



# Young Explorers Preschool Handbook



## **Grand Haven Christian School Mission Statement**

*Our mission at Grand Haven Christian School is to educate minds and shape hearts for service to God in His world.*

Education at Grand Haven Christian School is Christ-centered. Our preschool program strives to educate 3 and 4-year-olds in a secure and loving environment permeated by awareness that s/he has a special place in God's plan.

**Young Explorers Preschool** is a workshop with children and adults living and learning together. In an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and guidance, your child can...

- \* Experiment
- \* Make mistakes and learn from them
- \* Discover and find happiness that comes from working and sharing with others

### **When our program helps a child...**

- to know God loves him/her
- to become more aware of God in our world
- to achieve a positive self image
- to wonder and ask why
- to develop good physical coordination
- to communicate with words
- to risk failure as a necessary part of growing
- to learn to accept and respond to others
- to feel comfortable with adults and other children
- to improve verbal, listening, and perceptual skills
- to love and learn

**then we have contributed to readiness for all future learning!!!**

### **Parent Visits and Participation**

You are very important part of our preschool program. We need your help, participation, input, and cooperation to have a successful program. Parents are especially encouraged to share information about their jobs, hobbies, and special interests at preschool. As a parent, you are always welcome in our classrooms. Just give a call if you'd like to spend some "School Time" with our child or just observe. We do ask for a few weeks at the beginning of the year to get our routine established, as well as a degree of independence for your child.

## School Cancellations

School cancellations due to inclement weather or other reasons are announced on our text tool REMIND, local and regional TV and radio stations. These include: , WZZM-TV 13, and WOTV-TV 8. Young Explorers Preschool is not in session when Grand Haven Christian School is closed.

## Fire Drills

Young Explorers Preschool holds fire drills on a regular basis. Children leave the room walking in a quiet and orderly manner led by an adult and followed by an adult. We exit through the playground doors to a designated spot on the playground a safe distance away from the school building.

## Tornado Drills

Young Explorers Preschool holds tornado drills on a regular basis. Upon an announcement by the principal or designated person, the students are led to an inner room or hallway in the building that has no windows or exterior walls nearby. The class then stays there until the "all-clear" signal is given.



## Lockdown Drill

Upon an announcement by the principal or designated person, the teacher locks the classroom door and the students sit in a corner away from any visual contact of a person in the hallway. Also, all window blinds are closed and the lights are shut off. Class resumes normal activity when the "all-clear" signal is given.

## Non-Violence Policy

We are all aware of the statistics and patterns involving violence and young children. Preschoolers are just beginning to distinguish between what is real and what is pretend. Often times, young children mimic what they see on the screen. Because of this, we have a no weapons policy at preschool. Toy guns and weapons are not permitted in the classroom. Any building of weapons from blocks or legos will be discouraged. We ask for your cooperation and support in this area.

## Serious Accident or Injury Policy

In case of a serious accident or injury, a teacher or teacher aide will stay with the child while help is obtained from the school office. 911 will be called immediately. As soon as possible, a call will be made to the parents, or, in the case the parent is unreachable, to the person listed on the child's emergency card. The child will be kept as comfortable as possible until professional help arrives.

## Health Requirements

We are required by law to have your child's physical form on file by the first day of school. You have received a health form which should be filled out and **signed by your physician** and returned to school by the first day of preschool. Vision and hearing tests are not required for preschool. It is extremely important that we have your child's immunization record on file. Please do not put off have this form completed by your child's doctor or the Health Dept. You will also receive a white information card which

must be filled out and returned for our files. Please inform us if any of the information needs updating throughout the school year.



### Health Protection

If your child shows symptoms of illness or is running a fever, please keep him/her home. A child must stay home 24 hours after the fever or illness has subsided. Inform the teacher if your child develops a communicable disease such as pink eye, head lice, strep throat, etc. Please call the school office if your child will not be coming to school that day. The phone number is 842-5420. They will let us know.

### Tuition

A registration fee is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. A portion of this fee is applied to the September tuition. Payments should be made directly to the school office and not placed in your child's backpack or handed to the teacher. No refunds will be made for illness or vacation. Cases of extended illness may be reviewed by the administration. Tuition is due the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month. If your tuition is not paid by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, a late fee of \$10 will be assigned.



