entry Health Exam on the required Florida Department of Health form.

Registration Fee

A yearly non-refundable registration fee of \$300 per child is due annually in February.

Maintaining Enrollment, Closed Classes, & Waiting Lists

- Please note that all fees and tuition payments must be paid current to maintain enrollment.
- When all seats are full the class is considered "closed".
- If a class is closed, parents may request placement of their child on a waiting list by contacting the Director of Admissions at the Real Life Christian Academy Clermont campus.

Financial Policies

RLCA strives to provide the highest quality education while maintaining affordable fees. We depend on the timely payment of tuition and registration fees to cover our obligations. Enrolling your child requires a financial commitment much like any other major purchase. Because of this, we will strictly enforce our financial policies, especially in regard to past due accounts. When you sign the payment contract you agree that as a parent you are responsible for all tuition, fees and related costs, regardless of any funding you might receive from a third party – our contract is with you.

FACTS Payment Plan

FACTS is a tuition management service used by more than 3,000 schools and two million families. Through this system, we help families meet their financial obligations in a simple, convenient payment plan that is completely confidential and secure.

Tuition Payment Options

Two payment options are available to best suit your financial needs:

- Option 1: Pay in Full by June 1 for a 2% tuition discount.
- Option 2: Multiple Payments (Semi-annual, quarterly, or monthly payments) o The first tuition payment is due on the 5th or 20th of each month (depending on the date you choose) and subsequent monthly drafts will be the same day of the month.

Financial Policies

1. A \$55 annual FACTS enrollment fee, \$75 annual textbook/curriculum fee, and \$50 annual technology fee applies to all families. Each family is required to have an active FACTS account.
2. Each family is contracting for a year of services for the student at Real Life Christian Academy and other students might be turned away to hold a place for the contracted child.
3. Each family must pay all fees and tuition according to the payment schedule. Families may adjust the payment date within two weeks of the original due date twice per school year. Failing to meet

these payment deadlines might result in the enrolled child being dropped from enrollment. It is the family's responsibility to know these deadlines.

4. If a student is withdrawn for failing to meet payment deadlines, the family is responsible to pay all delinquent charges prior to re-enrolling. This includes repaying the registration fee. Re-enrollment is also contingent on available classroom space.

5. All families – pay in full and payment plan – must enroll in FACTS for the purpose of student accounting and sign up for "Auto Payment." In this way, unpaid incidental charges will be drafted through the FACTS system. Tuition may be paid by credit card, checking or savings account. Families are responsible for fees associated with the use of credit cards.

6. Parents may not inactivate or suspend the payment plan directly with FACTS or cancel automatic withdrawals with the bank. In such a case, all charges for the school year become immediately due and payable.

7. All application fees, registration fees, enrollment fees, and tuition deposits are non-refundable and non transferable.

8. All students will pay a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$600. This is not an additional charge and is credited toward the total tuition due for the year. This is due by June 1 annually.

9. Incidental charges (e.g., emergency extended care, etc.) will be automatically drafted through the FACTS payment system.

Past Due Accounts

If an account is delinquent (more than 30 days past due) your child may not be permitted to attend class. If your account is more than 60 days past due the student may be administratively withdrawn for the school year, and the family will owe tuition according to the financial responsibility schedule. It is the parent's responsibility to initiate resolution of past-due accounts. All account balances from the previous year must be paid in full by June 30th or the student may forfeit enrollment and all fees for the subsequent year, with the academy applying these funds to outstanding balances. Any unpaid balances may prohibit future enrollment and the release of report cards, transcripts and student records. Real Life Christian Academy will not release grade cards or records until all tuition, fees and charges have been paid in full. On occasion, special financial agreements may be made between the academy and the family. These are done on a case by case basis and are considered to be a final attempt at grace for a family in delinquency.

For the FACTS payment plan, if an unsuccessful draft attempt is made on an account, a second attempt will be made on the next FACTS draft date (the 5th if your due date is the 20th or the 20th if your due date is the 5th day of the month) and a late fee assessed. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, a third attempt will be made a month from the original due date. Once three unsuccessful attempts have been made the FACTS account will be put on hold and the account is considered delinquent.

For incidental charges, delinquency charges result immediately upon an unsuccessful FACTS draft attempt.

Once a student has left the academy, the school may pursue all legal means to collect any outstanding balances due to the academy.

