



PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024

447 Keswick Avenue, Glenside, PA 19038

Phone/Fax: (215) 887-2289

Email: glensidebcns@gmail.com

Website:

<http://www.glensidebiblechurch.org/nurseryschool>

Dear Families,

Thank you for your interest in Glenside Bible Church Nursery School and Playgroup! We are a preschool with fresh ideas and an enthusiastic, qualified staff.

The aim of our program is to meet the "total" developmental needs of your child. Physical, mental, social and emotional needs will all be addressed within a warm and loving Christian context. Our play-based curriculum includes a variety of activities: reading readiness skills, crafts, music, art, dramatic play, story telling and free play. Field trips are also part of our enrichment experiences. Because of the vertical-grouping of our classes, ages 3 to 5 years combined, an individualized approach will be used to meet the needs of each age group as well as each child's own level of development.

As you read through the handbook, if you have any questions, or would like to request clarifications, please don't hesitate to contact us at 215-887-2289 (Church Office) or 215-407-5927 (my cell phone).

Sincerely,

Priscilla Patterson

Director

Glenside Bible Church Nursery School & Playgroup

How To Read This Handbook

All font in BLACK pertains to BOTH our Nursery School and Playgroup Programs.

All font in BLUE pertains to the Nursery School Program ONLY.

All font in RED, pertains to the Playgroup For Two's Program ONLY.

Table of Contents

Staff Information.....	p. 4
School Year Calendar.....	p. 5
Program Goals/Curriculum.....	p. 6
Objectives/Evaluation.....	p. 7
Adjusting.....	p. 8
Regular Attendance/Holidays.....	p. 9
Parent Support.....	p. 10-11
Field Trips.....	p. 11
Daily Schedules.....	p. 12-13
School Policies.....	p. 14-19

STAFF

Director:

Mrs. Priscilla Patterson

Nursery School Teachers:

Mrs. Priscilla Patterson 215-407-5927

Mrs. Sarah Walker 267-872-4991

Playgroup Teacher:

Mrs. Diane Ashlock 215-962-4966

Teacher's Aides:

Mrs. Julie Duprey

Mrs. Jennie Swaim

Ms. Marie Gannon

Nursery School Committee:

Rev. John Kless

Mrs. Priscilla Patterson

Mrs. Diane Ashlock

Mrs. Gwyn Gaspari

Mrs. Julia Paone

Mrs. Chris Robinson

Mrs. Nancy Bell

Financial Secretary:

Mrs. Nancy Bell

For questions or concerns regarding tuition payments, please contact Mrs. Nancy Bell at

nancybell428@gmail.com

Website:

<http://www.glensidebiblechurch.org/nurseryschool>

Registration forms, brochures, handbook and additional information may be viewed and downloaded.

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2023-2024

Calendar Key:

Black font = Nursery School & Playgroup

Blue font = Nursery School ONLY

Red font = Playgroup ONLY

Nursery School Orientation Days: 9/6 & 9/8

Playgroup Orientation Day: 9/11

First Day of Nursery School: 9/11

First Day of Playgroup: 9/13

Fall Family Field Trip: October Date TBD

Fall Costume Parade: 10/30

Thanksgiving Feast with Friends: 11/22 (all NS students dismiss at noon)

Thanksgiving: 11/23 (No NS 11/23 & 11/24 No PG 11/27)

Christmas Program: 12/15 @ 10:00 AM (all students dismiss after festivities)

Christmas Break: 12/18-1/1

School Resumes 1/3

MLK Jr. Day: 1/15 No School

President's Day: 2/19 No School

No Playgroup 2/21

Picture Day: March (Date TBD)

In-Service Day: 3/15 School Closed

Open House: 3/16

Easter Break: No School 3/25—4/1

School Resumes 4/3

Closing Program: 5/17 @ 7:00 PM (all NS students dismiss at noon)

School Picnic at the Playground: 5/20 @ 10:00 AM (Family Event!)

Last Day of Nursery School & Playgroup: 5/22

We do our very best to reschedule any of our fun events should they be cancelled due to weather related issues.

For more Inclement Weather Closing Details, see page 16.

