

Covenant Child Development Center



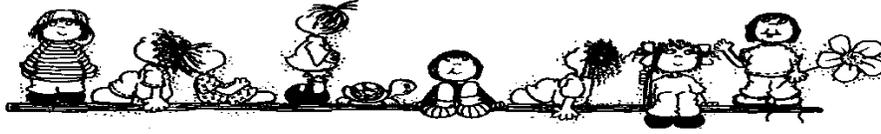
Handbook 2026-2027



210 Poppell Drive ~ Lakeland, FL 33813
863-646-6531
covenantcdc.org

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Covenant Child Development Center

Dear Parents:

Thank you for your interest in *Covenant Child Development Center*. We consider it a sacred trust and privilege to partner with parents in the nurture and training of their preschooler.

During the 40+ years of our existence the CDC has built a strong reputation in the community and most of our families learn about us by a referral from other satisfied parents. Families have come to expect from us -

- A safe and nurturing environment for their child
- Classes taught by credentialed, experienced teachers, most who have been here many years (translates into a low rate of teacher turnover)
- A Bible-based curriculum that integrates biblical truths into every day learning experiences
- Varied learning experiences appropriate to the developmental stages of two, three, and four-year-old children that readies them for Kindergarten
- Healthy teacher to child ratios that promote favorable learning opportunities for children

This handbook is a statement of many things about our school - our philosophy and program, policies and procedures, enrollment requirements, health regulations, and other general information. Please use it as a quick reference when you have questions concerning our school. If the information you need is not found, please call our office so that we can answer your questions.

Sincerely,

Katherine Boll

Director

210 Poppell Drive Lakeland, Florida 33813
863.646.6531

Covenant Child Development Center Mission Statement

The mission of the Covenant Child Development Center is to serve God by offering a Christ-centered preschool education to the children of those who worship at Covenant Presbyterian Church and the children of our community. The CDC seeks to glorify God and reveal Him to the students and their parents through biblical teaching and godly example. Learning experiences will be appropriate to the developmental stages of two, three and four-year-old children and will foster a biblical view of self and others.

We are a ministry of Covenant Presbyterian Church. We have a commitment to children, parents, and staff to provide an enriching experience. We believe that each person is created uniquely in the image of God. Our goal is to promote child development socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically, and spiritually, basing our curriculum upon the Word of God, which is the full and final authority.

Enrolling at the CDC

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, or ethnic origin in our admissions policies or in the administration of our programs. When a class is full according to required ratio, prospective enrollees will be placed on a waiting list and will be contacted when a space is available. Enrollment priorities are given to siblings of children currently enrolled.

Age Requirement

The state of Florida currently has established the entrance age for kindergarten children to be 5 years old on or before September 1st. Your child must be 2, 3, or 4 before he or she enters Covenant Child Development Center. **All children, even 2s, must be potty trained.**

Required Documents

The following information is required to be kept on file in all Polk County child care centers:

- Current immunization and physical forms provided by your child's pediatrician
- Registration form with child's schedule
- White Student Information Sheet
- Signed receipt of influenza brochure
- Signed receipt of the Safe Practices brochure

Communication

We believe open and frequent communication with you is essential for making your child's experience beneficial. Parents are encouraged to stay in regular contact with the teacher and attend important events, in order to be involved in all aspects of the child's care and education. We look forward to an exciting year of exploring God's truth with your children!

Monthly Notices/Information

Each month information will be sent home informing parents of what the children are doing in the classrooms. Notices concerning school events, holiday closings, snack menus, and other information will be sent home regularly. Please check your child's papers so that you do not miss any necessary information.

Staff Development

Our staff is composed of well-trained and experienced teachers who express love and concern for the children. They are encouraged to participate in various workshops to continually enrich their teaching skills and awareness of new developments in early childhood education. All teachers are required to meet annual in-service training hours. Early childhood teachers must remain learners throughout their careers.

The CDC meets or exceeds all standards of the state of Florida and the Polk County Health Department in order to provide a stimulating, safe, clean, and pleasant environment. Our classrooms are disciplined and orderly. Our license is reissued annually after inspections by the Polk County Health Department, the Lakeland Fire Department and the Department of Children and Families.