DISCOUNTS

Several discounts may be available to qualifying students:

Full Payment Discount: Accounts paid in full by June 1 for the following school year or at initial enrollment for new students will receive a 2% discount on their tuition and extended care for that following year. Students must be a returning student, or if a new student, have completed the application process and been accepted.

Real Life Christian Church Active Member Discount: To provide an incentive to enroll their children in Real Life Christian Academy and help them provide a Christian education for their children we offer a discount on tuition for active members of Real Life Christian Church. Active membership is determined by the Elders of the church to mean:

- Immersed believer in Jesus Christ
- Agreed to the Membership Covenant
- Membership at RLCC for at least six months
- Attendance at least three out of four weekend services per month
- Tithing (giving 10%) of gross income to the church
- Involvement in a Life Group or active in a ministry of the church

The Elders of Real Life Christian Church will be the final arbiters in deciding a family's eligibility. This eligibility may change during a school year, based on a change in the above-mentioned criteria. Families must apply for this discount each year at enrollment time and provide a copy of the W-2s or copy of the previous year's tax return.

Billing and Payment Processing

Tuition is billed only through the parent's FACTS account via electronic automated payments through credit card or bank draft on the 5th or 20th of each month.

- By signing the online perpetual enrollment contract, you agree to the financial policies discussed within and outlined on the Financial Agreement completed at the time of online enrollment.
- All fees and tuition must be paid according to the payment schedule.
- Failing to meet these payment deadlines might result in the enrolled child not being able to attend class.

- If a child is withdrawn for failing to meet payment deadlines, the family is responsible to pay all delinquent charges before being re-enrolled. This re-enrollment is contingent on class availability.

Late Payment or Non-Sufficient Funds Policy

A late charge of \$35.00 will accrue for late or returned payment.

Late Pick-Up & Fees

If your child is picked up later than his/her scheduled program time, they will be taken to Extended Care which will incur an additional fee. The fee will be charged through the parent's FACTS account.

Withdrawal

Please be advised that parents enrolling at the Real Life Christian Academy Preschool-Clermont Campus, are required to sign a Perpetual Enrollment Agreement through the online enrollment process. All students will remain enrolled unless the parent fills out the proper withdrawal paperwork through the Director of Admissions. Termination procedures of the enrollment contract are:

Termination Procedures: Parent may terminate this Contract by submitting a WRITTEN Termination Notice to the Director of Admissions by the dates indicated below (the Termination Date). The Termination Notice must (a) be dated, (b) state the Student's name, (c) provide a reason for the termination of the Contract; and (d) be RECEIVED by the Director of Admissions on or before the Termination Date. If such Termination Notice is timely received, Parent will be liable for only a portion of the full year's tuition for the academic year. Even if this Contract is terminated pursuant to the terms of this Paragraph, Parent understands Parent will still be responsible for payment of (and/or will not receive a refund of) the Registration Fee and the Tuition Deposit. The annual Termination Dates are:

- A. If the Termination Notice in form stated above is RECEIVED prior to June 1, then Parent will be relieved of all tuition and fees paid and other payments and fees that would have come due on or after June 1.
- B. If the Termination Notice in form stated above is RECEIVED on or after June 1, but by July 31, the Parent will be responsible for 40% of the total tuition obligation for the academic year to begin in August of that same calendar year. Any balance due on Parent's account must be paid within thirty (30) days of the Termination Notice. Failure to do so will result in the entire tuition amount due under this Contract remaining due and payable.
- C. If the Termination Notice in form stated above is RECEIVED on or after August 1, but before October 31, the Parent will be responsible for 60% of the total tuition obligation for the academic year that began in August. Any balance due on Parent's account must be paid within thirty (30) days of the Termination Notice. Failure to do so will result in the entire tuition amount due under this Contract remaining due and payable.
- D. No termination option is available after October 31. After October 31 Parent remains responsible for the entire financial obligation due under this Contract for the academic year that began in August.

Arrival, Dismissal and Child Safety

At RLCA Preschool, parents/guardians park and walk children into the school for proper check in and check out procedures. Children must be checked in and checked out of our facility each day with arrival and dismissal times recorded accurately.