GOALS FOR PROGRAM

- To provide a well-balanced program of instruction that teaches children skills and attitudes essential to success in school.
- To use a developmental approach to help children develop at their own rate.
- To provide individualized instruction with our vertically-grouped class.
- To work together with parents, since they are primarily responsible for the education and growth of their children.
- To provide an integration of Christian truth in all areas of the children's study and investigation of God's world.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum's aim is to meet the following needs:

- To develop readiness in reading, language, and math, according to the child's maturity level.
- To provide balance between active and quiet activities, indoor and outdoor play.
- To establish routine of physical habits, work habits and self-discipline.
- To provide enrichment experiences in the way of field trips and visitors to the classroom.
- To promote growth through creative self-expression in art, music and movement.
- To explore the natural environment through observing, investigating, experimenting, and experiencing.

Materials are selected and arranged based on the students' interest and levels of development. Many units are developed with a thematic approach but are also interdisciplinary to include experiences for all areas of the curriculum. Teachers use learning activities to teach new concepts, vocabulary, language forms, math, reading, writing, mental process, and attitudes.

SOCIAL AND ATTITUDE OBJECTIVES

An important part of any good pre-school program is learning social and attitude skills. Some of our long-term objectives include:

- Positive self-identity
- Independence
- Persistence
- Ability to delay gratification
- Interest in school activities
- Trust in the Teachers/Aides in the classroom and in the classroom environment itself
- Identification with a positive Christian adult role model
- Ability to follow directions
- Positive attitude toward own and other social groups
- Sportsmanship: taking turns, sharing, accepting the fact that one cannot always win

EVALUATION

- An initial, informal assessment of each child is used to determine individual needs. A check list is used to record progress during the school year, and a portfolio is kept for each child with samples of their work.
- Since an important role of the teacher is not only participant but also observer of the classroom environment, anecdotal records of each child's growth may be recorded.
- A journal, where both parent and teacher can make comments and record information, serves as a dialogue between child-teacher-parent. This journal goes home and comes back with the child each school day.
- An in-school conference keeps you personally informed of your child's progress. Please reach out if you would like to schedule one. More on conferences on page 16.
- The teachers and Director are always available for answering questions. Please feel free to contact them at any time.
- In Playgroup, the teacher will verbally communicate any concerns/events with parent/guardian at the end of each school day. Parents are expecting to make known their concerns so the teacher can be mindful of specific observational needs.

ADJUSTING

Your positive, happy outlook regarding preschool will encourage the same attitude in your child. A more relaxed parent makes for a more relaxed child. During the first weeks of school, your child may:

- be shy and cling to you
- not say much about the school day
- tire easily and cry more than usual
- be aggressive and have difficulty sharing
- resist using the school bathroom and/or have "accidents"

These behaviors are in response to the stress of a new situation and should slowly disappear as your child becomes familiar with the staff, classroom routines, and other children in the group.

Families can be understanding and emotionally supportive by:

- having a positive, cheerful attitude when bringing their child to school
- ensuring consistent bedtime rituals and a good night's sleep each and every night
- allowing lots of time for personal routine, a nourishing breakfast and a pleasant ride to school
- asking specific questions regarding preschool such as, "How did you create this artwork?", "What was your favorite part of morning circle?", or "Who did you play with on the playground today?"
- allowing children time to adjust to the new routines of school

Visit your local library or bookstore for additional information. There are many wonderful books that can help ease apprehension and encourage healthy conversations about school.

REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Children can benefit from the opportunities offered by a nursery school program only if they attend regularly. One of the important developmental opportunities offered in a group experience is the relationship to other children. If a child is absent frequently, that child will always feel unacquainted with the other children. To get the most out of our program, children need to be here regularly. Additionally, arriving on time for school at 9:30 provides consistency for your child. Teachers are available to greet each child and allow for a smooth transition into the school day.

HOLIDAYS

Holidays are special times throughout the year to be celebrated. Our Christian beliefs are reflected through our holiday celebrations.

- The adventure of dressing up and pretending is evident in our Fall Costume Parade, to the delight of parents and friends. However, Halloween can also present some scary situations to young children. With this in mind we ask that children:
 - Do not dress in scary masked costumes
 - Avoid costumes reflecting occult imagery (witches, ghouls, etc.)
- Christmas is a celebration of Christ's birth. We celebrate it and all its joy. We don't put emphasis on "santa" within the classroom setting, but we would never discourage a child's wonder and imagination as they feel led to share on the topic.
- Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day and Easter are special days at GBCNS as well. God is part of who we are and what we do. We are thankful for blessings, for love and our salvation.

Each holiday season is a time to celebrate in a way that is appropriate for young children and pleasing to our Creator.

