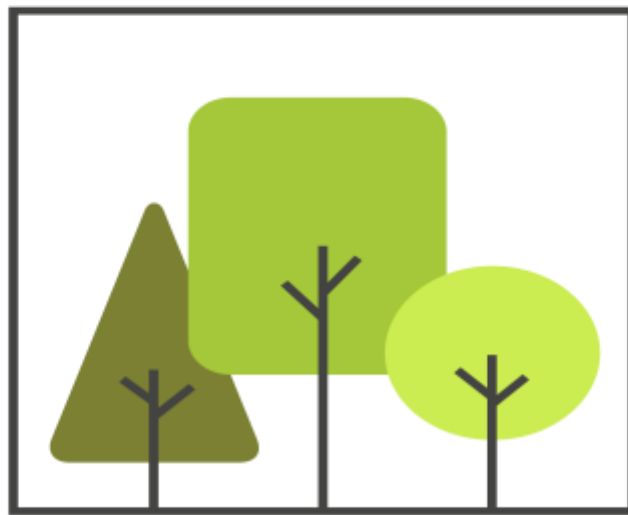


Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool



✠ KIDS at THE CROSS
WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL

Jesus said, "Let the
little children come unto me."
Matthew 19:14

TEACHER
HANDBOOK

Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool 2023-2024

Welcome Kids at the Cross Weekday Staff!

We are excited and feel very blessed to have you on staff at our preschool. We are pleased that you will be a part of our ministry to the children placed in our care. Your talents and skills will have a great impact on the lives of your students and their families. It's great that we are able to contribute to the children's early life experiences while sharing God's love with them each week. We thank God for each one of you!

The Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool program was developed in 1988. As the name suggests, this program is aimed at children ~ the children in our church and community. Our goal is to provide a loving and caring atmosphere in which children can grow spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and mentally. We do not just baby-sit; we are here to help children develop to their fullest potential. To help aid in this development, we provide a curriculum based on Christian principles. It is our desire that each child will come to know that God loves them, and so do we!

It is extremely important to us that our teachers have a positive experience while working in this ministry. The director, is here to help and guide you in your job. If you have questions or concerns, please go to the director.

The director is Trish Van Loh: (Cell) 817-528-5405

Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool is an integral part of our congregational ministry at Church at the Cross. Our staff is not required to be a member of this congregation; however, we want all teachers, parents, and children to feel at home and welcome to participate in any activities offered at our church. We also seek to share the Gospel of Christ with all the community as our children, teachers, and staff live their Christian example in this school and all other contacts with the public.

While performing their duties, all teachers are required to adhere to the doctrine, teachings, and policies of Church at the Cross.

Once again, we hope that this will be a positive and exciting year for you. May God richly bless you as you share your talents with these precious children each week.

Purpose and Vision

The purpose of the Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool program of Church at the Cross is to provide care, education and development for each child enrolled to enable them to reach their full potential spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially. This is to be accomplished by providing learning and developmental experiences consistent with the Christian principles of Church at the Cross. Our vision is to help the children encounter Jesus by showing and telling them about the saving, life-changing message of the gospel. We value children as people in need of a Savior, so we center our environment on the gospel of Christ. We strive for each child to experience God's love for them through loving relationships and happy times at school.

Objectives

- To have each child experience God's love for them through loving relationships with students and staff. To provide a development and academic setting where the child can socialize in an environment that is designed with a play philosophy which we believe enhances learning.
- To provide an opportunity for parents to place their children in a secure Christian environment for periods of several hours, allowing the parents extended latitudes and freedoms to care for personal matters.
- To help prepare the students for their formal elementary education.

Curriculum

We use the Wee Learn Christian Curriculum. This is a Christian-based curriculum which allows children to develop and grow as Jesus did. This guide provides a range of activities designed to meet the needs of children at their level of development along the growth continuum. This guide also provides guidance and activities in each unit to help each child develop language, pre-reading, pre-writing, and other foundational skills appropriate to his or her stage of development. Teachers are encouraged to use this guide to plan activities which will meet the specific needs and interest of each child; however, we do have many additional resources to complement our curriculum. Teachers are allowed to take materials home to plan; however, if the Wee Learn Curriculum is lost or damaged, the teacher will be required to pay \$150.00 to replace it. Our Pre-K and TK classes use many additional resources for academics to prepare the children for kindergarten.

Staff Responsibilities

A. Hours

You are to sign-in promptly at 8:30 a.m. to begin your day. It is important to be on time and have your room in order by 8:50 a.m. Please wear your staff badge and return this daily when you sign out. Children should be picked up at 2:00 p.m. You should be able to clock-out no later than 2:15 – 2:30 p.m. You will be paid for hours worked with a cap of six-hours per day. If you work our extended hours from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., you will be paid with a cap of seven and a half hours. Please make sure you sign-in and sign-out in the notebook provided in the second floor kitchen. This record is used to create payroll.