### Withdrawal Policy

*After the session begins, a two-week notice of intention to withdraw is requested. All notices should be given to the school office. If a child's behavior constantly disrupts the class, the administration will assess the child's ability to continue in the program and will determine if the child should be withdrawn.*

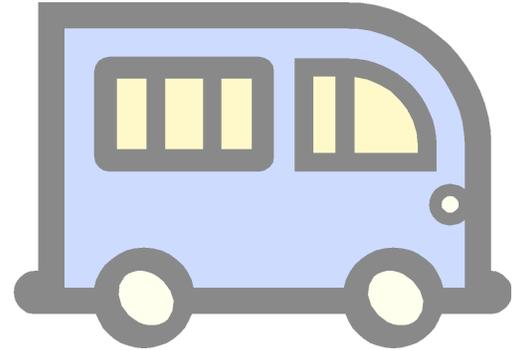
### School/Home Communication

Clear communication between school and home is vital. At the end of each month, we will send home a new calendar with a newsletter printed on the back. This piece of paper will include the wonderful books we have explored, Bible/Praise Time stories or topics we have shared, snacks and birthdays, the color, number, and shape of the month, snack assignments and birthdays, and special songs, prayers, or fingerplays/poems we are learning. The Home Bulletin, weekly newsletter of GHCS, will also be sent home every week via email. You are always encouraged to call the teacher with any questions or concerns. We want the very best for your child so no concern or question is too small.



## Delivering and Picking Up Children

Please bring children 5 minutes before class. Children will be released to authorized persons only. Please send a note whenever someone other than you, the legal guardian, is picking up your child. Preschoolers must be brought inside the building and picked up inside the building to insure their safety. Watch out for the marked bus zones at designated times of the day, they do ticket! If you are staying longer than just a drop off, please use the parking lot of First Christian Reformed Church on the Colfax street side of campus.



## Discipline

It is our goal that the attitude of the classroom will promote love and respect for one another. Positive methods of discipline, which encourage the child's own self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation, will be emphasized. Children are not born with self-discipline, it must be developed. Therefore, in an atmosphere of purposeful control, we have chosen 3 classroom rules which will guide our behavior together:

- \* We will respect the rights of others
- \* It's OK to make mistakes
- \* Give a signal

If a child becomes frustrated or angry, we have a "turtle seat" for slowing down. This is not a punishment or embarrassment, but a time out to enable the child to use the power within him/her to get control again. The child may leave the seat whenever they decide they are ready. In the event a disruption occurs that affects all the children, parents will be contacted. We use praise and applause generously. In an atmosphere free from fear and tension, our discipline will be governed by love and respect.



## Dress

Play clothes are a must for preschool! Even though we try to be careful and mix Tide with our paint, many of our activities are messy! Dress your child in clothing suitable for the weather, as we will sometimes play outside. Please LABEL boots, coats, mittens, etc. with your child's name to prevent mix-ups. In the winter, boots are to be kept in the hallway outside of our room and slippers become the footwear of choice inside our room...no ties, no Velcro; easy on-easy off! You can help your child be self-sufficient and independent by selecting clothing s/he can manage with little help. Encourage your child to zip, button, and hang up his/her own coat.

## School Supplies

Each child will need a tote bag or full size backpack. Print your child's name on the outside of the bag so it is visible to the teacher and assistants. Purchasing preschool supplies from the supply list is only suggested and is helpful in limiting the costs. It is also possible to support the program by



volunteering your time to make playdough, do cutting for the teacher, cleaning toys, driving for field trips, etc.

## Field Trips

Field trips are exciting to preschoolers and exhausting to parents! However, preschoolers learn a great deal about the world around them - where their food comes from, what adults do at work, and the wonder of nature. Encourage the children to investigate, ask questions and enjoy the experience. The 4 year-old classes will have opportunities for field trips throughout the school year. State law requires that each child be fastened with a seat belt. We will be asking for parent volunteers to drive for field trips. There will be signup sheets in the hallway for parent drivers a week before the field trip. Drivers must follow the following guidelines:

- Vehicle Requirements
  - ✓ Good operating condition - tires, brakes, horn, lights, wipers, etc.
  - ✓ No loose, heavy objects in passenger area
  - ✓ Safety belts in good operating condition
  - ✓ Children must ride in back seats only
  - ✓ Have a First Aid Kit (provided by the school)
- Driver Requirements
  - ✓ Valid Driver's License
  - ✓ No more than 6 active points on driving record
  - ✓ Provided with a list of children in vehicle with names and phone numbers of parent/guardians.
  - ✓ Proof of insurance coverage

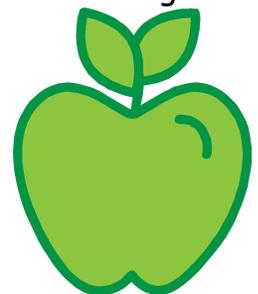
**Field trips are special times for you to spend with your Young Explorer. If you sign up to drive, please arrange childcare for younger siblings.**

## Reports (Otherwise Known as "Show & Tell")

"Reporters" will share their reports as recorded on the monthly calendar. This is a conversation time which develops language skills. At the beginning of the year, it may be helpful to assist your preschooler in thinking about 1 or 2 things to report about the item being shared with the class.