- **Siblings** (younger or older) are not permitted to enter the classroom and should not enter play areas in an effort to minimize outside germs.
- **Food-** Walking around with food is not permitted in our front entry, foyer and/or hallways.
- **Cell phone** use is not permitted while in the process of picking up or dropping off your child. Please, complete your call prior to proceeding to your child's classroom.

Morning Drop-off Routine

Only Teachers and Staff will be permitted to enter the classrooms. Parents/family members remain outside of the classroom.

Afternoon Pickup Routines

Only Teachers and Staff will be permitted to enter the classrooms. Parents/family members remain outside of the classroom.

Parents are asked to inform their child's teacher if an Emergency Contact/Authorized Adult will be picking up their child. Children will only be released to verified adults on the child's Emergency form or RenWeb pick-up list. Calling or emailing to authorize a pick is not permitted. This must be done by the parent through your RenWeb portal.

1. If the adult on the child's emergency form/RenWeb pick up list has the PreK Parent Pass badge, they may proceed through the PreK doors during regular drop-off/pick-up hours.
2. If the adult on the child's emergency form/RenWeb pick up list does not have the PreK Parent Pass badge, they will proceed directly to the Academy office. They will be required to show their I.D. and the office staff will check the child's pick-up list to verify.
3. Parent/family member will walk to the classroom, knock on the door, step back and wait for the teacher to prepare your child for dismissal.
4. Once ready, the teacher will open the door and release your child to you.

Please do not use the time during drop-off or pick-up to engage in lengthy conversations with your child's teacher. These times are reserved for class preparation, care of the students, and to facilitate the health and safety of all children within our care. You are more than welcome to email your child's teacher to schedule a conference, if needed.

Child Safety

Children will only be released to an adult 18yrs. or older, who is documented on the child's Emergency Form/RenWeb pick-up list and presents a valid identification for verification.

Calling or emailing to authorize a pick is not permitted. This must be done by the parent through your RenWeb portal.

Emergency Forms

Having a good support system is very important. Please, plan for the unknown.

- Please, make sure to update your contact information in a timely manner- **no less than 72 hours in advance**, if there is a change to an authorized pickup/emergency contact.
- Children will only be released to an adult 18yrs. or older with valid identification that matches the legal name (first and last name) you placed on the Emergency Form/RenWeb pick-up list.

Legal Documentation

- Family dynamics are unique to each household. The appropriate legal /court documentation with court seal is required as applicable (if the other parent is not listed on the RLCA application but listed on the child's birth certificate).
- As a provider, we may not keep a child from their legal parent/guardian once validated (as seen on their birth certificate) without the appropriate court order/documentation.
- Our stance is to remain neutral, therefore, the school will not get involved with dynamics among parents or family members.

Getting Started at School

Meet the Teacher and Parent Night

These meetings are hosted annually, before the start of the new school year. This is an opportunity to connect and collaborate with your child's teacher in preparation for your child to start. **Parent attendance is highly encouraged.** You will gain important information about our program and/or program changes, meet with teachers and administration, have your questions answered and ensure you are prepared for the first day and beyond.

Parent/Teacher Communication

- Please communicate with your child's teacher via email during school hours
- Teachers will share/communicate/respond via email and through the child's communication folder
- Non-emergency responses will be during non-instructional/learning time, during school hours
- Morning and afternoon drop off is not the time for lengthy ongoing interactions

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are held once per year (October). These meetings are designed to collaborate and share information regarding your child's ongoing progress. They are based on classroom observations, assessments, or when there is a concern from parent and/or teacher regarding a child's health, development and/or progress in the program. Additional conferences may be requested by parent, teacher and/or administration.

Learning at School

BJU (Bob Jones University) Curriculum-Every subject is approached from a Christian perspective, and you'll find Scripture and biblical principles used to emphasize or illustrate concepts.

Chapel Time- Chapel is held weekly as a group, and daily in the auditorium. As a group, this is a special time of worship for our young learners as we gather together in the auditorium to sing, dance, hear a bible story and praise Jesus!

Meals, Snacks and Water

We have prayer before each snack and meal. Students provide their own morning and afternoon snack.

Parents have the option of ordering a hot lunch for their child via the school app. If parents are providing the child's lunch, parents must provide a well-balanced healthy lunch.