PARENT SUPPORT

Since parents are primarily responsible for the education and growth of their children, the goal is to work together, teacher and parents, towards your child's success. Parent support is an integral part of our Nursery School Program. Some ways you can participate and support us and your child's education include:

Helping with special occasions: Before most classroom celebrations or holiday parties your teacher will coordinate with parents about any needs such as treats, decorations, craft supplies, tableware and more. If you would like to contribute simply, respond / sign-up with your preference.

Birthdays: Everyone loves a birthday! Each child will have their own special day. The teacher will coordinate with parents to select the day (closest possible school day). You may send in a snack of your child's choosing that day. The teacher will advise in September what dietary restrictions or concerns to be aware of with regard to food in the classroom. The teacher will arrange a special day for those students who have summer birthdays.

Special Family Events:

We do host some special events where parents or other family members are invited to participate in. We realize some parents work and not all have the ability to "request off". You are always welcome to send "a substitute" on your behalf, so your child feels included and special. (We already know that they are!)

Observing: Parents are always welcome to visit. Whenever possible, please notify the teacher in advance. Because of health and enrollment standards, do not bring along other children when you come to observe.

Conferences: A conference day will be offered midway through the year to benefit those preparing for Kindergarten. Parents and teachers will share information and observations about your child's progress at home and at school.

Additionally (for all children 2-5), if you feel you would like to discuss your expectations and goals for your child at any point in the school year, arrangements can be made. Please contact the Teacher at any time if you would like to schedule a conference.

Parent Helpers: Parents who are interested, should inform the teacher. The teacher will work with you to schedule a time / day that works best. (Please make appropriate childcare arrangements for any siblings, as they will not be able to join you in the classroom.) A copy of up-to-date clearances must be submitted to the director before your volunteer visit begins.

Sharing talents: If you have a hobby, talent or profession you would be willing to share with the children as an Enrichment Program, contact the teacher to arrange a time.

FIELD TRIPS

Each year we plan a few favorite field trips:

- Fall: Pumpkin Farm
- Optional Spring: Elmwood Park Zoo or Briar Bush Nature Center
- Picnic at the Playground
- In addition, we occasionally take walks in the neighborhood

With the exception of neighborhood walks, permission must be given in writing.

If we are providing transportation, a car/booster seat is required and must be provided.

Parent participation is required for children in Playgroup.

SCHEDULE

Children will learn to anticipate and predict time periods. Please keep in mind that this schedule is flexible and subject to change depending on the needs of the class as a whole. Our daily routine is as follows:

Playgroup:

9:30 Arrival
9:45 Activity & Craft Time
10:30 Clean-Up
10:35 Outdoor Time/Gym
11:05 Snack Time
11:15 Story Time/Quiet Time
11:25 Puzzles/Play Dough/Crafts
11:35 Circle Time & Pack Up
11:50 Dismissal

Nursery School: AM Class Time

9:30-9:40 Arrival & Morning Meeting:

Time for the class to connect as a whole. Includes welcome song, observing the calendar, going over plans/expectations for the day, and introducing our letter of the week.

9:50-10:50 Centers, Small Groups & Clean Up:

Children are free to explore the room; Imagine and create inside a healthy balance of structure and creativity. Pre K academics are offered through individualized instruction time. Children work together to put away materials and equipment at the hour's conclusion.

Circle Time:

Story time, songs, music, plus games and activities involving the whole group are used to reinforce concepts learned. Listening skills, speaking and taking turns are also reinforced at this time.

11:00-11:15 Snack & Quiet Time:

Prayer & Snack are first. Next, children are encouraged to clean up their snack area and take a "potty break". Those who finish up early move on to a short period of quiet time while others finish up snack. During this time children may sit with a book or puzzle.

11:15-11:45 Outside Play:

The use of tricycles and other outdoor toys are regularly available. On rainy or freezing days we play in the gym.

11:45-12:00 Pack up / Review and Discussion:

Children come in and cool down from their active play with a drink of water while we review our day and process all we did together. Children who leave at noon are packed up and get ready for dismissal.

12:00 PM: Dismissal of Half Day Students

PM Class Time

After an enriching morning, children registered for full day will continue on with their day as follows:

12:00-12:30 Lunch (parent provided):

Children wash up and sit together for lunch. Bathroom breaks are encouraged at this time.

Outside Play/Gym: 12:30– 12:55

Children get a second opportunity for fresh air and running free. On rainy or freezing days, we play in the gym.