Upon Arrival

Three's and up, see car line procedure at www.katcpreschool.com. Parents will sign in their kids using the Brightwheel App. Please have your room in order by 8:45 a.m. Our rooms are shared by other ministries and things can be left out at times. Let's remain flexible and do our part to be as neat as possible. Upon arrival, bring in toys and set up all learning centers. It is important for your room to look fun and inviting for the children. Open blinds and turn on happy music. For 3's and up – Both teachers need to be downstairs ready for the carline at 8:50am. For 1's and 2's classes - One teacher must be in the classroom by 8:45 a.m. ready to SMILE and greet parents and children. We prefer that parents do not come into the classroom with their child. This cuts down on a chaotic environment so the children can begin playing and socializing with their friends. Parents should hand babies and toddlers over the gate to teachers. This helps with separation anxiety as well. ***Staff children should remain with their parent at all times. Do not leave your child unsupervised in your classroom while preparing for your day. You may drop your child in their classroom no earlier than 8:50 a.m.***

Stay & Play:

Parents will need to sign up using our google form for their child to do Stay & Play. They can find this form online on our website. If they need last minute care, they should call the office to see if there is availability for a daily drop in that day.

Upon Departure:

Parents will use the Brightwheel App to sign out their kids. If you are unsure about a particular situation, please discuss this with the director. We will notify you if a parent calls to let us know someone else is picking the child up. Parents will add additional pick up persons to Brightwheel. If they don't have Brightwheel, please verify with office and we might require a driver's license to verify pick up.

Late Parents: If a child has not been picked up when you are ready to leave for the day, please bring the child to the director's office. Please report habitual late parents to the director. Please remain kind, but allow the director to guide you in this matter.

Comments to Parents: Please only make positive comments to parents. Never compare children or give unwanted advice. If you need to share something with a parent concerning their child, make sure you do not do this in front of other children or parents. You can schedule a conference if needed. **(3)**

Room clean-up: Please clear off your counters and wipe them clean. Put all toys away properly. Separate pieces and put them back correctly to keep toys in order for the next class using them. Look in the home-living center for stray toys. Return supplies to the Resource Room. Please do not hoard things in the cabinets in your room. Clean items used in 2nd or 3rd floor kitchens!

B. Absences

If a substitute is needed, please call or text Trish and she will arrange a substitute for you. The evening prior, please call or text no later than 9:30 p.m. Call or text as early as 6:00 a.m. and no later than 7:00 a.m. the morning you need a substitute unless illness occurs after this time. If you do not receive a reply in thirty minutes, please send a text or call again. **Do not call the KATC office and leave a message regarding an absence. Please call Trish's (Cell) 817-528-5405.**

IMPORTANT: Except for illness, we ask that you not take off work without discussing the situation with the director. Advance notice is appreciated when you know dates you will need to miss work. Please try to honor this commitment to the KATC program each Tuesday and Thursday. ***Thank you for informing the director if you need to leave the building during your workday for any reason.***

C. Staff Dress Code ~ During Work, Orientations or Meetings

Staff should be neat in appearance. Our attire during work is nice casual. Shorts are not allowed unless they are right above the knee. Remember that we are in a public ministry and our staff needs to dress professionally. Sweatpants, shirts with logos, halter tops, midriff shirts, short skirts and short shorts are not acceptable attire. Please do not wear shirts or blouses that are low-cut. (Also, watch out for low-rise jeans that are cut too low in the back.) You will want to be comfortable in order to be able to play with the children. Staff will wear pajamas on pajama day and may wear other attire that goes along with our "special days."

D. Staff Conduct

- ***Cell Phone Use at Work:*** No talking, texting or looking on cell phones during school. *Parents are not allowed to text or call teachers during school hours. Direct parents to call the KATC office at 817-421-5437 and we will deliver their message to you.* If you have a personal situation that requires cell phone use, then come and speak with the director to receive permission to make a call. We are here to supervise children. Phones are a distraction that could compromise a child's safety which is also a liability. We should be watching, teaching and playing at all times. ***Please do not talk, text or look on your cell phone during naptime as well.*** Cell phones use is permitted in an emergency. Otherwise, please put them away and focus on the children.
- ***Parents & Guests:*** Be tactful and courteous to parents at all times, even when the same courtesy has not been displayed toward you. If a problem arises, please inform the director. We want to represent Christ while modeling a Christian example to children, teachers, and staff at all times while working at Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool.

E. Duties and General Policies

Staff Notebooks: This notebook has been created in order for our staff to work in a professional manner. Please mark your personal calendars with KATC dates in order to be on board as a staff member. (Especially our Staff Christmas Party!!!) Read all policies and guidelines in order to be able to carry them out during your work day.

Daily Notes to Staff: The director provides a daily instructional note on your counter in your room each morning. Both teachers are required to read this upon arrival. This note includes happenings, or possible changes for the day. This is required reading!

Staff Prayer Needs: Trish will come around to each classroom so you can share your prayer needs with her. You can always text or call with any needs anytime!