- Please, place lunch in a secure insulated (regular size) lunch box that fits in their space. **Lunch must be nutritious and ready to eat. Food must not be expired.**
- RLCA does not warm up food for lunch. A thermos is recommended for hot foods.
- Please put an ice pack for food that needs to remain cold.
- Candy, soda, juice, and sugary foods are not permitted.
- Please, make sure your child has **"water only"** in their water cup; **no other drinks at school.**
- **Be sure to wash and air dry all parts of their water cup daily to prevent mold.**

Birthdays

Birthdays are special and we look forward to celebrating with your child. All arrangements/planning should be made at least 1 week in advance and confirmed with your child's teacher. If you choose to provide a special treat to celebrate, please send in the prepackaged food (Nut-free); it must have a clear nutrition label identifying all ingredients. Sugary treats are not the only option, fresh fruit is also a healthy option. We only distribute birthday invitations if all children in the class are invited.

School Supplies- ready for each day!

Children must have the required items listed on our website:

<https://rlcacademy.com/parent-information/>

**Naptime items must be taken home every Friday to be cleaned and returned their next program day. Items may not stay at school over the weekend.

We do not share **nap items or **clothing**. **Children must have naptime items.**

Dress code

Children must be dressed according to the school's dress code.

Lower School Boys

Slacks/shorts – Lower School boys will wear uniform style black slacks or shorts. Shorts will not be shorter than three inches above the knee. The belt line must be at or above the hips.

Shirts – Boys will wear the RLCA school approved logo uniform shirt purchased through the school vendors. Any shirt worn under the uniform shirts must be solid white or solid black.

Jackets – For extra warmth in the classroom, students may wear RLCA school-logo jackets and hoodies available for purchase through the school vendors. Hoods may not be worn inside the school. Only school-logo jackets are allowed to be worn inside the building.

Shoes – Students will wear athletic shoes and socks or laced boat shoes. Students may not wear sandals, flip-flops, slides, boots, shoes with wheels, shoes with high heels, or Crocs.

Hair – Hair is to be kept clean and well-groomed. Hair color must be tasteful, modest, and not disruptive to the educational process. Hats are not allowed except on special days. Any other head wear that disrupts the educational process is not permitted.

Jewelry/adornment – Jewelry should be kept simple.

Lower School Girls

Slacks/shorts/skirts – Lower School girls will wear uniform style black slacks, skirts, jumpers or shorts, uniform style. Shorts and skirts may be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Skorts and uniform capris are allowed. On chilly days, solid black tights and leggings may be worn under skirts/shorts.

Shirts – Girls will wear RLCA school-logo uniform shirts purchased through the school vendors. Any shirt worn under the uniform shirts must be solid white or solid black.

Jackets – For extra warmth in the classroom, students may wear RLCA logo jackets and hoodies also available through the school vendor. Hoods may not be worn in school. Only school-logo jackets are allowed to be worn inside the building.

Shoes – Students will wear athletic shoes and socks or laced boat shoes. Students may not wear sandals, flip-flops, slides, costume style/dress-up shoes, boots, shoes with wheels, shoes with high heels, or Crocs.

Hair – Hair is to be kept clean and well-groomed. Hair color must be tasteful, modest, and not disruptive to the educational process. Hats are not allowed except on special days. Any other head wear that disrupts the educational process is not permitted.

Jewelry/adornment - Jewelry should be kept simple. For safety reasons, no large hoop or dangle-style earrings should be worn. (Expensive jewelry should not be brought to school.)

Special Days and Activities

Throughout the school year and the summer, we have special activities that may include water.

Securely fitting closed toe/close back shoes are required for all water day activities (clog type water shoes/crocs are not permitted).

All students must be modestly dressed. No swimsuits are permitted unless covered by clothing.

LS Dress Code Violation Procedure

First Violation: Verbal dress code reminder given by the teacher

Second Violation: Parent Email/Phone Call by the teacher

Third Violation: Teacher will complete Office Discipline Referral (ODR)

Items from Home

Real Life Christian Academy Preschool does not allow the following items from home:

1. **Toys:** RLCA Preschool is fully equipped with toys and educational learning materials to be used in our various learning environments.
 - School appropriate toys from home will only be permitted on special “Show & Tell” days or if requested by a teacher as part of a learning experience. Toy weapons of any kind are not allowed.
 - We understand that sometimes, especially with our younger learners, that a special “lovie” or stuffed animal from home can help ease the transition from home to school; however, these are not permitted in our efforts to keep outside germs at bay.
 - Please understand that RLCA is not responsible for any items lost or broken.
2. **Jewelry:** We are not responsible; please, keep **all** jewelry at home.
3. **Money:** Not permitted in children's possession at school.
4. **Medications:** Not permitted in children's possession at school. This includes lip balm, cough drops, etc.
5. **Pacifiers/Bottles:** Not appropriate comfort items for our children age 2 to 5.
6. **Wet Wipes:** These are not used at school for self-toileting support.

