

# *Preschool Handbook*



*“I’m a Little Pilgrim”*

*The Pilgrim Academy*

*“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6*



Dear Parents:

Welcome! We are excited you are a part of the preschool program at The Pilgrim Academy. This is an important step in the life of your child. We believe each child is fearfully and wonderfully made by God and as such has unique needs, interests and characteristics. Our goal is to come alongside parents in their God-given responsibility to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. At TPA, your child will be encouraged to learn and grow spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically. We hope the following information will assist you in preparing your child for their first days of school and will serve as a reference during the year.

In Christ,

Mrs. Joy Ludwig  
Lower School Principal  
Galatians 2:20



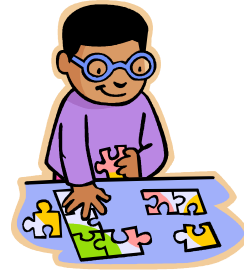
## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

The purpose of The Pilgrim Academy is to assist Christian parents in obeying the commands of Scripture: “Train up a child in the way he should go...,” and “...bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4) We present each subject area in the light of the principles within the Word of God.

## **OUR GOALS**

The purpose of the preschool program is to see each child come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and to disciple young children to grow in Christ-likeness. As we teach the truth in God’s Word, we seek to demonstrate how to apply God’s truth to life. For a preschooler this may mean learning that God is love, and that we can show God’s love by being kind to one another.

Our preschool has the responsibility to provide the best education for kindergarten readiness. We desire to meet the needs of the whole child by promoting spiritual, academic, intellectual, physical, and social development.



## **LEARNING FOR LIFE**

When you walk into the preschool room, you will see children engaged in a wide variety of activities. The preschool seeks to provide all instruction through developmentally appropriate activities. Our curriculum is presented utilizing BJU Press preschool resources. The love of God will be shared through Bible stories, songs, and prayers as well as through the daily instruction of a Christian teacher. Our preschool curriculum is a complete foundational program for four-year-old children. Through Bible stories, Bible verses, and songs, preschoolers learn about God and the world He created. The curriculum is designed to teach basic visual perception skills as well as an introduction to alphabet recognition, initial letter sounds, number and numerical recognition, correct pencil hold, and handwriting strokes. In addition, the basic sound of each consonant letter and the short sound of each vowel letter are presented. Our goal is to teach reasoning and thinking skills that will help children sort out and organize information. Teaching a combination of concepts and processes provides experiences that give meaning to the symbols of language. Children will discover the world God made through age appropriate science activities and nature walks around our campus. Additionally, the providence of God is taught through Heritage Studies. Story time is an important component of the preschool program as children listen, gain longer attention spans and develop pre-reading skills. All of this adds up to a program that fosters creativity, play, and growth in kindergarten readiness skills within a positive learning environment.



## **LIFE AT PRESCHOOL**

### **ADMISSION**

The Pilgrim Academy accepts students without regard to race, color, and national or ethnic origin. Children entering preschool must be four years old by October 1st of that school year. Children must be independent in their toilet routines. The parent must complete a current application as well as

health, transportation, and emergency forms. Final approval is based on an interview with each family and administration. All prospective students must be present during the interview. The application and registration fee must be turned in to guarantee a spot for your child. A family who does not agree with the purpose of the program will not be admitted or allowed to remain in school.

## **DAYS**

Preschoolers may attend a 2-day, 3-day or 5-day program. Parents may choose a half day or full day schedule.

## **HOURS**

Our school day begins at 8:30 am and goes to noon for the half-day schedule, and from 8:30 am to 3:15 for the full day schedule.

## **CLASS SIZE**

The class is limited to fifteen children.

## **DROP OFF AND PICK UP**

Please enter the first parking lot through the driveway on the left (as though you were going to the office), and park. **Do not drive around the long driveway to the gym entrance. This is the TPA bus loop. Traffic will create unsafe conditions for buses that are unloading and loading students.**

Please walk your child along the sidewalk to the classroom via the gymnasium entrance promptly at 8:30. It is disruptive to young students to arrive after learning activities have begun. Being on time will help the class get off to a good start. Any key information about your child may be communicated to the teacher during this time, but please try not to take too much of the teacher's time in the morning as she has to greet and attend to her young students.

When picking up your child, please park in the first parking lot. The teacher will walk your child along the sidewalk to you. During cold weather months, children may be picked up in the gym lobby. Please do not come to the classroom at the end of the day as this is an especially busy time for the class.