Lesson Plans/Supply Sheets: Your lesson plans/supply sheets are due monthly. There is a "Lesson Plans Due Sheet" in your Staff Notebook. While teaching, try to adhere to your plans as much as possible, allowing for some departure. Please be specific on your supply sheets. We do not use food on art projects, memory books or tactile letters without the director's permission. **Event Sheets** will be given to you monthly to make you aware of expectations prior to planning.

Toy and Supply Closets: We have closets that are for our ministry. Please return items in their proper place. We have a toy closet for babies/toddlers on the second floor. Closets on the 3rd floor are for two's through Transitional Kindergarten. We always need help to better organize and clean toys. Our budget doesn't always allow extra money for this, so any volunteers to help us organize with helping hands or ideas would be greatly appreciated. **Note:** There are many items that we are able to use that are in other areas of our building. We have sand and water tables and many other fun resources, so let us know if you are wondering where to find something you need.

Photo Books:

Our end-of-the-year gift to our KATC families is an online photo book. You will create one book for the whole class like a yearbook. The office will create the outline for the book and you just add your photos. **Reference:** Photo Book Instruction Sheet is in your Staff Notebook.

Creating Art Projects: Please do not walk down the hall and take art or project ideas from different classes. We don't want a parent receiving an art project in a younger age that they will create again the very next year. With so many ideas online, it might be a good idea to discuss ideas you've found with staff.

Duties and General Policies

Class Schedules: Try to follow your class schedule as closely as possible. For example, if you are going to be late to music, please notify the music teacher. *Never change your lunch or play time without discussing this with the director. We need to keep our ratios safe.*

Chapel: Teachers must participate with children in worship without talking the entire time to co-workers.

Music Class: One teacher is required to assist and stay with the music teacher. The teacher should show excitement while participating in all songs and activities.

Cleanliness/Safety: Please adhere strictly to safety and cleanliness standards. Maintain supplies and equipment properly and guide the children in doing this as well. We have been blessed with great resources, and we want to be good stewards by taking care of them. **Protect Clothing:** While painting or doing any messy projects, please have children wear paint smocks. **End of the Day:** Help children pack up supplies and nap mats and line them up in an orderly fashion. Make sure the child's face is clean and hair out of their face before parents pick up. ***Please try not to forget items to send home!*** We want our presentation at the close of our day to be as impressive as when parents arrive. If a child's clothes are covered in stains from the day, please change their clothes with their extra outfit if needed.

Focus on the Children: Make sure you are focusing on your relationships and instructional time with the children. Be mindful to create a plan that is filled with fun and learning while keeping activities age appropriate. You are in charge of your students and their classroom experience that has been promised to their parents. Come up with a plan for the flow of your day with your co-worker allowing time for planning together at appropriate times and dividing up tasks to create efficiency.

Snacks: Always wash hands before eating or cooking anything. Please have the children pray before snack time. We have a volunteer sign-up sheet for parents to bring snacks. Our babies and toddler snacks are kept in the 2nd floor kitchen. Two's and up snacks are kept in the 3rd floor kitchen. **Watch your allergy lists!**

Breaks: You can discuss with your co-teacher when you need to take a quick break. The older classes have a break when the children are at music, etc. One teacher is always with the children. Never leave the classroom without asking your co-worker if it is a good time to leave. Quickly return to continue supervising children. The TK teacher should phone the office when she needs assistance or a break.

Circle Time: This is an interactive group time for the children. Two-year-old classes may have circle time for brief amounts of time. Our 3's/Pre-K/TK classes are required to create a circle time to be able to carry out the purpose of their monthly lesson plans which can be thematic along with academics. You can also incorporate color, shape, scriptures and pledges if time allows. Teachers must take turns teaching circle time.

Duties and General Policies

Jesus in the Classroom: Be sure you talk about Jesus and put a religious emphasis during your day. Example, "Jesus wants us to be kind to our friends." "God made you special and I'm very happy that you are in my class." Pray when they share concerns.

Lunch Procedures:

- Set rules at the beginning of the year and supervise children well.
- Wash hands before lunch. (Soap and water...not just antibacterial gel.)
- All children will eat in their classrooms.
- Assist children in opening lunch boxes and opening containers.
- Send home lunch boxes without a terrible mess for parents.
- Pray before lunch and encourage children to use polite manners.
- Don't allow children to get up and down during lunch.
- Direct children in cleaning up tables and floor area.
- Teachers wipe off tables and clean the floor as needed.
- Eat outside when the weather is nice if you like.

Science Experiments: Parents are told that we require monthly science experiments in our toddlers through TK. Please incorporate a monthly experiment in your plans. There are so many fun science experiments for children to enjoy. Our older classes can even have science days. We have many science resources including pop up tents to compliment a science day!

Bringing Pets or Critters to School: Please check with the director prior to bringing critters to school. We want to discuss safety and maybe a note to parents first. Thanks!

Naptime: Please keep this very positive. Pray with the children before they nap. Play soft music while they rest. We must empathize with the children who no longer take a nap. It is good to offer a soft touch or quick backrub to reassure the children. The child does not have to fall asleep, but must remain on their mat while resting quietly. Please be patient, firm and loving during naptime. Don't make it too long for the children. If you have an area that works, you can allow non-sleepers to get up.