7. **Headbands:** All headbands should be appropriate for the child, and not present a safety concern with sharp edges that may poke eyes or ears.

Potty Independent

Children must be past potty training and **potty independent** to enter into our PreK-3 and PreK-4 classrooms.

Potty Independent means:

- Children recognize the need to use the bathroom, go to the bathroom or ask to go to the bathroom without constant prompting/reminders
- They are able to pull up/down their pants/underwear/clothing, sit/stand and use the toilet
- They are able to wipe appropriately and flush
- They are able to wash their hands appropriately
- They are able to wear underwear (no pull-ups/diapers)

Medication Policy

All medical concerns and/or medications must be addressed with the school nurse. No medications will be administered without the proper consent forms. Medication consent forms can be found with the school nurse. Medications and/or consent forms do not go to the teacher via the parent. A medication log will document all medication administered to children.

Please submit the completed medication consent form to the school nurse 24 hours in advance for review and approval.

Whenever possible, it is best that medication be given at home. The parent/guardian is encouraged to discuss this possibility with the child's health care provider.

The first dose of any medication should always be given at home and with sufficient time before the child returns to school in order to observe the child's response to the medication given. Parents must document the last time medication was given at home, if medication doses continue at school. (Required each day that the medicine is required).

Prescription medication will only be given when ordered by the child's health care provider and with written consent of the child's parent/legal guardian. A prescription/non-prescription consent form will be required and will hereafter be referred to as Permission Form. All information on the form must be completed before the medication can be received at school or administered to a child.

Medications given in the school will be administered by the school nurse or appropriate school personnel. The staff member will have knowledge of the child's health needs related to the medication (training in the safe administration of medication as required).

Any prescription or over-the-counter medication brought to school must be specific to the child who is to receive the medication, in its original container, have a child resistant safety cap, and be labeled with the appropriate information.

All medications are stored, inaccessible to children and under proper temperature control as required. Unused or expired medication will be returned to the parent/guardian when it is no longer needed or usable.

Parent/guardian will authorize the school nurse to contact the pharmacist or health care provider for more information about the medication the child is receiving, and will also authorize the health care provider to speak with the school nurse in the event that a situation arises that requires immediate attention to the child's health and safety particularly if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.

Information regarding health, medication is shared with our staff to safeguard all children's health, safety and well-being. Appropriate staff are trained on proper administration per Authorized Medical Consent and/or medication instructions.

Children's Health and Wellness Policy

Parents

Parent(s) should conduct a daily wellness check on their child each morning before bringing them to school to make sure they are healthy, ready to learn and play and symptom free. We know that from time to time children have various accidents, it's a part of growing up. Please, let us know when you arrive if your child has a bruise or mark that may raise a concern or if it causes them discomfort.

At School

As a proactive early childhood education provider, it is our responsibility to be aware, notice and ensure the health and safety of all the children in our care at all times (when they arrive, while they are at school and until they are released to their parents or authorized adult). We facilitate this through the daily health check.

At school, the teacher completes the daily health check for all children within the first 15-20 minutes of the child's arrival each day. The daily health check gives the teacher the opportunity to notice and be aware of the child as they arrive. It is a quick view of the overall appearance of the child with concern to their health and safety. If there is a concern shared by the child or noticed by the teacher and/or school nurse, the teacher and/or school nurse will reach out to the child's parent(s).

Accident and Incident Reports

Accident and/or Incident reports serve the purpose of informing parents of any concerns throughout the day. Although these reports are shared at pick up and require signature acknowledgment, teachers and/or administration will reach out to parents and share throughout the day depending on the nature of the accident/incident. In certain instances upon request by the parent, a picture may be sent to the parent to determine urgency or to monitor their child.