Your child will need to be signed out by a parent or other responsible adult on your pre-approved list. You can indicate who has permission to pick your child up from school on the Student Registration form. In the event you require someone other than a person on the pre-approved list to pick your child up, the office must receive written notification and the person picking up the child must show identification. (Driver's license, etc.)

On half days, morning students should be picked up at 12 noon; full day students should be picked up at 12:15.



## DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30 to 8:45	Arrival and opening activities
8:45 to 9:00	Calendar/ opening exercises
9:00 to 9:30	Bible lesson
9:30 to 9:45	Snack
9:45 to 10:05	Directed Instruction (Heritage Studies, Science)
10:00 to 10:20	Directed Instruction (Language Development)
10:20 to 10:40	Directed Instruction (math)
10:45 to 11:15	Learning centers or outdoor play
11:20 to 11:45	Lunch
11:45 to 12:00	Pack up and get ready to go home
12:00	Half day students say goodbye and greet parents
12:00 to 12:30	Music
12:30 to 1:00	Art/ Gym/ Nature walks/ gross motor development
1:00 to 1:20	Educational games/social development
	Restroom breaks, prepare for naptime
1:20 to 2:05	Naptime
2:10 to 2:25	snack time
2:30 to 2:50	Indoor play/ learning center/storytime
2:50 to 3:00	Clean up time
3:00 to 3:15	Get ready to say goodbye and greet parents



## EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Our staff uses Biblical principles of discipline to train children. Children are expected to be able and willing to obey instructions and be kind to others. We believe children learn these behavioral expectations precept upon precept, line upon line (Isaiah 28:10). Age appropriate expectations for conduct and rules of the class will be clearly communicated to children in order to maintain a safe and positive learning environment. The classroom teacher fosters cooperation and kindness through the modeling of Christ-like behavior, meaningful praise and classroom rewards. The teacher may use verbal correction, a “time out” chair, or loss of a privilege to help train the child toward acceptable behavior. The teacher will work toward a solution through communication, prayer, and encouragement. Parents will be informed of any conduct that is not in keeping with expected classroom norms. Dismissal for behavior is rare but may occur for failure to correct actions deemed harmful or dangerous to others.

## **FOR PARENTS**

### **ATTENDANCE**

In order for your child to get the most out of their preschool experience, it is important that they attend consistently. If your child will be absent, it is helpful to the classroom teacher if you would call the school office and notify them of the absence. This prevents the teacher from starting class late as she waits for all students to arrive. If you are going on vacation, please notify the teacher and the school office.



### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

Students need to be in good health with all immunizations current. The health form must be completed and signed by your child's physician. Emergency contact information must also be filled out and turned in by registration in August. Please do not send your child to school if they have a communicable disease, are running a fever, are coughing or sneezing, or are not feeling well enough to participate in class activities.

Parents should notify the school immediately if your child has a communicable disease such as the chicken pox, measles, etc. so that other parents can be notified. After an illness, such as those listed above, children must be symptom and fever free for 24 hours and have a doctor's note before returning to school.

Children need to feel well to enjoy their preschool experience. Parents may be called to pick up their child if they obviously are not feeling well enough to participate in class activities.

All medication should be administered at home. In the event, medications must be given at school; arrangements need to be made with the school nurse prior to the start of school. If it is necessary to send medication to school, it must be in the proper container with the physician's script. If your child has asthma and requires nebulizer treatments, send the tubing with the medication. The teacher may not administer any medication.

### **CALENDAR**

Preschool begins in early September, usually the Tuesday after Labor Day and ends in early June. You will receive a yearly calendar for the entire school. Preschool will have a preview day one school day before the entire student body begins school. Other holidays, scheduled days off, and special events are listed on the school calendar.



## **PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Our desire is to have open and frequent communication between home and school. Each month, parents will receive a monthly letter from the teacher outlining new content for the upcoming month as well as any class news. Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled during the course of the school year.

A weekly newsletter with pertinent school news is sent home via students every Friday.

Daily communication is best accomplished by briefly talking with the teacher at drop off or pick up times. Please keep in mind, this time is valuable to the teacher, as she needs to be greeting and caring for your children. Any lengthy discussions can be arranged privately (not in front of your child), by writing a note, or arranging a meeting or phone conference after school.