Toilet Needs: *It is best for both teachers to be in the room during potty times.* Let the child take care of their needs if possible. Never allow more than one child to be in a restroom stall. Please supervise handwashing, turning off faucets, flushing, and picking up paper off of the floor. We have no potty training rule but do require pull-ups for children who are not trained without accidents. Do not allow children to go to the restroom alone. Baby teachers check diapers every hour and change as needed.

Toilet Accidents: Accidents should be cleaned up immediately. The child should be changed into dry clothes. Never scold or shame a child for having an accident. We have a washer/dryer if needed. NEVER DRY NICE OUTFITS! (Send home wet in plastic bag.)

General Policies and Procedures

Outside Play Rules & Safety Procedures

1. If temperatures are too hot or cold, do not stay out too long.
2. Check play equipment for snakes, etc. prior to releasing children.
3. Hold gates open upon entering play area. Close gates while playing.
4. Children are not to climb on the fence.
5. Children shall remain in the fenced area. Count heads frequently!
6. Swing rules: Sit down. Hold on with both hands. Stop the swing before getting off. Only allow adults to push children in swings.
7. Slide rules: One person slides at a time. Children must sit down, facing forward.
8. Do not allow overcrowding in the play area.
9. Supervise safe and fair behavior in children while playing. Listen!
10. Teach children to respect the play area, toys, flowers, etc.
11. Make this a fun, safe and happy time.
12. Do not bring planning materials or busy work while supervising play.

**NO CELL PHONES WHILE SUPERVISING CHILDREN ON PLAYGROUND
STAFF MAY USE CELL PHONES TO CALL AND REPORT AN INCIDENT OR
TO REACH THE DIRECTOR OR THE KATC OFFICE FOR ANY REASON.
OTHERWISE, KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE CHILDREN.**

Staff Playground Rotation Requirement:

Please station staff around the playground to supervise areas around the perimeter of the playground. *Have a team discussion to create the best rotation while supervising children. It's fun to visit with other teachers, but please WATCH the children to ensure a safe and happy environment.* If an incident occurs, we want to be able to honestly tell parents that we saw what happened to their child. This is required while supervising children at Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool. Please remove broken toys and report any dangerous situations to the director.

Key for Tricycle Closet: We have tricycles for the children to share. The last class on the playground should put them away.

Sidewalk Chalk: There are so many sidewalks behind our building. Please use any of them while drawing with chalk. Please do not draw in front of our building. Thanks!

General Policies and Procedures:

Inside Rules

1. Encourage children to “walk”, not run, indoors. Encourage them to use their “inside” voices in the halls. Model this by using your “inside” voice during transitions. (Don’t stress about children walking in a straight line.)
2. Children are not allowed to climb or stand on furniture or equipment that is not made to climb on.
3. **Elevators:** Watch children carefully on elevators. Have one teacher walk inside the elevator while the other teacher stands outside to supervise the door until all children are safely inside. One teacher is required to stand backed up to the inside elevator door to protect children. Don’t allow children to push buttons!
4. **Stairs:** Be very careful when taking your class up and down the stairs. Teach the children to hold onto the rail. Have one teacher walk in front, and the other teacher walk behind them. Beware of flip-flops! They can cause a fall.
5. Chewing Gum – Please do not allow any chewing gum at school.
6. Keep play dough on the table. Hands and designated tools may be used with play dough, but not other toys.
7. Cover carpeting when painting at the easel.
8. **Vomit;** Please evacuate students to another room. Try to clean area with paper towels and put in a blue disposable diaper sack. Inform director and she will bring the carpet cleaner. Church at the Cross doesn’t have a janitor on staff.
9. Keep purses, teacher’ scissors and other materials under your counter.
10. Don’t allow children to run away from your class. Count heads frequently.
11. Children are not allowed to take security items to chapel, lunch, play, etc. No toys should be brought from home except for naptime items or show and tell.

KATC FOOD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The majority of our parents are very health conscious, and they would prefer their child not be bombarded with sweets, etc. Our parents sign an allergy list upon registration, and they are counting on us to protect their child. The teachers have a huge responsibility while monitoring snack and lunch time. We have some severe allergies in our program. It would break our hearts if we were the cause of endangering a child. Our office staff must inform subs of allergies in each classroom.

Please read carefully the new rules listed below:

- **NEVER BRING FOOD OR DRINK FROM HOME** to offer your students that has not been approved in your lesson plans. You must always have the director's approval prior to serving anything other than their lunch, regular snack and the drink they bring from home.
- **AVOID INCORPORATING FOOD IN LESSON PLANS:** Try not to incorporate food in your lesson plans unless it is for a special holiday party. Birthday treats and holiday treats must be brought to the KATC Office for approval. Special days such as a "Cooking Day" may happen in the future and your menu and ingredients must have the director's approval. We all enjoy food and lean toward wanting to use this as an activity. We can all find fun and exciting new ways to replace "food" activities.
- **MONITOR LUNCH AND SNACK TIME:** Staff must constantly reference your allergy list and be keenly aware of which children are allergic to particular foods. Speak to your students about not sharing food from their lunches. Be cautious about seating children with severe allergies next to another student. It is best to sit them with an empty seat in between these students. As co-workers, constantly remind each other to be mindful about checking the allergy list and watching to be sure the children are not sharing food. Inform any sub at the beginning of the day about restrictions they need to follow. This is extremely important to the children's welfare and safety.
- **LOOK FOR NEW ACTIVITIES BESIDES FOOD:** There are numerous activities for children to enjoy that do not include food. While sorting, we need to use pom poms, buttons, jewels, etc. We will not be using candy or food products. We do have to be careful in our environment about small objects which can cause choking.

Discipline ~ Positive is the best:

A well-planned day with smooth transitions and a variety of activities should keep discipline problems to a minimum; however, if difficulties should occur, discipline will be handled in a kind and loving manner. We do not think of discipline as punishment, but rather as a tool to help teach the child self-control, Christian attitudes, orderliness, and efficiency. God's Word will be our guide in evaluating these actions and in determining appropriate discipline.

There are two extremes of discipline: at one end of the scale there is authoritarianism, or total control of the child. On the other end is permissiveness. Children have a need for order and balance in their lives; therefore, disciplining with love calls for direction and guidance that holds the child accountable for his/her own actions as you teach him/her the consequences of making poor decisions.

The teacher is the sole disciplinarian in the classroom. You will tolerate actions acceptable for the age-level you teach, redirect actions whenever necessary, and stop any behavior that interferes with learning activities. Positive examples of behavior should be discussed with the child. Use of "time-out" to reflect the child's age (i.e., two minutes for a two-year-old, etc.) may be used. A private discussion with the student may follow to remind him/her again of the rules of the room. *THERE WILL BE NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OR HARSH ACTIONS TAKEN TOWARD THE CHILD. Never leave a child unattended in the hall, room, etc.*

You will set the tone of your classroom. Your attitude toward each child should show respect and care for that individual. *Harsh words, an angry voice, and physical force will not be used to discipline a child at Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool.*

The Director Expects Guests: Please bring the child to the director. The director and administrative assistant are here to help you. Never hesitate to come to the office for anything you may need. Please keep the director informed of any situation that may merit a parent/director conference. The director is always ready to support her staff!

Positive Discipline:

1. Keep your sense of humor! Most children really want to please. Keep the pace in the classroom moving. Focus on the children and not just your co-worker. Monitor how much you are visiting and not engaging with the children. Boredom sets up discipline problems, so offer plenty of activities for all types of learners. Try to be upbeat, happy and energetic with the children.
2. Children should be recognized and encouraged for good behavior. Celebrate the child's personality and try to approach them in a positive way. A child can feel if you don't love or connect with them. This sets up the desire for negative attention if they can't get a positive connection with you.

Positive Discipline:

3. Children should be given clear directions and guidance on the child's level of understanding. Verbally praise what you see that is right and good instead of mentioning..."we don't do this"..."you shouldn't do that." Instead..."I love how you are helping your friend." "How happy it makes me when you are such a great helper."
4. Children should be supervised by people showing an attitude of understanding and firmness in a Christlike manner.
5. Try to be positive rather than negative when correcting a child. Say," Please keep your hands to yourself" instead of "Don't push." Another example could be, "Please keep your feet on the floor" instead of "Don't climb on the table." Try to re-direct the child to another area.
6. Discipline is communicated by our example. Raising our voice in anger or losing our temper indicates that we are out-of-control.
7. Try not to take their outdoor/indoor play away. Children need exercise!
8. NEVER put a child to rest, withhold food, or leave him/her alone for punishment.
9. If a child becomes aggressive toward you or other students, remove him/her from your classroom. Please bring the child to the director for assistance. Once again, the director is here to help you. Don't let one child spoil everyone's day!
10. Use "time-out" or deny a privilege if a child continues to misbehave.

Parent Communication:

Welcome Message to Parents in brightwheel: Teachers will send a message through the brightwheel app to the parents of each child prior to Parent Orientation/Meet the Teacher to introduce themselves and tell them their room number. This is your first impression to share excitement about teaching their child.

Greeting Parents: Please be extra friendly and upbeat. Reach down and greet the child commenting on how happy you are to see them! Ask the parent about their weekend or their family. When parents feel acceptance, warmth and love for their child then they will feel at peace about leaving their child in your care.

Bio Letters sent out prior to Parent Orientation: Each teacher will write a bio letter to welcome parents to your class and to share some fun facts about you and your family. The Director must preview your bio letter before you sent it!

Parent Communication:

What to Bring to Class: These lists are posted on our website for parents to view. If your age group needs to be updated, please let the office know.

Parent Handbooks: The Parent Handbook is now online. Parents will not receive a hardcopy. If they have questions, please direct them to our website to view the handbook. www.katcpreschool.com. Parent Questionnaires will be sent home on the first day of school. They will fill it for you, the teacher. Please keep these in your staff notebook for reference. **Note:** Once a mom wrote that her son was obsessed with toy trains. The child was having separation anxiety along with lots of tears. We brought a train in the classroom and he was all smiles!

Folders and Notes: Each student has a folder to take home in their backpack. Please instruct parents to send these back each day. Our office will send various notes home to keep parents apprised of upcoming events. Teachers send daily or weekly notes in folders depending upon the age-group. Every parent loves a personal note with positive and personal comments about their child. Please give parents compliments about their child. It will touch their hearts and they will save this note! Document when you send a personal note in order to be sure everyone receives a personal note from time to time. We have cute shaped pads in our toy closet in Rubbermaid drawers that are nice for these personal notes.

Behavior Notes/Calls/Conferences: Teachers need to mention any incident such as a child being sent to the office to the parent. The child will go home and tell their version and then the director will receive a call from the parent wondering why they were not informed. Respect parents by only discussing their child's behavior with them. Please be careful not to speak to parents about negative issues in front of other parents. Never discuss a child with any other parent but their own. Open communication in a positive fashion is always the best approach. Offer to call a parent or schedule a conference. Ask the director when is a convenient time to have someone cover your class for a conference.

Discussing Children in Your Class: Please be discerning before you vent about the children in your class to another staff member. Keep this discussion between you and your co-worker and the director. Please do not seek out the teacher who had the child the previous year. Children grow and change developmentally so quickly over the summer and we want to meet the child where they are with a fresh new start.

Change of Plans: If you inform parents of a special event in your classroom and you change your plans, please use the Brightwheel App to communicate with parents! This may give parents a chance to pack backpacks accordingly. A heads up is appreciated!

Parent Communication:

Working Parents: We are fortunate to have several children who have parents who work full time but love our setting for part of their child's childcare experience. It is imperative that we communicate directly with these working parents as much as possible. Please do not discuss a behavioral issue with their grandparent or the designated person who brings them to school. It is easy to assume that this is okay with their parent, but it actually causes a huge disconnect and makes the working parent feel left out. (Even if the child is a staff member's relative.) A call after school hours would be appreciated. You can even text a message (after work) to share something cute their child did in class that day. Thanks for helping us communicate!

Preschool Parties:

We will have planned parties at the following times: Thanksgiving Feasts, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. All parties need to be held during school hours and will be kept very simple. Our focus at Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool for Christmas is Baby Jesus. We do not create art projects with Santa. This is a short window to share God's greatest gift to us! We do not celebrate Halloween so do not create any crafts with a focus on Halloween. Our focus is Pumpkin Praise and the celebration of fall! We do not celebrate Saint Patrick's Day at KATC. If you consider celebrating any holiday that is not mentioned above, please see the director prior to planning.

Birthdays: Keep celebrations for the children simple. Parents may send a store bought peanut free mini hand-held treat for a birthday snack for the class. Create a plan to celebrate "unbirthdays" for summer birthdays.

Birthday Invitations for Parties Outside of School: Parents may send invitations home in class folders if the entire class is invited. Otherwise, they must mail them. All staff must enforce this rule so we will not participate in hurting a child's feelings.

Never plan parties for your class off campus without informing the director.

Allergies: **We are a PEANUT FREE facility** Parents inform us of an allergy on the registration form so we will provide a complete list before school starts. If allergies arise during the school year, please report them to the office. Please be careful to watch out for any peanut products in lunches and contact the office if you find any. All snacks and classroom supplies will follow this guideline.

EPI-PEN GUIDELINES: If you have a child in your class with a severe allergy and they need an epi-pen, please have them fill out an epi-pen form. You **MUST** put epi-pen in a sling backpack and wear **AT ALL TIMES** when the child is in school that day.

Sunscreen or Mosquito Spray: Parents may want to leave these products for you to apply to their child. Encourage parents to apply sunscreen prior to school. This can be time consuming and take time away from other students. You may apply mosquito spray only to the child who brings it to school.

Maintenance Requests Forms: If you notice anything or a parent reports something broken or unsafe in any area of our preschool building, please let the preschool office know. We will report to the church facility director to get the repairs done.

Salary:

Your salary will be determined by the director. Your salary is based on the hours you work with a cap of six-hours per day or a cap of seven and a half hours if you work our extended session. You are not paid over six hours unless a specific agreement has been made for a particular task, etc. FICA and withholding will be deducted from your salary. ***Never discuss salaries with other employees. This is personal, and would be grounds for termination.***

Pay days will be the 5th day of each month. If the 5th falls on a Wednesday, you will receive your check on Thursday, the 6th. You are given the option of direct deposit, or we will put your check in your staff mailbox located in the 2nd floor kitchen. All holidays will be unpaid vacation days. We will arrange and pay for the services of a substitute in your absence. You will not receive pay for missed days.

Commitment Contracts: Each KATC Staff Member will be asked to sign a "Commitment Contract" at the beginning of our year. In order to have a successful and professional year, we need a commitment from August through May. We appreciate each employee honoring this to be best of their ability.

Supervision and Evaluation:

Each teacher will be evaluated by the director once per Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool year and periodically at the discretion of the director. If the director perceives any problems with your performance, she will discuss them privately with you.

Termination:

You must give two weeks notice if you plan on leaving for any reason. The director may terminate your employment at any time. Some examples of reasons for termination are listed below but not limited to:

- excessive tardiness
- discussing salaries
- unable to follow program guidelines and philosophy
- unable to communicate and follow director's lead
- causing problems with co-worker and other staff
- social media postings that are inappropriate for KATC
- breaking policies in the Teacher Handbook

Grievances:

Staff members having problems with a parent, child, or another staff member are to go to the director for advice and counsel, endeavoring not to discuss these problems with other staff. If the director is unable to resolve the problem, it can be referred to the Church at the Cross staff.

No Gossip Policy:

In our workplace, gossip is an activity that can drain, distract and downshift our job satisfaction. We have all participated in this, yet most of us say we don't like it. In order to create a more professional workplace which honors the Lord, we are making a commitment to create a GOSSIP-FREE environment.

GOSSIP: Rumor or talk of a personal, sensational, or intimate nature. A person who habitually spreads intimate or private rumors or facts. Trivial, chatty talk or writing.

You will notice that "gossip" is a noun – which means it is something you DO. That also means that gossip is something you CHOOSE to do and you can CHOOSE NOT TO DO. You enter into gossip by choice – you can opt out of the activity at work! In order to end gossip means to end a particular type of communication – and that can be talk, text, social media or email communications.

- Gossip always involves a person who is not present.
- Unwelcome and negative gossip involves criticizing another person.
- Gossip often is about a conclusion drawn without facts that can injure another person's credibility or reputation.

Promises to make in order to keep gossip out of the workplace:

1. Go to the director with all concerns first rather than speaking to other employees.
2. Pray for the person or about a specific situation rather than talking about it to staff.
3. Refuse to participate or listen when another mentions a person in a negative light who is not present. I will change the subject and remind them about our "gossip-free" policy and advise them to speak directly to the KATC Director.
4. Choose NOT TO RESPOND to negative emails, texts, social media posts, or use any of these types of media to pass on private or derogatory information about another individual from the workplace.
5. While off the job, I will not speak to another co-worker about people at work in a derogatory light. I will not gossip or slander the KATC PRESCHOOL staff to anyone inside or outside of our workplace. This includes gossiping about a child who is enrolled or their parents. I will never gossip about any situation to a KATC STAFF OR PARENT.
6. If a co-worker does something unethical, against policies or procedures, or disruptive behavior, I will be responsible and report this to the KATC Director. All KATC Staff has the responsibility to uphold policies that affect this program.
7. I will mind my own business, do good work, be a professional adult and expect the same from my co-workers.

Teachers with Children enrolled in Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool:

Tuition: Staff will receive half-price tuition for their children enrolled in our program. We also honor staff with grandchildren in our program.

Tuition is due by the 5th of each month.

If late, an additional \$10.00 late fee will be required.

Registration/Activity Fee: nonrefundable

The discount for this fee for teachers is half-price and is non-refundable.

This is due upon registration unless otherwise arranged with the director.

Childcare for Staff Children:

We provide childcare at all orientations and teacher meetings for your children. We also provide childcare at staff parties. We do not provide childcare for CPR training.

Teacher Training

New Teacher Orientation: All new teachers are required to attend a brief orientation to introduce them to policies, procedures and methods that are unfamiliar to them as new employees.

Teacher Orientation: This day is a mandatory training day that is a vital tool to promote new ideas and preparation for the upcoming Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool year. This day provides an exciting kick-off to a new year. It's filled with fun, fellowship and, of course, food!

Create the Classrooms Day: Staff will meet briefly with teams and get to work while creating a fun and inviting classroom. The director will come by to briefly meet with teams to answer any questions or assist as needed.

Note: Please come to the director if you need help finding new ideas or extra input in any area of the program. The director is available to schedule a meeting with you whenever needed. We want you to feel confident and excited about teaching.

CPR Training: All teachers are required to be CPR certified. The director will schedule classes and pay for your training. We do not provide childcare.

Background Checks

Kids at the Cross Weekday Preschool requires all employees to undergo a background check prior to employment. This is to help ensure a safe environment for our children.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse:

If you suspect any abuse or neglect of a child, please inform the director immediately.

Cameras/Building: We are fortunate to have cameras in the ceilings of this preschool building. They are also outdoors around the perimeter of our building. We lock down after drop off and open again during pick up.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures:

Fire Drill: (We will have fire drills two times during our preschool year.)

In case of fire, the buildings must be evacuated immediately using posted evacuation routes. A teacher in each classroom should take the class list and lead the children from the building. The administrative assistant and receptionist will help carry the infants and toddlers out of the building. We will meet at the front parking lot close to the Bessant House. The children should be taken as far away from the building as possible.

Evacuation: The director will remain in the building until everyone is evacuated. Once the children have been evacuated and taken to the indicated safe area, they should be kept as calm and as quiet as possible. Wait for further instructions. The director will meet the fire officials, and the children will be transferred to another place as directed by authorities. Once children are outside, the teacher should immediately check the class list to determine if all children are out of the building. The director will check the restrooms and classrooms for children inadvertently left inside. Teachers should notify the director immediately if any children are not accounted for.

Note: At the beginning of the year, prepare the older children concerning fire safety. Read stories...practice stop, drop and roll. Tell them about the "alarm" and the evacuation. This will prepare them to be ready for our fire drills without so many tears.

Tornado Alert: We will all quickly bring the children to "The Theater" located on the first floor of our building. This is also our "music" room at KATC. Sit the children against the walls and encourage the older children to duck and cover. Preschoolers may become frightened and keeping the children calm and safe is our main goal.

We will call parents for early pick- ups if needed on inclement weather days.

Health Guidelines:

1. Teachers should always wear gloves when changing diapers, assisting in the restroom, or handling blood.
2. Tables should be cleaned with disinfectant cleaner.
3. Wipe counters with Lysol wipes.
4. Wash children's hand with soap and not just antibacterial gel.
5. Mats will be sprayed with Lysol Spray daily and cleaned with bleach water as needed.
6. Clean toys with disinfectant cleaner.
7. Make sure parents are sending items for lunch that do not require refrigeration.

Accidents/Incident Report Notebooks:

If an injury occurs, keep the child calm and take them to the office if the child can be moved. The office staff will inform parents of accidents occurring during preschool. You may also send home a written "boo-boo" report to explain the incident. Please follow the guidelines in your Incident Folder in your room.

Medications:

Only the office staff will administer medications. Teachers should not accept any medication from parents. Please refer parents to the KATC office to fill-out the proper forms. This is a very strict policy. No medication is allowed in the child's backpack. EPI-PENS are the exemption to this rule. They will be kept with the teachers at all times and teachers will be trained on how to use them.

Staff, Parents, Children Illness: Our policy is that when anyone is ill, they are not allowed to come into our preschool building. They should phone the KATC office or the director's cell. If a parent mentions that they are ill with fever, etc., please remind them that our policy is for them to call the office and someone will come downstairs and get their well-child from their car by our front doors and will take them to their class. This includes siblings who are not enrolled in our program who ride with them for drop-off and pick-up. **One teacher may have to help us retrieve well children.**

Vomit, diarrhea, or fever: If a child in your classroom is experiencing any of these symptoms, we will call the parents to pick them up. If a child has loose stools but not totally diarrhea, then wait to see if it happens a second time. If the odor is very foul and you are sure the child is ill, then we will not wait until a second episode to call.

Pink Eye: If a child's eye is red with mucus oozing from the tear duct area, the parent should be called to pick up the child and seek a doctor's attention. The child should be on medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school. **Rash:** If a child has a rash at drop-off, don't be shy to take the parent aside and quietly question if they have seen a doctor about this.

Staff Do Not Diagnose Children: We are not equipped or trained to diagnose a child in any area. Always suggest that parents work with their Pediatrician to receive the best advice and care for their child. Beware of giving unsolicited advice.

Biting Can Be a Problem: Biting is a common occurrence among the youngest of preschoolers. Teachers please make notes after a biting incident including the following: what happened right before the bite occurred, who was the biting child playing with, who was bitten, did a child do something to cause the aggressor to bite and where the biting child was when the bite occurred.

- Wash the bitten area with soap and water; pat dry.
- Ice packs for boo-boos are in the 2nd floor kitchen; apply to bitten area.
- One teacher writes a note by following the above suggestions and bring to the director's office.
- Fill out a Boo-Boo Report to send home to parent of the child who was bitten. Do not mention the biter's name on this note or in person to anyone except your co-worker and the director. This includes other staff members.
- Send note home or speak privately with the biter's parents. Be sensitive!

Children bite for several reasons including: Taken from The Children's Center, a facility for children & families

- Lack of speaking skills
- Anger
- Violation of personal space
- Excitement
- Sensitivity to light, sound and activity level
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Experimenting to see what will happen
- Need for more active play
- Feeling tired or hungry
- Teething
- Need for oral stimulation

Understanding this helps teachers evaluate and prevent further occurrences.

- When you see a child bite...Intervene by using a firm voice, "No biting...biting hurts!"
- Teachers give ALL attention to the bitten child, helping to soothe and calm him/her. Showing concern teaches other children empathy.
- Paying too much attention to the biter negatively reinforces the behavior.
- Re-direct the biter to a sensory activity that is calming to reduce tension while eliminating the need to bite.
- Ask parents to support positively realizing that this is a normal occurrence. Ask the parent about teething and products that may be used to soothe gums.
- Refrain from calling a child, "the biter." We don't want to label a child and intimidate them into taking on this identity.
- If a child bites more than once during the day, then call parents to pick him/her up early in order to let them calm down. They are allowed to return to school the next day.
- Preschool is to socialize children, and we will give every effort to help the child learn that biting is inappropriate without dropping the child from the program.
- Older Children should be led in a Circle Time to talk about feelings and why biting is hurtful both physically and to the hurt child's feelings.