## Snacks

We'd like to promote good nutrition and healthy habits with our daily snacks. Your cooperation is necessary for us to accomplish this. If your child is scheduled to bring the snack, please bring enough servings for the children plus the teacher and helper. You should also provide paper cups and napkins along with the snack. The Preschool does have a refrigerator and access to a freezer to keep snacks cold. Beginning in October, the 4's classes begin focusing on one alphabet letter each week. The snack is one more place of exposure to the letter and sound is a fun way. If your child has a food allergy, please notify your child's teacher in writing. The snacks and drinks



provided should be nutritious with as little added sugar as possible. Here are some general snack suggestions that would be appropriate on any day:

- ❖ **Drinks:** We suggest that all drinks be non-staining juices such as apple juice, white grape juice, lemonade, etc. WATER is fine with all of us, but we still need you to include paper cups!
- ❖ **Fruits:** Apple halves with peanut butter(if no peanut allergies are present in the class), or apple slices, bananas, grapes (seedless, please), peaches, pears, raisins, watermelon, strawberries, applesauce, etc.
- ❖ **Vegetables:** Celery sticks with peanut butter or cream cheese, carrot sticks, pepper strips with vegetable dip, or plain, etc.
- ❖ **Cheese:** Slices, cubes, cookie cutter shapes, spread on crackers, or on a toothpick, etc.
- ❖ **Bread:** Whole grain, banana, apple, etc.
- ❖ **Crackers:** Graham, cheese, wheat, with or without cheese
- ❖ **Cold Meats:** Turkey or chicken cubes, bologna, turkey or ham slices, rolled up on a toothpick
- ❖ **Popcorn/Trail Mix**
- ❖ **Finger Jello/Yogurt/Pudding**



### Playing IS Learning!

At first glance, preschool activities may look like fun and games. We hope so! But take a more in depth look at some of the valuable skills children practice every day through routines, activities, and play at preschool.

**Coat/Backpack Area** helps children with:

Language Development	Weather Awareness
Small Motor Skills	Listening Skills
Adult/Child Interaction	Following Directions

**Library Area** helps children with:

Pre-Reading Skills	Sequencing
Story Telling	Predicting
Listening	Independence

**Table Time/Small Manipulatives** help children with:

Creativity	Following Directions
Spatial Awareness	Fine Motor Skills
Eye-Hand Coordination	Language Development
Pre-Math Skills	Sorting/Classifying
Pre-Reading Skills	Experimenting/
Pre-Writing Skills	Investigating

**Sand/Water Areas** help children with:

Taking Turns	Social Skills
Pre-Math Skills	Small Motor skills
Science Concepts	Measuring

**Writing/Art Area** help children with:

Pre-Writing Skills	Creativity
Small Motor Skills	Graphic Language Development

**Circle Time Activities** help children with:

Spiritual Development	Following Directions
Listening Skills	Non-Verbal Communication
Socialization	Language Development
Role Playing	Self-Concept
Pre-Reading Skills	Rhythm
Pre-Math Skills	Problem Solving
Spatial Awareness	

**Take Home Activities** help children with:

Language Development	Pre-Reading Skills
Positive Attitude	Responsibility
Home-School Connections	

**Bathroom/Drinking Fountain Areas** help children with:

Personal Hygiene	Independence
Taking Turns	

**Clean Up Activities** help children with:

Organizational Skills	Classifying/Sorting
Socialization	Following Directions
Self-Concept	Problem Solving
Responsibility	Fine Motor Skills
Safety Concepts	Sensory Exploration

**Snack Time** helps children with:

Language Development	Socialization
Cooperation	Practicing Good Manners
Sharing	Eye-Hand Coordination
Fine Motor	Taking Turns
Nutrition Habits	Being Thankful
Sensory/Texture/Taste	Taking Turns

Space Awareness	Socialization
Language Development	

**Block Area** helps children with:

Sorting	Problem Solving
Pre-Math Skills	Planning
Creativity	

**Housekeeping/Dramatic Play** helps children with:

Role Playing	Social Skills
Taking Turns	Language Development
Problem Solving	Nurturing Empathy

**Puppet Area** helps children with:

Self-Expression	Role Playing
Story Development	Problem Solving
Social Skills	Creativity

If your hobby/occupation/place of business would lend itself to an interesting exploration by our preschool students, we would love to know about it.

## **Our Staff**

Each staff member of the Young Explorers Preschool loves children and is devoted to Christian education. We feel it is an honor to be chosen for a child's first school experience. Our program operates under license for the Department of Human Service's Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing and under the authority of Grand Haven Christian School. The preschool staff is also certified in CPR and First Aid. GHC conducts background checks for all employees through the Michigan State Police and the FBI.

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842-5420

Teacher: Mrs. Barb DeVries  
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Aide: Mrs. Cindy Bakker

Our Preschool vacations coincide with the Grand Haven Christian School calendar.