IMMUNIZATIONS, MEDICATIONS, AND CLINIC

Prior to entering school for the first time in Florida, a physical examination must be documented or transferred on the official health department form. Proof of immunization on the official health department form or a certificate of waiver is required for all students. Immunizations must be kept current, and a certificate of Immunization, signed by a physician, or an immunization waiver must be kept on file in the school office. Students may not attend school without an appropriate immunization record.

The school health attendant is available to students daily. If a student is not feeling well, he/she should inform the classroom teacher and ask to be excused to go to the student desk in the front office. Students will be released for medical reasons only with permission from the parent/guardian or from the person designated on the student's emergency RenWeb file.

Many students must have medication available at school for certain illnesses and conditions. School personnel cannot administer medication, including pain relievers, without explicit written parental/guardian permission and a doctor's order. A permission form completed by the parent/guardian and a doctor's order is required in the event a student must receive prescription medicine at school. The medicine, in its original container, labeled with the student's name, name of medicine, dose and time to be given, doctor's name and possible side effects, must be given to the health attendant together with the signed permission form.

Students who are absent from school for the following reasons require a physician's statement confirming the student's ability to return to school and any necessary limitations or restriction:

- Measles, mumps, chicken pox, ringworm, scarlet fever,
- Strep infection, mononucleosis, hepatitis, pink eye
- Absence due to an extended illness or surgery
- Students who may not participate in sports or gym classes following an extended illness or surgery

Medical Request and Documentation: For any type of medical accommodation (including administration of medication at school), the parent must contact the academy nurse. The RLCA nurse will then advise the parent of the type of medical documentation needed, which generally will

state the student's diagnosis, how the condition limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed.

Fever Policy

Students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Parents may not give the child medication to bring down the fever and send him/her to school that day. This policy is for the protection of the students and staff.

Student Illness

Students must have no fever, vomiting, etc. for 24 hours prior to their return to school, or have a physician's note stating that the student is not contagious and/or is under treatment.

A student who is ill should be signed out by the clinic. Teachers will be informed of students dismissed for illness. The student may be checked by the nurse upon return.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to have alternate arrangements if they are unable to pick up their sick child. Please be sure that anyone picking up your child is on your RenWeb authorized pick-up list.

Communicable Disease Policy

This school desires to maintain a healthful school environment instituting controls designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. The term "communicable disease" shall mean an illness which arises as a result of a specific infectious agent which may be transmitted either directly or indirectly by a suspected host, infected person, or animal to other persons.

A teacher or staff employee who reasonably suspects that a student or employee has a communicable disease shall immediately notify the RLCA office.

Any student or employee with a communicable disease for which immunization is required by law or is available shall be temporarily excluded from school while ill and during recognized periods of communicability. Students and employees with a communicable disease for which immunization is not available shall be excluded from the school while ill.

If the nature and the circumstances warrant, our school may require an independent physician's examination of the student or employee to verify the diagnosis of the communicable disease. A written release from the physician will be required before returning to school. RLCA reserves the right to make all necessary decisions to enforce its communicable disease policy and to take all necessary action to control the spread of communicable disease within the school.

Lice and Nit Policy

Head lice are a common nuisance among school children. In the event that lice or nits are found, treat your child and notify RLCA. We will then do our part to help stop the spread in the classroom. Children are not allowed back to school until they have been treated and are "nit free." After treatment, students must report to the front office upon their return to be checked and receive clearance from the school nurse before going to class. RLCA reserves the right to require physician verification that the child is lice and nit free.

Discipline Policy

Discipline is an important component of learning. Good discipline is a way of establishing boundaries and clear expectations, achieving goals through teamwork, and helping our students work to their highest potential. At Real Life Christian Academy Preschool, we will do all that is within our abilities to assist students in becoming good school citizens and examples of Christian character. We will also have a safe environment where students feel secure and free to learn and explore to their full potential. Our discipline policies and procedures are put in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students. **Video for the purpose of educational/developmental/behavioral concerns and/or support are used on campus. Video will not be released to parents for legal and privacy purposes.**

The Real Life Christian Academy Preschool classrooms are where our youngest students discover, learn and grow. Kind, supportive teachers nurture each child's development at this formative time of life. Children learn through intentional instruction and independent, play-based learning that incorporates God's word and His love for them.