## **DRESS CODE**

Preschoolers are to wear appropriate play clothes to school. Please make sure students wear comfortable shoes appropriate for play. Velcro closures are preferred. No open toed shoes or shoes without a back please. Sandals are discouraged but permitted if they have an ankle strap. Gym type shoes with socks are best. Please do not send children to school with clothing that advertises commercial products, slogans or television superheroes. These can be distracting in the classroom. Jewelry and hair beads are discouraged and if a choke or play hazard will be removed. A complete change of clothes may be placed in the child's backpack if you feel they may need them at some point.



## **SUPPLIES**

Students will receive their preschool activity books in class. Most supplies will be provided as part of the materials fee. Preschoolers will need:

- A backpack large enough to carry a lunch and art projects home.
- A lunch box
- A small pillow for naptime
- A blanket if desired for naptime
- A box of tissues
- An old tee shirt for art activities

Preschoolers should not bring toys from home to school unless it is for a “show ‘n tell” day. All items should be marked with the child’s name.



## **SNACKS AND LUNCH**

Part of being ready to learn is keeping young bodies well fed and hydrated. Children will need a healthy snack for a mid-morning and mid-afternoon break.. Suggestions include the following; fruit, granola bar, yogurt, raisins, peanut butter crackers, and/or string cheese. Please stay away from high sugar snacks. A water bottle or other fruit drink such as Capri Sun is fine. No soda or glass bottle drinks.

Please pack a wholesome, nutritious lunch and drink, and notify the teacher of any food allergies.

## **BIRTHDAYS AND OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS**

Birthdays are celebrated in preschool if the parents desire. Birthday treats may be sent in for the class. Please notify the teacher if you would like to send a birthday treat in for your child.

As a Christian school, our emphasis for holidays such as Christmas and Easter is on the birth and resurrection of Jesus. We do not recognize or celebrate Halloween.

## EMERGENCIES

Our staff strives to provide a safe environment for all children. In the event of an accident or emergency, our staff will take the following steps:

- An adult will remain with your child at all times.
- Basic first aid will be administered.
- The parent will be notified immediately.
- If necessary, emergency personnel will be contacted.



## INCLEMENT WEATHER

School closings are announced on radio stations WOND 1400 AM, WSNJ 107.7 FM, WYRS 90.7 FM and on TV channels 3, 6, 10, and 29 in Philadelphia. Parents may also call the school or check the school's website at [www.pilgrimacademy.org](http://www.pilgrimacademy.org). If school should happen to close due to inclement weather while in session, parents will be called to pick up their children before the weather is too hazardous for driving.

## TUITION

An official registration fee must be paid in order to reserve a spot for your child in the program. The materials fee and first month's tuition must be paid at registration in August. Thereafter, payments are due on the first of the month and will be considered late if payment is not received by the tenth day of that month. Any past due account will be assessed a late charge of \$20 on the close of business on the tenth day.

Payments more than 30 days past due will cause the student not to be allowed to attend class and parents will be notified to pick their child up from school. The account must be made current in order for the student to return. Accounts will be charged \$25 for a returned check.

If the child is withdrawn from school at any time between August 1 and September 30, the parent is responsible for 20% of the total tuition for the year. After September 30, tuition will be pro-rated on a full month basis. If tuition is paid in full at registration, the school will refund 80% of the tuition through September 30. After September 30, tuition refunds will be pro-rated on a full-month basis. If a parent wants to withdraw a child, two weeks notice should be given in the form of a written note. Transcripts will be held for students until all unpaid tuition and fees are received.

## PROMOTION

Students who have completed preschool and will be 5 years old by October 1 will be eligible for Kindergarten. Each eligible preschooler will be evaluated by Pilgrim staff for readiness. After conferring with the preschool teacher and parents, a recommendation will be made regarding a child's readiness for a full day kindergarten program.

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP

The goals of The Pilgrim Academy and of each family must be in harmony for proper development in a child's life. In order to obtain these spiritual, moral, and academic goals, parents are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Provide a home environment free from overt worldliness and philosophies contrary to Biblical teachings. (Romans 12:2)
- Teach and encourage good habits at home. (II Timothy 2:15)
- Encourage regular church attendance. (Hebrews 10:25)
- Support The Pilgrim Academy authorities, policies, and procedures. If an issue arises, go directly to the party involved to resolve any conflict or misunderstanding. (Matthew 18: 15)
- Do not undermine or disparage teachers, administration, or other parents in the eyes of children or other parents. (Ephesians 4:29)
- Speak the truth in love and in the spirit of meekness. (Ephesians 4:15)