Operating Hours

The Child Development Center operates year-round, except for certain holidays noted on a separate calendar. Children should arrive at school no later than 8:30 a.m. in order to participate in all the morning activities. We close promptly at 6:00 p.m. If you are detained, please send an authorized person by the closing hour. A call from you will help us put your child at ease. **It will be necessary to charge an overtime fee of \$1.00 per child for each minute past our 6:00 p.m. closing time.**

Regular attendance and punctuality are very important for the overall development of your child as well as the good of the group and the program. If your child is absent, please notify the CDC office.

Naptime

Children will be expected to rest from 12:30 to 2:30 every day. Children must be able to remain quiet and still. If they do not fall asleep and are consistently causing a disruption, they will be asked to be picked up after lunch, prior to naptime.

Arrival and Release of Children

1. Roll sheets will be available with your child's name listed in alphabetical order. Please sign in with your arrival time and out with your departure time. The children are to arrive by 8:30 unless prior arrangements have been made.
2. If your child will be absent on a school day for any reason, you must notify the school via phone call (863-646-6531), email (admin@covenantcdc.org), or text to a staff member (teacher or office). Leaving a message is fine. Parents of children enrolled in VPK do NOT have to notify the school on a non-VPK day, unless you have pre-enrolled in special care for the day and we are expecting you to attend.
3. Children should be walked into the building. Accompanying your child to greet the teacher assures a secure and safe feeling for the day. Parents/Guardians must sign the child in on the child's class roll sheet; when the child is picked up, the parent or authorized guardian must sign the child out on the same roll sheet.
4. In the unavoidable circumstance that you must assign an individual to pick up your child and that person's name is not on file, you must add the new name in writing. Telephone authorizations are not permitted. Emails and texts are permitted. This may occur in an **EMERGENCY** only.
5. Children will be released only to those individuals whose names you have written on the white Student Information Sheet.
6. If the newly assigned pick-up person is not known to us, we will ask for photo identification before releasing your child.
7. Our staff reserves the right and responsibility to deny release of a child if in the sad event someone arrives for pick up who in our opinion is not in a condition to drive safely.
(Someone else on the call list will be notified.)

A child will not be released unless the above requirements are met.

Lunch and Snack Program

The snacks are prepared by a trained food service administrator who serves nutritious, well-balanced snacks each day. We follow Florida Department of Children and Families' food safety rules (Child Care Handbook 3.9.3) regarding the proper handling, storage, and serving of food. If a child is allergic to a particular food, we will substitute a non-allergen food item that serves the same purpose or fills the same food group requirement. If we cannot accommodate the allergy, we will ask the parent to provide an alternate food item for the child.

Monday through Thursday lunches will be brought from home. We will provide details about what to pack and what DCF guidelines to follow. Fridays we will be serving pizza, fresh veggies, and fruit.

Special Events

We believe that the parent is the single most significant person in the life of a child! You have influence that is stronger, and lasts longer than that of anyone else.

For this reason, we encourage your involvement in your child's preschool life. We will be having important events throughout the school year. You will want to attend and participate in these events

August

**Parent's Night - Information and orientation*

October

Parent Appreciation Breakfast

December

Christmas Program

March

Family Picnic

May

Spring Program

Your attendance at these functions is strongly encouraged and will foster ties between home and school that will build security for your child's future school years. We look forward to getting to know you!

**Children will not participate in marked event.*

Appropriate School Attire

For safety's sake, we discourage the wearing of loop earrings and necklaces, or bringing handbags containing small items. We recommend your child wear tennis shoes or shoes with a rubber sole. We request that your child **NOT** wear Crocs, flip-flops, or boots. They are safety hazards on our stairs and not really suitable for outdoor play on the playground. Please select clothing for your child that makes it easier to take care of bathroom needs more independently. One-piece outfits, lots of zippers, difficult snaps, and belts can be hard for them to deal with.

Change of Clothing

We understand that all children may have an occasional toileting accident. Please furnish to the teacher a change of clothing in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name on the outside.

Backpacks

Children in all age groups will bring a backpack to school. This practice helps children develop independence in keeping their school things together, and it provides a useful tool for sending projects home. Important communications to parents will go home in the backpack, so it is very important to **check it daily**.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings should be LABELED with the child's name. This includes not only sweaters, jackets, coats, and books, but also any other "treasures" that may occasionally be shared with the class. Toys should be brought to school only in conjunction with special opportunities the teacher may provide.

Birthdays

Celebrating birthdays with friends at school is a fun experience. Each teacher will have her own way of recognizing the special day for a child in her class. Parents often want to bring a snack to share with the whole class at snack time on the day of the birthday. According to state guidelines, snacks should be pre-packaged or purchased from a commercial establishment. Cookies, ice cream bars, or other not-too-crumbly treats work well. Details for birthday celebrations should be worked out between you and the teacher.

Preschool Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on knowledge about how children develop and learn. Our program supports the guidelines established by leaders in early childhood education and the standards set by the Early Learning Coalition. These guidelines help us make curriculum and classroom practice decisions with regard to the well-being and education of children. We understand that children benefit by a variety of materials and activities that enable them to satisfy their natural curiosity about the world around them.

Our curriculum themes for each month are developed around the biblical days of creation. Educating children about how God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th teaches them about God's character, His loving care towards all He has made, and His design for the institutions of marriage and family.

Each unit of study provides children opportunities to interact with the content through art, music, language, books, exposure to real life "creatures", growing plants in the classroom, and other experiences that combine to give rich life learning experiences within each classroom. Other academic components are incorporated into the creation curriculum, enabling our teachers to educate the whole child: physically, mentally, and spiritually. Each classroom's daily schedule has a balance between teacher-directed activities and free-play opportunities for the children.

Each child is a unique creation of our Creator God - learning and developing in individual ways. They will move from playing alone, to playing alongside of others, and finally to playing with others. Our instruction will guide them in learning to share and take turns. In this environment they can flourish academically and grow in relation to one another.

On Mondays, we have Good News Club in the sanctuary when all the children are together for a Bible story and songs. On another day we have Music in the sanctuary and sing lots of fun songs that are in correlation with our monthly themes.



Discipline Policy

Florida State Law requires:

1. Child care facilities must ensure that age appropriate, constructive disciplinary practices are used for children.
 - a. Children shall not be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating or frightening.
 - b. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest or toileting.
 - c. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited.

Practicing proper behavior and learning self-control is a normal and necessary phase of a child's development. An important lesson for a young child to learn is that he is an individual under authority and that his choices have natural and logical consequences. We also believe that behavior—the things the child says and does—reflects his heart. In age-appropriate ways we want to address the child's heart and his conscience. We will make sure that children understand the instructions or limits. We will use praise and positive reinforcement for correct behavior or good choices. Likewise, we will endeavor to redirect a child from inappropriate behaviors to actively engaging them in other more appropriate behaviors. Other methods of discipline that we believe are biblical and age appropriate are reproof, denial, and removal from fellowship of the group. The goal of our discipline is to lovingly move a child from correction, to restoration within the group.



Aggression/Biting Policy

We understand that biting behavior is not unusual around the ages of one, two, and even occasionally three years old. However, though typical of the age, biting other children is not a behavior that we can condone in the preschool setting. The first time biting occurs, the biter will be removed immediately from the other children and placed in time out. An Accident/Incident Report will be completed, signed by the parent, and placed in the child's enrollment folder. On the second occurrence of biting, the parents will be called to immediately pick up their child. The third occurrence of biting will require a one-day suspension from school; the fourth occurrence will require a one-week suspension. If biting occurs again, you will need to find a more suitable setting for childcare.

Dismissal of Unruly Children and Uncooperative Families

Covenant Child Development Center is a privately-run school and reserves the right to dismiss a child for any unruly, uncooperative, or dangerous behavior, some of which is outlined above and in our Biting/Aggression Policy. However, we are not limited to the incidents listed or described and are not bound by any specific timeline. The administration is committed to having students and families stay in our care as long as it is safe for the other children, families, staff members, and the child whose behavior is in question. There may also be incidents not described in this handbook that must result in the dismissal of the student and his/her family. Children who fail to adjust to the CDC's expectations, continually use abusive and/or inappropriate language, and/or show inappropriate physical contact with others, self, or property will be asked to withdraw. We do not have specialized personnel on staff to intervene in such situations.

Health Regulations

The enrollment packet contains a Parent Agreement on Health Regulations that outlines these policies more specifically. Your signature on the agreement is required when enrolling at the CDC.

Our guidelines are designed to protect the well-being of all children and to minimize absences for health reasons. When there are symptoms of illness, or other indications that a child is not well enough for group activities, arrangements must be made for that child's care at home. The center has no provisions for the care of children who are ill. If your child shows signs of being ill upon arrival at school, he/she will not be allowed to stay. If your child becomes ill during the school day, he/she will be isolated. You will be called so you can make arrangements to pick up the child right away.

For the protection of all children, please keep your child at home if he shows any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or more - without fever reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- A rash of unknown origin
- Conjunctivitis (weepy, pink eyes)
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Other signs of
- communicable illness

Head Lice Policy

- If your child is identified as having head lice or nits (lice eggs), you will be called to pick-up your child immediately.
- Your child may only return the next day with proof that treatment has occurred (product box, box top, empty bottle, prescription).
- Upon return, your child will be immediately checked for any remaining lice or nits. If any are found, your child will be sent home and the process will repeat until the child is free of lice or nits as determined by school staff.

Re-admittance Following Illness

Before your child returns to school after being sick please be sensitive to your child's needs and the needs of the school. Children returning to school should be able to participate in the normal daily activities. (Reference Parent Agreement in enrollment packet for specifics.)

Dispensing Medication

Dispensing medications accurately and correctly is a serious responsibility. **If a child is to be given any medication during school hours we must have a dated, written authorization and written instruction signed by the parent or guardian, as well as the original container with the prescription label on it.** A form to complete for dispensing medication is available in the office or from staff. (Reference Parent Agreement in enrollment packet for specifics.) The only OTC topical creams we are permitted to apply are sunscreen and diaper rash cream, and we must have the signed medication form for it.

Regarding Epi-Pens, nebulizers, and other medicine-dispensing devices, a parent must train multiple staff members in use of the device in question before staff members are allowed to dispense the medication. A signed form documenting the training will be placed in the child's enrollment folder.

Serious Injury

In case of serious injury, immediate attempts will be made to contact a parent or guardian. If the parents cannot be reached, persons listed on the Student Information Card will be called. The child's physician will be notified and, if necessary, 911. Your signature on the student information card gives permission for the administration to make decisions until you arrive.

For these reasons it is IMPERATIVE that you keep the school up-to-date on home, work, and cell phone numbers, emergency numbers, and any other pertinent information that could be needed in the case of an emergency.

Payment Policy

Tuition is billed at the beginning of the month. Tuition will not vary from month to month. All tuition payments must be in our office no later than the 15th of the month to avoid a late fee. The late fee of \$20 will be charged if tuition is not paid by the 20th of the month. We accept cash, check and online payments.

Financial Policy

The Child Development Center is a self-supporting, non-profit preschool. We depend entirely on tuition to meet our monthly financial needs. We base tuition on normal operating expenses which includes day-to-day operating costs and program improvements. For this reason, it is very important you remain current on your monthly charges. If tuition payments fall behind, the CDC is not able to remain current on its monthly expenses. Therefore, it is the policy of the CDC Board that no family carry a balance exceeding one month's tuition. If a family incurs a balance larger than one month's tuition, the child will not be allowed to continue in school. This serves as a protection for the CDC as well as protects families from incurring large debts which they will not be able to pay.

Billing Credits

As a result of our efforts to keep down the cost of tuition, credit for sick days, vacation days, teacher work days, or unexpected closings (hurricanes, Covid, etc...) cannot be given.

Tuition Discount

A 15% tuition reduction for the older child will be given when siblings are enrolled in our full 5-day program.

Tuition & Fees for School Term August 2026 - May 2027

Enrollment Fee Schedule:

Registration fee: **\$275**, non-refundable

Sibling Enrollments: **\$50** reduction of enrollment fee.

Cot Fee: **\$95** an annual non-refundable fee charged for those who stay for naps which covers the cost of furnishing and cleaning cots and blankets.

Tuition Fee Schedule:

Two-Year-Old Preschool Full Day Program 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

5 days (M-F)	\$960
3 days (M/W/F)	\$755
2 days (T/TH)	\$525

Two-Year-Old Preschool Morning Program *Before Lunch* 8:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. *After Lunch*-12:15 pick-up

5 mornings	\$640	\$680
3 mornings	\$495	\$530
2 morning	\$355	\$375

Three-Year-Old Preschool Full Day Program 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

5 days (M-F)	\$945
3 days (M/W/F)	\$740
2 days (T/TH)	\$510

Three-Year-Old Preschool Morning Program *Before Lunch* 8:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. *After Lunch*-12:15 pick-up

5 mornings	\$665	\$710
3 mornings	\$515	\$550
2 morning	\$370	\$390

VPK Wrap-Around Preschool Program *Full Day* 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

5 days (M-F)	\$700
3 days (M/W/F)	\$440
2 days (T/TH)	\$290

Extended Care (7:00-8:00 am & 5:00-6:00 pm)

Per hour	\$10
Monthly Flat Rate	\$70