12:55-1:25 Nap/Quiet time:

All children will be given an opportunity to fall asleep. Nap mats are provided. Those who do not nap will have a quiet, restful activity to work on, such as puzzles, books or coloring activities.

1:25-1:40 Table Task: A small task or activity is assigned at the tables while nap mats are cleaned and packed away. (Example: name practice/coloring page/letter tracing/assorted skill builders)

1:40-2:15 Group Activity/Centers:

After a peaceful rest, Teacher will gather children together again and work on a group project/activity. This may differ day to day and will range from a variety of board games, story time & discussion, show & tell, puppets & finger plays, science experiments, crafts, etc.

2:15-2:20 Pack Up & Dismissal

POLICIES

1. AGE OF CHILD

Nursery School:

A child must be three by September 15 and not older than five by January 31 in order to be enrolled at the school. Exceptional cases will be considered. Children must be toilet-trained to attend school.

Playgroup:

Child must be 2 years & 7 months by their first day of school.

2. FOOD

Nursery School: A snack fee is included in your child's tuition. A snack will be planned, prepped and provided daily by their teacher and aide.

A balanced lunch should be brought to school each day for full day students. We really appreciate healthy options!

Playgroup: A .50 cent fee is collected weekly outside of the classroom. The teacher will use funds to purchase and serve snack daily.

Please let us know if your child has food allergies. If there are classroom allergies, certain foods may be restricted depending on the severity.

Lunch Bunch is offered to each class once a week. Parents will have the weekly option to sign their child up for an extra hour which includes playtime and lunch with friends. Parents will be billed with tuition. The cost is \$10. To participate, simply sign up on the sheet outside of the appropriate classroom and send your child the day of with a packed lunch and drink. Lunch Bunch dismissal is at 1:00 PM promptly.

3. TOYS

We have a large array of toys and equipment at school. Therefore, children should not bring toys from home.

4. CLOTHING

Play clothes are considered to be the best-suited type of dress for nursery school activities. For your child's safety, shoes should be appropriate for running and playing indoors and out. Please do not send your child to school wearing flip-flops or wheeled shoes as these are not safe for running. Close-toed shoes are required. Also, note outdoor play is considered to be an integral part of the nursery school program during all seasons, weather permitting. On winter days, please dress your child appropriately in warm clothing, including hats, mittens and boots when needed. It is requested that all outside clothing be name-tagged in some way.

A complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing in a labeled bag will be left at school or in child's backpack. Please keep sizes and seasons current. This is helpful for spills and accidents.

5. INCIDENTS/ACCIDENTS

Nursery school teachers will document incidents (hitting a peer) or accidents (a scraped knee) relating to your child while at school and will be kept on file. All accounts will be relayed to parent at the end of the session. Parents are contacted immediately if a situation requiring parental/medical attention is necessary. Please keep your emergency contact information up-to-date.

6. RECORDS

The school will keep records of attendance, health, and achievement of each child. A record of immunizations OR a written letter explaining your exemption from immunizations is required by the start of school. Please submit a current printout of your child's immunization record obtained from their primary care provider.

7. OUTSIDE SERVICES

If your child is receiving outside services or you are planning to arrange such services for your child, please advise the teacher. Outside visitors to the classroom must make timely arrangements with the Director. Ideally, disruption to the normal classroom routine and schedule should be avoided if at all possible.

8. HEALTH

Children sent to school should be in good health -- free from communicable disease. Our primary consideration is for the wellbeing of all the children and staff. Children with the following symptoms will need to be kept home:

- *Vomiting
- *Diarrhea
- *Strep/sore throat
- *Ear pain
- *Lice
- *Listlessness
- *Congested cough
- *Fatigue
- *Chills
- *Very pale or flushed
- *Temperature above 100
- *Conjunctivitis
- *Rashes or any other type of skin eruption
- *Discharge from eyes or nose that is yellow/green
- *In need of constant one-on-one attention

If the symptoms develop while your child is in attendance, you will be contacted to pick up your child. The child may return after being symptom-free for 24 hours and fever-free for 24 hours *without the use of fever-reducing medications*. If your child comes down with a communicable disease, please contact the teacher so other parents may be informed.

9. WEATHER CLOSINGS

Glenside Bible Church Nursery School will follow Abington School District decisions. The school closing number is #301. If Abington Schools close, so do we. If Abington schools issue a 2- hour delay, GBCNS & PG will plan to open at 10:00 AM. You will be notified by telephone/email if there are any changes to this procedure.

After a total of three weather closings, every effort will be made to make up any additional time lost due to inclement weather.

10. DAILY ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL ROUTINES

Teachers will be ready to greet your child and begin our day together at 9:30 AM. A reliable person must leave and call for your child. The person who brings your child must stay until he has been checked into the class. This person must accompany the child to the classroom door. All outside doors on the building remain locked during school hours. If you arrive late, you may ring the doorbell at that entrance.

Please be on time for your students dismissal time. Approved pick-up persons should wait outside at the designated area assigned by the teacher. Your child will only be released with a person known by the staff to be authorized to call for the child. A list of authorized persons is maintained in your child's file. Permission for a child to go with someone other than the parent/guardian or those listed as "authorized" must be given in writing. Verbal notice to the teacher/aide alone is not sufficient. There are no exceptions to this. Persons unknown to the staff should be prepared to show identification before the child is released to their care.

A late pick-up fee of \$10.00 will be assessed if your child is not picked up within 15 minutes after the scheduled end of the class. More details on this on page 18 under "Fees/Tuition".

11. PHOTOGRAPHS

A photo consent form must be filled out and returned for each child. Photographs are taken and used within the classroom setting regularly. We use them to share with you about especially fun activities, and for special projects. Occasionally school photos are shared with our church family during Sunday service for the purpose of engaging with our congregation who support us through out the year in many different ways. Likewise, we may share pictures on our website or social media platform.

Each spring, professional portraits are taken and made available to you for purchase. A separate permission form from the photographer is required to take these professional pictures.

12. FEES/TUITION

Our tuition fees are broken into 9 installments which are due Sept. 1 thru May 1. *There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$35.* Program options are as follows:

- 3 Half Days: \$2,100 for the year (9 installments of \$233)
- 3 Full Days: \$2,910 for the year (9 installments of \$323)
- 4 Half Days: \$2,600 for the year (9 installments of \$289)
- 4 Full Days: \$3,700 for the year (9 installments of \$411)
- 1 Day per week: \$80/month
- 2 Days per week: \$145/month

Your monthly bill will show the amount due and the due date. Please mail the return envelope to the church office or drop inside the tuition box, located in the Director's Office. Make checks payable to: Glenside Bible Church Nursery School or GBCNS. Receipts upon request. Automatic payment/withdraw forms are also available upon request.

Please note: As per the Financial Commitment Form signed at registration, if tuition is not made by the due date and our office is not notified, a late fee of \$25 will be charged. Repetitive failure to stay in good standing and good communication with tuition may result in your child's loss of enrollment. Final tuition payment is due May 1st of current school year. If this is not possible, please make specific arrangements with the school treasurer regarding your tuition obligation.

A late pick-up fee of \$10.00 will be added if your child is not picked up within 15 minutes after the scheduled end of the class. A bill for the late pick-up fee will be included with your next tuition bill. Payments can be mailed or deposited in the tuition lock box in the Director's office. Failure to pay the late pick-up fee in a timely manner, may result in further action.

13. REFUNDS

Fees are non-refundable in the event that school is called off because of weather conditions. There are no refunds in the event of absence or illness up through two weeks duration.

After two weeks of a child's continuous, prolonged illness, fees will be reduced to one-half until the child returns to school, provided that the parents have notified the Director in writing prior to the third week of illness. Paying the reduced rate insures a child's position in the school when he returns.

14. DISMISSAL OF A CHILD FROM PROGRAM

We plan for success for each child in our preschool. We will work together as a team to support a positive learning experience for everyone. In the event that it becomes necessary, the school reserves the privilege of dismissing any child. Some reasons for this may be:

- A child has been in attendance but has not made progress towards a happy and secure adjustment away from home
- Financial obligations are not met
- A child becomes extremely disruptive or poses serious danger to himself or others

In the event that GBC Nursery School dismisses a child from the program and there is prepaid tuition, you will be reimbursed for the unused amount of prepaid tuition within ten business days of the withdrawal date.

15. WITHDRAWAL

If you wish to withdraw your child from the school, written notice must be given to the teacher four weeks before billing is terminated. A child who has withdrawn from the school, and then wishes to return, must have his name placed on the waiting list, if necessary.

Thank you for interest, consideration and/or participation in our program(s). We value our students and their families and we know that with your support, we will make a lasting and meaningful impact in your child's life.

*“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up.”
Galatians 6:9*