In order for your child to meet with success each day, classroom rules are established, taught and supported. Although the rules may differ from classroom to classroom, they will be based on love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Gal 5:22-23)

Student behavior will be managed through noticing, encouragement, redirection, and modeling. Positive discipline techniques are used to help students learn to make appropriate decisions and choices regarding their behavior. We use Conscious Discipline for integrating our behavior awareness support.

Approaches include:

- Noticing and verbal redirection
- Modeling expected/appropriate behavior
- Alternate activity/appropriate choices
- Independent activity/appropriate choices

If a child continues to demonstrate the inability to function in the classroom and continued behavior is such that the child becomes injurious to self or others, the following may occur:

1. Parent will be asked to become involved via written notification and/or phone call and/or parent-teacher conference.
2. If necessary, the parent may be asked to pick up their child from school.
3. The child may be removed from the program if behavior does not improve or if the child becomes physically violent towards self, other students, or staff members.

Be assured that age-appropriate strategies will be utilized to maintain student behavior. Children will not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating, or frightening. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking or any form of corporal punishment is not permitted.

If after all interventions have been exhausted and the harmful/disruptive behavior still persists, and if it is deemed in the best interest of the child, the school, and the other children, the child may be administratively withdrawn from RLCA. Written communication will be shared with parents.

There are no refunds or tuition credits if a child is suspended or withdrawn under our discipline policy.

Biting

As early childhood education professionals, we understand that biting can be a normal part of early childhood development, the health and safety of all children and personnel is important at Real Life Christian Academy Preschool and this compels us to take biting very seriously. The following outlines our policy for biting:

1. The first time a child bites another child, parents of all involved will be notified and a written incident report will be completed. The parents of the child who bit will be required to pick up their child.
2. If the child has a 2nd biting incident, parents will be notified and are required to pick up their child immediately. The child will be suspended for one day and a parent meeting is required.
3. If after the one day suspension the child bites for the 3rd time, parents will be notified and required to pick up their child immediately. The child will receive a two day suspension. Additional action will be discussed to support the family and child while maintaining the health and safety of other enrolled children and our staff.
4. Additionally, the child may be withdrawn from RLCA Preschool.

In compliance with confidentiality guidelines, RLCA staff will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child.

Aggressive Behavior

As previously stated, the safety of all children and personnel at RLCA Preschool is of high importance. Aggressive behavior is defined as, but not limited to the following behaviors: hitting, kicking, spitting, swearing, knocking over chairs, etc. Outside behavior supports, interventions, and/or medical attention may be suggested for continued enrollment. Additionally, the child may be withdrawn from RLCA Preschool. In compliance with confidentiality guidelines, RLCA staff will maintain complete confidentiality of all children involved when notifying parents that their child has been aggressive towards another child.

In accordance with providing a safe environment, the following outlines our aggressive behavior policy:

1. The first time a child exhibits aggressive behavior, parents will be notified and a written incident report will be completed. The parents of the child who exhibited such behavior may be required to pick up their child.
2. If the child displays aggressive behavior a 2nd time, parents will be notified and are required to pick up their child immediately. The child will be suspended for one day and a parent meeting is required.
3. If after the one day suspension the child becomes aggressive for the 3rd time, parents will be notified and required to pick up their child immediately. The child will receive a two day suspension. Additional action will be discussed to support the family and child while maintaining the health and safety of other enrolled children and our staff.
4. Additionally, the child may be withdrawn from RLCA Preschool.

Visitor/Volunteer Policies

Visitors/Volunteers

We value and encourage the home-to-school connection here at Real Life Christian Academy Preschool. Visitors and Volunteers are required to sign-in at the front desk. On a limited basis, as needed and approved by Administration, parents/family members may attend special events. Any Volunteer with 10 or more hours per month on campus must meet the screening standards specified in the Florida Statutes 402.302(3). Volunteers are always under the direct supervision of our staff; volunteers are not permitted to be alone with any child or group of children at any time.

You may volunteer for:

- Special event days onsite
- For your child's assigned classroom as a room parent- "room mom" or "room dad"
- As needed to help with special projects- Thanksgiving, Christmas production, Winter Wonderland, etc.



Parent Handbook

I have received and read the Real Life Christian Academy Preschool Handbook. All updates to this handbook will be shared electronically and are applicable to all enrolled families. My signature indicates my/our family's agreement to adhere to the policies, guidelines and acknowledgements within to ensure continued enrollment.

Date: _____

Child's Name (Print)

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature