



PARENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

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Non-discriminatory Policy Statement:
We admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded to the students of our school.

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SECTION I

OUR SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Matthew 18:2-6, 10

"He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like a little child, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoever welcomes a little child in my name welcomes Me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."

"See that you do not look down on one of these little children. For I tell you that their angels in heaven see the face of my Father in heaven."

Mark 10: 14,16

"Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

"And He took the little children in His arms and put His hands on them and blessed them."

SECTION II **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Children are important to us because they are important to Christ. Luke 18:16 says, "*Permit the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.*" Our philosophy is that our program first be Christ-centered, and second, child-centered. We offer an environment geared toward success for the child's feeling of self-worth. We feel a child who likes himself can afford to like others. Mark 12:31b says, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" It is our belief that children who are accepting of themselves can reach out and fulfill their capacity for learning with assurance. Therefore, the program is geared toward success for children by encouraging them to attempt the new as well as risk possible failure in a safely controlled, supportive environment.

Our environment encourages the child's autonomy and initiative. Activities are carefully thought out so that the child will feel free to experiment, explore, and try new things on his own. Limits are established which will be of benefit to the child. Setting limits will help the child learn more about personal safety, respect for the rights and safety of others, and respect for property. The limits are consistent and carried through in a firm, but gentle manner. Proverbs 22:6 says, "*Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.*" This environment will allow the child a freedom to be himself, yet achieve self-discipline.

There are critical periods in development, physical as well as spiritual, when growth is more affected by the environment. Our goal is to help facilitate your child's growth and maturity as a whole person. We respect the individual growth of each child realizing everyone grows at his/her own pace, so we encourage learning, but do not pressure the child. Learning is a natural process and because all aspects of learning are interrelated our curriculum considers the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development of the child as an individual. Our expectation of the child is not to sit, listen and learn by rote while an adult "teaches" by pouring facts into their minds. Rather, we create an environment to which they can respond, one in which they can feel, one in which they can mold, invent, take apart and put together, one that they can master and feel a sense of self-worth and belonging.

The child's intellectual and spiritual development is a very important part of our curriculum. Natural learning situations are planned, so as the child responds to them, the teacher responds to the child. This facilitates the learning process enabling the teacher to bring the basic concepts of learning and knowledge at the optimum time for the individual child. Our greatest concerns are not with the quick surface changes in behavior, quick mastery of skills nor the finished product of the child's work. We are concerned with what the **PROCESS OF LEARNING** and the **VALUE OF EXPERIENCE** will be for the child. The growth that comes from experiences such as these is lasting growth. It is our conviction that children belong to the Lord. (Psalm 127:3). Teaching them is a great honor and responsibility for parents as well as teachers. Our staff knows this and feels a deep respect for the children, valuing them for the individuals God created them to be. Our goal is to motivate the children to be themselves, pleasing God.

SECTION III

OUR PURPOSE

Ventura Missionary Preschool is designed to assist young children between two years of age and kindergarten entrance. Through this ministry we aim to:

- * Bring honor and glory to God and to serve our Lord, Jesus Christ.
- * Lead young children in Christian worship, learning fellowship, service and commitment to God.
- * Promote and perpetuate Biblical beliefs.
- * Excel in Christian education of young children.
- * Establish a balanced program that will promote the social, mental, emotional, physical and spiritual development of the child.
- * Instruct and guide parents in child rearing and parenthood.

In stark contrast to educational systems centered in man and apart from God, our program is based on the Bible, the Word of God and the world-view espoused by it. Since God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, all truth is ultimately centered in Him and each person is responsible to Him.

As an integral and inseparable non-profit ministry of the church, Ventura Missionary Preschool provides quality care in a safe, inviting, and pleasant environment. Our purpose is to provide quality Christian education for young children -- not baby sitting. Although instruction is an important part of the program, our objective is to encourage young children to respond to God's love and to apply God's Word to their lives.

Ventura Missionary Preschool offers a carefully supervised program to enhance the development of the spiritual, mental, social, emotional and physical make-up of the child. We feel that each session is to be more than a playtime experience. Each child builds important foundations for the development of character and self-esteem, a personal relationship to God and to others, and skills necessary for further education through careful planning and preparation, guided conversation, motivational activities, learning centers and creative use of natural, spontaneous situations.

Your child will participate in a variety of activities such as:

Working with paints, clay, crayons, blocks and other manipulative materials;

Enjoying stories, poetry, dramatic play, occasional short videos and books;

Learning to share, take turns, plan, work and play with others;

Learning to respond rhythmically to music, singing new songs, and listening to different kinds of music;

Acquiring good health and cleanliness habits.

Our carefully planned Day Care Program (consisting of A.M. Care 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. and P.M. Care from 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.) is an extension of this ministry to accommodate working families. Our ratios are small, enabling us to minister to the unique needs of children and their families needing care for more than three hours a day.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask our Director. Have a happy school year!

SECTION IV INTRODUCTION

Age groupings are generally based on the child's developmental age as of September 1 of each year. Groupings are flexible and a child may be moved from one group to another to meet special needs. To be eligible a child must be 2.0 years of age. We do add children from our waiting list as openings occur.

The staff has been called of God to teach young children. They have completed or are completing the Early Childhood Education classes to become fully qualified teachers. They attend in-service training seminars and stay on the cutting edge of what is happening in the field of Early Childhood Development.

All staff members are active in regional and national professional Early Childhood associations. The Director is a member of and in a leadership role for the Association of Christian Schools International.

Ventura Missionary Preschool is open to all children regardless of race, nationality, or creed, who may benefit from our type of program. Enrollment policies for our morning or afternoon programs are as follows: First priority is given to continuing students, second priority is given to siblings of Ventura Missionary Preschool and Day School children, third priority is given to Ventura Missionary Church members enrolling their children for the first time. Then, any remaining openings are available to the general public.

The criteria for eligibility for either program are the individual child's emotional readiness to be separated from parents, for a few hours a day, and the parents readiness to share the care of the child with the preschool staff. The Day Care Program is especially designed for those children whose parents work outside of the home. It is a ministry designed to meet the unique needs of families where both mother and father must work, where care is needed for more than three hours per day. To qualify, the child must be enrolled in one of our morning classes. He may attend the Day Care Program only on his regular class days. Ventura Missionary Preschool reserves the right of dismissing any child who is unable to participate in group experiences, or who appears to be continually stressed by too long of a day.

All we expect of your child is that he come to our program and be himself. **PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO READ THE OPERATING PROCEDURES IN THIS HANDBOOK AND THE SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES AND NEWSLETTERS WE SEND FROM TIME TO TIME.** Feel free to be part of the preschool by becoming involved as a class volunteer, working with our Parent Teacher Fellowship on extra-curricular activities, offering suggestions and comments, as well as financial, moral and prayer support.

All children are placed in Ventura Missionary Preschool by the recommendation and observations of our Director. Questions concerning placement must be addressed to the Director.

Assessments of each child are scheduled twice a year, once during the Fall semester and again in the Spring. These are done by your child's teacher. An end-of-the-year evaluation is done by the Director for placement of children for the following year. Your input is very valuable, as well as that of the teacher, but the Director reserves the right to make the final decision, taking into account the developmental needs of the child and how the child relates to the group.

Being enrolled in Ventura Missionary Preschool does not automatically enroll a child in the school for the next year. Each year you must reenroll. Those who wish for their children to continue at VMPS for Kindergarten or continue from Kindergarten to 1st grade must register. VMS enrollment is usually full, so it is critical to register at the earliest allowable registration date.

Policies and procedures for enrollment into our Day School can be found in the Day School Parent Handbook. You may also contact the Day School secretary for additional information. VMS offers a quality program for 1st through the eighth grade. Our Day School Principal writes the following:

Have you appreciated the loving, Christian teachers who have made your child's Preschool/Kindergarten years a positive experience? Teachers who are committed to Christ make a significant difference in creating an intimate and nurturing environment in which children flourish. The same type of Christian teachers serve at VMS Elementary and Middle Schools. Our teachers genuinely care about the holistic development of your child. Our goal is to maximize each child's God-given potential.

At VMS, we are committed to a quality educational program which honors God and brings out the best in children. We provide a course of study which prepares students to be successful, contributing members of our society.

Additionally, VMS is deeply concerned about the character development of our students. The highest standard of behavior is expected. Students treat each other and their teachers with respect. The self-esteem and emotional well-being of students is a high priority.

The transition into elementary school is easier for the little ones who remain at the same geographical location, and have the opportunity to go back for hugs from Kindergarten and Preschool teachers! Please call for an appointment if you have any questions or concerns about your child's placement.

SECTION V
THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FORMAT

The design of our format is referred to as the "informal integrated day" approach. Activities are set up in creative learning centers and the child is allowed to pursue areas of interest. The teacher's role is to facilitate self-discovery by the self-directed learner. They are watching for "teachable moments" to interject information without interrupting the learning process. We involve children in their learning process and encourage them to use their time making good constructive choices.

Curriculum and Learning Media

Our Learning Centers consist of creative Art, Math-Readiness, Reading-Readiness, Natural Science, Blocks and Construction, Dramatic Play, Scribble and Writing Tables, Fine and Large Muscle Motor Activities, Listening and Book Centers, Music and Language Arts, daily. Biblical principles and Bible stories are interwoven throughout the entire program. Large group learning times are divided into shorter time segments depending upon the age of the children. Large group activities are balanced between quiet listening, verbal interaction, sharing opportunities, and active movement. Group times include cognitive concepts, prayer, character qualities, stories, music and movement, all carefully chosen according to developmental needs of the children.

Our environment is Christ-centered and child-centered. Based upon God's exhortation to us in Hebrews 10:24, Let us consider one another to stimulate unto love and good works, we seek to study the children and understand their individual needs. Only then can we set goals and plan activities that stimulate growth in all areas of their lives. We plan according to the developmental age of the group and provide hands-on experiences for exploration and discovery.

We Believe That:

1. Children are naturally curious and eager to know.
2. Children learn by doing. Learning is not done TO, but BY the child.
3. Hands-on experiences and use of all the senses enhances the learning and retention value.
4. Children's PLAY is their WORK.
5. Children are capable and should be involved in the initiation and decision making process of their learning environment.
6. Children are unique individuals with their own developmental time tables and learning styles. It is the responsibility of the teachers to discover how each child learns best.
7. Learning occurs best when it starts with concrete concepts and progresses to the abstract.
8. Most facets of learning are best evaluated by direct observation of the child's work rather than by a paper-pencil test.
9. Learning to interact and cooperate with others is vital to success in school and in life.
10. Education must take place in an environment that communicates love, trust, warmth, security, safety, respect and openness.

SECTION VI

BIBLE CURRICULUM AND THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

It is necessary for us to design our Bible curriculum to meet the needs of each group developmentally to make sure they clearly comprehend the Bible truths being communicated. First, we concentrate on what the Bible says and who its author is. The next step is to help the children see clearly what the Bible truth means. Then we help them apply what they have learned. We stress building a comprehensive foundation of understanding that transcends head knowledge and speaks to a child's heart. To make Bible truths more tangible we use flannel graphs, books, songs and drama. Because children learn best experientially, we strive to integrate Biblical truth naturally into all parts of our daily activities as opportunities and questions arise. This follows the model provided in Scripture for how we are to teach our children to know God's ways and love Him with all of their hearts. *These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.*

We realize young children are easily influenced, so if a child shows interest in accepting Christ we ask the child to speak with us individually. In this way we can see if the child understands and is sincere. We are careful not to pressure any child. We leave the prompting of young hearts to the Holy Spirit. If a child shows this desire, we notify the parents the same day.

Prayer:

Prayer is integrated throughout the child's daily routine. Each class prays before snack, and at the opening and closing of the day. We also pray with individuals if they want to pray for a situation they are facing. We ask children if they have prayer requests and these are prayed for.

Our goal is to help children understand that God is everywhere and that He loves and cares about every aspect of their lives. The children are learning that God is always available to listen and all they need to do is pray.

Chapel:

Each month we have chapel in the sanctuary for all classes. Parents are welcome to attend. Each class (except the 2's) will sing several songs at least once at chapel throughout the school year. Each new year we have a chapel theme. Check your yearly calendar and newsletters for dates of chapels.

SECTION VII

STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE

The expectations and limitations for the child must be consistent to the child's developmental needs, clearly understood by the adult, and clearly communicated to the child in a means he/she can understand. Biblical discipline provides clear boundaries for behavior and gently but firmly guides the wanderer back within the boundaries in a loving, encouraging manner. Our discipline must seek to build up the child in growth rather than cause them to feel discouraged by their shortcomings. *Encourage one another and build each other up. 1 Thessalonians 5:11*

Purpose:

The State requirement, when dealing with children of ages 2-5 years, in Title 22, Article 4, #31239 and recorded under "Discipline," states as follows:

"Constructive methods must be used for maintaining group control and handling individual behavior. Corporal punishment and other humiliating or frightening techniques are prohibited. Punishment must not be associated with food, rest, isolation for illness or toilet training."

In view of the State requirements and extensive research in alternative discipline techniques, Ventura Missionary Preschool has had much success with the following mode of discipline. The techniques described are consistent with the goals of the Day School, yet the methods we choose to deal with the same areas are different in order to fit the developmental need of children in the preschool age bracket.

Ventura Missionary Preschool Discipline for the Pre-School Age Child:

Proverbs 22:6 tells us to train our children in the way they should go, this is a responsibility God has charged to parents. Parents have the primary responsibility ordained by God and as a Christian Early Childhood Program, it is our responsibility to supplement the parents, but not assume full responsibility from the parents.

We choose to use logical consequences, where the discipline fits the action, for negative behavior.

The pre-school age child, according to Jean Piaget, is egocentric or self-seeking. Most have a need for order, justice and fairness. We find that by using "logical consequences" for their behavior, the child is more accepting of the discipline because they can see the fairness and how the discipline relates to the action. By seeing the direct relationship between "action and outcome," children are more inclined not to repeat the behavior as long as the adult in charge is consistent. We see this type of discipline as accomplishing a two-fold goal in the child.

1. It begins to instill inner controls with the child from the inside out, instead of reliance upon the external control of the teacher.
2. The child assumes direct responsibility for his/her actions.

With these objectives in mind, we also realize that the child develops a conscience gradually. We help teach the child right behavior and by his experience, he then builds upon what we have modeled as teachers and parents. In encouraging this conscience development, our discipline must always accompany a loving, trusting, safe atmosphere where the good of the child is sought, not the venting of angry feelings of the teacher. We need to be in control of ourselves and our tempers and never discipline in anger. *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:29*

Researchers have indicated that this process of conscience development is directly associated with warm nurturing parent-child or teacher-child relationships along with mental and emotional growth in the child's ability to reason. As we do our part to nurture the child, the child naturally develops. By considering each child's needs, we attempt to follow Biblical guidelines. *...do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4* Just as the child develops physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually at individual levels, their consciousness of right and wrong and inner controls develop at their own rate. As the child grows in these areas we usually refer to this development as "social maturity."

Several ways are used to implement this mode of discipline. Listed are those most frequently used:

1. We are careful to create an atmosphere of warmth, trust and respect for each individual child. We carefully observe the individual temperaments and frustration levels and seek the best for each individual child.
2. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT, by sincere verbal affirmation and love communicated in our voices, is very effective in supporting and encouraging actions we desire the child to repeat.
3. REDIRECTION of the child's energies into productive areas of the classroom or outdoor play helps teach the child appropriate behavior. When the child's first reaction is to strike out or hit, we give them alternatives to release energies in a socially acceptable way.
4. VERBALIZATION is stressed as the number one communication skill. As children grow in verbal abilities they can express themselves and let their needs be known. For the less verbal child, the teacher serves as a mediator and helps each child resolve conflict by asking questions and stating feelings like, "Your actions are telling me you are really angry," or "I can tell by your crying that you seem to be sad."
5. Always warn the child of transitions. This age group really has a need to know what happens next. By giving them a warning such as "in five minutes we will put the trikes away," they will know there is time to finish what they are doing and plan for what happens next. This adds to the security and trust between child and teacher.
6. Set the limits that are consistent with the developmental stage of the child. If the limits are too hard to attain or too much to remember, they become confusing to the child.

7. The teachers continue to challenge the child's abilities physically and mentally with fun activities. Children tend to misbehave when bored or over-stimulated.
8. Consistent limits coupled with brief explanations why they "can" or "cannot" do something helps the children understand the good reasons for the constraint. Good guidelines to follow are:

Most areas of inappropriate behavior fall under one of these four categories:

- a. At this school we do not hurt each other by our words and we do not hurt each other's bodies.
 - b. Children may not hurt teachers.
 - c. Children may not hurt themselves.
 - d. Children may not destroy property or toys.
9. Prompt intervention of the teacher before things get out of control is important.
 10. Teachers maintain a professional model of self-control and verbal expression.

OUR STEPS OF DISCIPLINE ARE:

- a. Warn the child or children and redirect when possible. We are careful to state directions and re-directions in a positive manner, which builds the child's self-esteem, and tear down barriers of resistance.
- b. If the child continues in a negative behavior pattern, the child may need to be removed from the situation for one on one time with a teacher or the Director. This allows us to assess the reason for the negative behavior and work on solutions. One child may just need some space. Another may need his emotional tank filled. Each child's needs are different. We seek to help children learn to recognize their needs, verbalize feelings, listen to others' feelings, and seek solutions to learn problem solving skills and self control.
- c. If, after the above steps have been taken, the negative behavior continues, the parent will be called to come pick their child up for the remainder of that day. The child can return the next scheduled school day.

SECTION VIII
PARENT-CHILD SEPARATION

A child learns best in an environment in which he feels safe, secure, loved and trusted by his parents. For that reason we take the child's process of separation very seriously and slowly. The more safe the child feels and the more he can trust that we are going to meet his needs when the parents are not available, the better the whole school experience will be. Please read this policy carefully and if you have questions, do not hesitate to call. We recognize that separating can be hard for the parents as well as for the child, so we are here for both of you.

1. If your child has been in school before, or seems very comfortable with the school environment tell him you are leaving and will pick him up in a few hours. (Be sure to tell the teacher you are leaving before you go.)
2. If your child does not seem at ease, let your child move away from you as he is ready. If you are apprehensive about his clinging, he will be apprehensive about his leaving you. Please do not insist or rush him. It often helps for you to bring a book or needlework for yourself. Get involved in your own activity.

A teacher will help your child move away from you and towards an activity. Each child is different and will move away at his own speed. Teachers will work with you and your child according to your individual needs. When we feel your child is ready, we will ask you to tell him you are leaving and the time you will return. The time will vary depending on your child. (This could mean returning in a few minutes, at snack time, outside time or possibly returning at the end of the school day.) The teacher will assist in determining the best time to return. Our goal is to help your child make a solid, smooth transition from home to school. Sometimes this requires time in the beginning, but we feel it is time well spent.

Occasionally a child cries when the mother or father leaves and stops the minute they are gone. The child may begin crying as soon as he sees his mother or father again. This is very normal. It is his way of saying, "I didn't want you to go." When you return you can say, "See, I told you I would be coming back." Act very matter-of-fact about going and coming. If you are upset or disturbed by their crying, your child will sense it. As your child adjusts to school, teachers and playmates, we will suggest you leave for longer periods of time. Soon your child will be ready to spend his entire morning at school, experiencing many exciting activities and the companionship of the teachers and friends. The Director and teachers will work closely with you during this time. This experience of success will set the tone for the whole year, so please work and communicate with us as much as possible.

SECTION IX
FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Financial agreements are signed by each family at the time of enrollment, which state our financial policies. Tuition for the morning programs is based on the actual cost of operating the program, divided by the number of students enrolled. Tuition is charged for only the actual number of school days per year. The current fee schedule, based on a non-profit budget, is published in the preschool brochure.

Payments:

VMPS uses a prepayment schedule. You can choose to pay in full (by June 20th), Semi-Annual (June, Jan.), Quarterly (June, Sept., Dec., Mar.), 10-Month (June-Mar.) or 11-Month (June-Apr.). Payments are due on or before the 20th of each month. There is a 10% discount if you have a sibling child in our preschool or VMS Grades K - 8.

Tuition payments are made to VMPS with payment statement provided. No bills will be sent. Payment is due on or before the 20th of each month and is subject to a \$10.00 late fee if not received on the due date. If you have questions about your account, please call the Preschool Office at (805) 644-9515 ext. 2.

If payment has not been received by VMPS on the 20th, a \$10.00 late charge will be assessed. If all tuition, child care, and late fees are not received by the 50 day delinquent point, the child can be dismissed from the program. All fees plus an additional registration fee of \$125.00 will be charged by VMPS and must be paid in full to reinstate the account after dismissal. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, it is essential that you speak directly with our office before you reach delinquent status.

Registration Fee:

A non-refundable registration fee is paid yearly at the time of registration for each child.

Daycare Payments:

All daycare payments are made payable to VMPS and must be paid in the preschool office by the 20th of the previous month. A \$10.00 late fee will apply if payment has not been received by the 20th of the previous month and increase an additional \$10.00 for each week thereafter. A \$10.00 change fee will also apply if you need to change your daycare time slots after you have submitted your Extended Care Sign Up Form.

Credit for Absences:

There will be no credit for absences. When placement is reserved for a child in a class, your payment guarantees your child's placement. Our expenses remain constant whether children are absent or not. As we operate on a non profit basis, we cannot afford to refund for absences.

Withdrawal from Program:

Each child is enrolled for the entire school year or the balance of the year from date of enrollment. Two weeks prior notice is required for withdrawal from the program on or before March 1. After March 1, no refunds will be given and any payments due for the balance of the year will be expected. If you withdraw your child before school starts in August you will be refunded all prepaid tuition but not registration fees.

Make-up Days for Absences:

There will be no make-up days. We are permitted to handle only a certain number of children per day, distributed among the various classrooms in specific numbers. Therefore, WE CANNOT GRANT OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE UP DAYS LOST AS A RESULT OF ABSENCES.

Regular Attendance:

Children can benefit from the opportunities offered by a group educational program only if they attend regularly. One of the important development opportunities offered in a group experience is the child's relationships to other children. During a child's absence, the others will be forming friendships, learning to play together, and acquiring new skills and knowledge. When the child returns to the group he may feel like an outsider. It may be difficult for him to keep up with the play or conversation of the other children because he has not shared their experiences.

Overtime Charges:

The Morning Preschool Classes:

There will be an overtime charge of \$10.00 for every 5 minutes (or fraction thereof) after 11:45 a.m. for children not picked up at their regular dismissal time. This late charge will not be billed, but parents will be expected to pay in the office for charges within a week of the day charges are incurred. Parents will be required to sign a Morning Care Late Pick Up Notice showing the time and amount due at the time the child is signed out. If you find that you are consistently late, please sign your child up for the PM Day Care Program, according to the time that you need care for your child.

The Afternoon Day Care Program:

There will be a \$10.00 charge for every 5 minutes (or fraction thereof) past 5:30 p.m. Parents will be required to sign an Afternoon Program Late Pick Up Notice showing the time and charges due at the time the child is signed out. We are licensed until 5:30 p.m. and time past 5:30 p.m. jeopardizes our license. Consistent lateness can be cause for dismissal from the Day Care Program.

If you pick up your child later than the time you signed up for, but prior to 5:30 p.m., you will be expected to pay the difference the next day. Please call the office if you are going to be late so we can reassure your child.

Bounced Checks:

There is a \$20 fee charged on each check returned to us for non-sufficient funds in your bank account. A letter will be sent home at that time with the bounced check enclosed. If this check then puts your account into a delinquent status, we will follow the late fee policy also. The amount of the check plus the \$20 fee will need to be repaid immediately with either cash or a cashier's check.

SECTION X
ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL & PARKING

Morning Day Care Arrival:

This program is open from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. There is a separate registration form for children whose parents wish to use the Day Care Program. You must sign up by the 20th of the previous month to use the Morning Day Care Program.

Morning Arrival:

Class hours for our morning program are from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Children may not arrive before 8:30 a.m. because teachers need time to prepare their classrooms for the day and are not free to supervise the children until 8:30 a.m. But, please don't bring your child later than 8:45 a.m. A child may feel uncomfortable about arriving after everyone else has become involved in the classrooms.

Morning Pick-Up:

Because the fatigue element is important and children often worry when they are not picked up at the regular time, we urge you to pick up your child on time. If you know you will be detained, please notify the school office so we can reassure your child. There will be an overtime charge of \$10.00 for every 5 minutes or fraction thereof after 11:45 a.m.

Afternoon Day Care Program Pick-Up:

Children may be in a different classroom in the afternoon program. Check with your child's teacher or the office as to where your child will be at the pick-up time you have scheduled. WITHOUT EXCEPTION, the latest a child may be picked up is 5:30 p.m. An overtime charge of \$10.00 for every five minutes, or fraction thereof, will be charged. Consistent lateness will be cause for dismissal from the afternoon program.

Sign-In/ Sign-Out:

Parents are responsible to sign-in/sign-out when they bring/pick-up their child to/from class as well as record the time the child is brought/picked-up. ONLY INDIVIDUALS LISTED ON THE CHILD'S EMERGENCY CARD MAY PICK-UP A CHILD. Should parents have another individual pick-up, parents need to a) add this person to their child's emergency form or, b) write a note for the school office stating who is picking up their child and they must present a photo ID at time of pick up. Be sure to date and sign the note and include any specifics necessary for the school. Signing in and out is the responsibility of the adult bringing the child and first and last names need to be used. Clocks are available in each room to record the time.

Parking:

Please park in the upper parking lot or on McVittie Road. No parking is allowed in coned-off or barricaded areas. Please use designated parking areas. Parking along the curbs is prohibited at all times. You must pull into a stall. Please DO NOT park in handicap stalls, even for a few minutes. Please do not leave children or babies unattended in parked cars. No matter how tempting it is to let a child rest while picking up another, there is a health & safety issue for any child left in a vehicle. The church and the school assume no responsibility for a child left unattended in a car while on church property! It is incumbent upon the parents to inform babysitters or other family members who will be transporting students of our parking requirements.

SECTION XI HEALTH, SAFETY AND RECORDS

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. A health inspection is given upon each child's arrival at the school. The child must be taken to his class by the parent or the adult responsible. The teacher will greet them and perform the health check. The person bringing the child **MUST** wait until the inspection is over before leaving the premises. Your child may be sent home if he appears to have symptoms of illness during the morning. In such cases he/she is immediately isolated from the others and a parent/guardian is contacted by one of the school staff.

What Your Child Should Wear:

Our dress code is simple. The only clothing not acceptable is clothing with symbols or words related to super-heroes or characters that might frighten a young child. If your child wears clothing of this type, we will change the clothing or turn the shirt inside out. The reason for this policy is to help direct the child into more constructive and less aggressive types of play. We will appreciate your cooperation.

Please dress your child in simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Also, **THINK OF MESSY ART MATERIALS AND OTHER MESSY ACTIVITIES** and think of our playground. Then dress your child in clothing that is washable and sturdy. Think of the changeable weather in Ventura (and the fact that even though the sun may be bright and warm at 9:00 a.m., it might be cloudy and cold at 10:00 a.m.) and dress your child warmly. Provide sweaters or jackets even on sunny days. It is much easier to remove an unneeded item than to put on something you don't have. Please mark all jackets and sweaters with your child's first and last name. If you do not have commercial labels, use adhesive tape and a permanent marker.

No open sandals, please! We want your child's feet to be protected from dirt, gravel, granite, fibar, sand and stubbed toes. If a child wears open-toed shoes, we cannot let them use the trikes or climbers because of the potential hazards to their feet.

Medications:

If your child needs to take any medication, whether over-the-counter or prescription, it must be in the original labeled container and be accompanied by a note indicating to whom, how much, when it is to be given, and must be signed by a licensed physician, even for over-the-counter medications. **Please ask the pharmacist for a second labeled bottle so that you may divide the prescription to bring only the amount needed at school, and keep the rest at home.** Any medications must be brought to the office--not left with a teacher, in lunch boxes, or in children's backpacks. Teachers should, however, be given a note to serve as a reminder if your child needs to take medication during the day, as well as putting a note in your child's lunch box for any medication to be taken during our afternoon program. Any medication left without a doctor's note, or not in the original labeled container, will not be given.

Illnesses:

KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME: (This is for your child's health and others).

- * If child has had vomiting or diarrhea the night before or within the last 24 hours.
- * If child has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hours.
- * If child is taking an antibiotic for less than 24 hours.
- * If child has a cold that is less than four days old.
- * If child has a heavy opaque nasal discharge.
- * If child has a constant cough.
- * If child is fussy, cranky and generally not himself.
- * Keep your child home even if he/she is just tired. Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness.
- * If child has symptoms of a possible communicable disease. (These are usually sniffles, sneezing, flushed skin, chills, earaches, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pain, a fever or skin eruptions.)
Please notify the school office at once at 644-9515 ext. 2, if your child develops a communicable disease (ie. chickenpox, head lice, pin worms, etc.)

YOUR CHILD MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL:

- * 24 hours after last episode of diarrhea or vomiting.
- * If the child has been exposed to a communicable disease, but the school office has been notified so that the incubation period can be discussed and it can be determined what dates the child should stay home.

Emergencies:

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we can't reach the parents, we will call the emergency number you indicated in your registration packet and/or the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or the paramedics. Until the arrival of a parent, the Director or person in charge will make all decisions about the care of the child. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by the insurance. It is for YOUR child's benefit that you keep the school office up-to-date on PHONE NUMBERS, EMERGENCY NUMBERS and other PERTINENT INFORMATION to help us locate you at all times!

Chronic Health Problems:

If your child has any specific problems, allergies or special diets, be sure to note them and verbally tell the teachers as well. Maximum consideration will be given to your child as an individual. We will look after the child's health and safety while at school.

Records:

Upon enrollment you must file a health form signed by a physician. The State of California requires that we keep health and immunization records on file for each child. A child's Physician's Report showing his immunization record needs to reflect that the child has had 3 Polio drinks, 4 DTP vaccines, 1 Hib (Meningitis) vaccine given after the age of 1 yr., 3 Hepatitis B vaccines, 1 MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) and 1 Varicella (Chickenpox). **All records must be turned in to the office before a child may attend class.**

SECTION XII
NUTRITION, SNACKS & BIRTHDAYS

We serve a mid-morning snack, as well as an afternoon snack to the children who stay for our afternoon program. Snack usually consists of juice or milk and cheese, fruit or crackers. Parents are assigned snack on a rotating basis and will be emailed the snack calendar(s). The monthly mid-morning snack calendars are posted on the bulletin boards of each classroom and the afternoon snack calendar is posted on the main bulletin board of the preschool.

If you forget to bring snack on your assigned day, please bring in a box of graham crackers or Ritz crackers, which is what we use for “back up” snack.

State law requires that snack menus be posted at least one week in advance and are to include a minimum of 2 basic food group selections. Only the snack listed is allowed to be brought for snack for that day. All food brought in must be store bought in original pre-packaged wrappings and well within expiration dates. Please bring enough for the whole class.

PLEASE NO SUGAR, PEANUTS, PEANUT BUTTER OR OTHER NUTS!

Birthdays:

We celebrate birthdays during the day as each class decides when that will be. If you would like to provide a special snack for your child's birthday, please ask the teacher for suggestions and provide enough for all the class. This will not be eaten at snack time but sent home with each child when they leave for the day. Your child's teacher will add special stories and songs. **No candles, balloons, red punch or grape juice, please.**

SECTION XIII
PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent-Teacher Fellowship:

Letter From the PTF President:

On behalf of the Parent-Teacher Fellowship, welcome to Ventura Missionary Preschool!

Your PTF desires to support parents in every phase of your child's development and to assist in the spiritual, social and financial needs of the Ventura Missionary Schools.

During the year there will be a number of activities sponsored by the PTF. Some are just for fun and fellowship, while others are to raise funds to provide extras for our classrooms that would not otherwise be available. Be sure to watch for notices sent home with your child regarding upcoming events.

The PTF Board is comprised of parents representing the preschool, elementary and middle schools. We meet monthly for the planning of special events. We welcome all parents to join the board in these meetings, and rely on many parents working together with us on committees for events. Please call the office for meeting dates or additional details.

We would like to have one parent representative from each class as a liaison between the PTF board and other parents in that class. If you are willing to serve in this capacity, please notify your child's teacher and we will contact you.

I look forward to working with all of you.

Once again, welcome!

Volunteers:

We are always appreciative of volunteers. We need and urge your voluntary assistance in programs, public relations, activities, recruitment of future students and other activities.

A classroom or office volunteer is a non-paid position that plays a supportive role for the children and teachers. By participating within the confines of the preschool policies and procedures, volunteers provide and extend learning activities for the classroom that we would

not be able to provide otherwise. Volunteers are often assigned to specific days, if extra supervision is necessary.

Parents: If your desire is to be with and play with your child, please do not sign up as a parent helper. If you simply want to observe or watch your own child, make sure the teacher and Director know your desire. Either way, if you are participating in one of our classes, it is extremely important to follow all policies and procedures designed for the entire preschool.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Make arrangements with your child's teacher for volunteering in the classroom.
- B. Before entering the classroom to volunteer/observe, please sign in at the office to receive a visitor/volunteer badge. When your time in the classroom is finished, please come back to the office to sign out and return the visitor/volunteer badge.
- C. Children see adults in the classroom as authority figures. Adults should be familiar with and follow indoor and outdoor rules. This will provide continuity and consistency for our programs.
- D. Become acquainted with our preschool policies and procedures. Confer with teachers for your responsibility.
- E. Ethics: Any information or observations which you become aware of, as the result of your participation with students in our classrooms, must be deemed confidential information as far as the general public and other parents are concerned. Children have rights of confidentiality, so we cannot share information concerning children that are not our own. You, as a participant, must practice this classroom ethic as well. If you observe problems, it is good to report them to us, but please do not be offended when we do not share things concerning others with you. We are protecting each child's right of confidentiality, but sometimes you may see things we don't see.
- F. If you are assigned to an area, always be conscious of the children's safety. Never take on more children than you can safely handle. If you are feeling overwhelmed, call a teacher and ask for assistance.
- G. Be firm when necessary, and kind with each child at all times in patterns established by the teachers and general policies of Ventura Missionary Preschool.
- H. Seek to be a HELPER figure. Don't do everything for the children, but encourage the child's independence with close supervision. You are a facilitator to their experience.
- I. Cooperate in maintaining a happy, calm atmosphere in which each child may come to know his/her freedom and limitations.

- J. Avoid enforcing external rules about sharing. We are trying to assist the children in learning kindness toward one another that is motivated internally. Ask to see "Guidelines for Disciplining." If you have any questions, direct them to the Director.
- K. If you are a parent helper, realize that sometimes children may become confused by having two authority bases, home and school, in the same room. For this reason it is imperative that you should know and support the policies and procedures of our preschool. If it is your child testing the limits, the teacher may need to take your child out and talk with him/her. The child may play the game, "Parent against Teacher." Please let the teacher handle it. We are used to dealing with problems such as these. If you have questions, we will address them later, and not in the presence of the children.
- L. If you don't agree with something being taught, or the way something was handled, feel free to bring it to our attention. We are happy to listen to other perspectives. (IMPORTANT! -- Please wait until we are alone so we may discuss it privately, unless it is to clarify something that will not erode the discipline taking place.) Your cooperation and support is essential for the children's security and positive experience in the classroom.
- M. Toys and slides are for the children's use only. If the adult is on the slide, etc., that means a child cannot use that toy and the adult is not supervising. We are to be facilitators of play, not playmates. We want the children to imagine and think for themselves as well as play and build friendships with peers.
- N. If you see children that need disciplining, take them to the teachers and observe their technique in handling the problem.

Helper Guidelines:

What to wear: Dress comfortably because our job requires walking a lot, bending down, and sitting on the floor. Please choose clothing that will not be ruined by finger-paint or other creative art activities. Pants are fine as well as tennis shoes.

PARENT EDUCATION for the large part, is through your active participation in your child's classroom environment. One way you can assist us is by sharing a few days this year, participating when we have a cooking experience, wood working or indoor/outdoor activity day. This is also an opportunity to observe the staff and pick up techniques and ways of working with children. Ways to participate without leaving home are: sewing, making toys, and collecting items for our learning centers (check with your child's teacher for their classroom needs).

Questions or Concerns of Parents:

We appreciate positive parental contact. We desire to be a school with whom you can converse freely about any issues that might arise. Please come directly to the teacher or Director with any concerns you have. We can only seek solutions, as we are aware of the issues.

Toys from Home:

Except for toys that are needed for security on the first days of the school year to assist in your child's transition, we ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in your car. We have toys and equipment in each classroom. We discourage bringing mouth toys for hygienic reasons. Instead, your child may want to share a favorite book or tape. If an item is brought, we cannot be responsible for it. It must be shared with others and must have the child's name on it. If you have a book or cassette that relates to our learning theme, we will appreciate your sharing it for curriculum enrichment. Just check with your child's teacher.

Please remember, **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD IN SUPER-HERO CLOTHING OF ANY KIND**, and do not send super-hero toys with your child, even for share time. These encourage non-constructive, aggressive play at school.

Items would include:

- jackets/ sweatshirts
- backpacks
- belts
- shoes/ socks
- lunchboxes
- shirts/ pants/ dresses
- jewelry

No Guns, War Toys or Other Toys of Destruction!

These items are prohibited in our program. When a child needs a means to express feelings of aggression - we suggest clay to pound (manual dexterity), hammer and saw to use (good for visual motor perception), punching bag to hit (to vent anger while developing perceptual abilities), and finger-paints to soothe jagged feelings while practicing a developmental rhythmic movement.

SECTION XIV
ORIENTATION, CONFERENCES, ASSESSMENTS, PARENT NIGHTS

Orientation:

When you enroll your child in our school, we assume the responsibility of giving you assistance with special needs in relation to your child's adjustment, growth and development.

The first day of each new year is a one hour orientation day for your child. Parents stay with their children that day. Please refer to the school calendar for the date for your child's class. There will be one Parent Orientation Night without children, for you to meet the staff and Director and to ask questions concerning the program.

Conferences:

Conferences to discuss your child's preschool experience will be scheduled two times per year. Feel free to request additional conferences if you have questions or concerns regarding your child. While we cannot take our attention off the children to converse with you extensively at drop-off and pick-up times, we will be happy to set up a time when we can give you our full attention.

Assessments:

All children approaching kindergarten age may be assessed for readiness and maturation when attending our Ventura Missionary Kindergarten. In order to attend VMPS Kindergarten, a child must turn 5 years old by December 1.

Parent & Family Nights:

Special nights are set up on occasion for moms and dads to join the children as participants. There is one Dad's Night in March and one Mom's Night in May. There is also a Christmas party in December. A variety of materials are provided with which you may experiment, create, use your imagination, invent, try out and discover the types of sensory experiences and emotions that your child experiences as he/she pursues activities in an environment geared toward self-learning and self-discovery.

Ventura Missionary Preschool Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the Ventura Missionary Preschool Handbook:

- From the website
- In the form of a hard copy (no computer access)

I have read it completely to become familiar with the programs and my responsibilities.

Child's Name : _____ Classroom # _____

Parent Signature : _____ Date: _____

This form is to be returned to your child's preschool teachers by the last week in August.