



PRESCHOOL

Parent Handbook

2026-2027

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” - 1 Peter 2:9

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VISION

Mercy Culture Preschool's exists to take students from corporate encounters with God to daily personal encounters with God.

MISSION

The purpose of Mercy Culture Preschool is to partner with families to develop Kingdom Leaders by equipping the whole student - spirit, mind & body through presence driven discipleship.

Jeremiah 29:11 states that God has a plan and purpose for every individual. Our goal is for each child to have a keen understanding of their identity as sons and daughters. Providing opportunities for each child to begin to develop skills which will be foundational for learning their purpose and preparing for their destiny.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

- At MC Prep we believe Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus Christ is eternally God. He was together with the Father and the Holy Spirit from the beginning, and through Him all things were made. For man's redemption, He left heaven and became incarnate by the Holy Spirit through the Virgin Mary; henceforth, He is forever one Christ with two natures—God and man—in one person.

- We believe The Bible is the Word of God.

We affirm that the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, is alone the only infallible, inspired Word of God, and that its authority is ultimate, final, and eternal. It cannot be added to, subtracted from, or superseded in any regard. The Bible is the source of all doctrine, instruction, correction, and reproof. It contains all that is needed for guidance in godliness and practical Christian conduct. (II Timothy 3: 16-17). 13

- We believe in the Trinity.

It is the testimony of both the Old and New Testaments and of the Christian Church that God is both One and Triune. The biblical revelation testifies that there is only one God and that He is eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is one God manifested in three persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (I John 5:4-7).

- We believe in the Person, gifts and move of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is God, the Lord and giver of life, who was active in the Old Testament and given to the Church in fullness at Pentecost. He empowers the saints for service and witness,

cleanses man from the old nature and conforms us to the image of Christ. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, subsequent to conversion, releases the fullness of the Spirit and is evidenced by the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God that leads and guides us into all truths, and that His gifts are in operation today (John 16:23 and I Corinthians 2:12)

- **We believe in biblical marriage.**

We believe in unconditional love for everyone while remaining unwavering in our loyalty to God's Holy word. We believe that because God our Creator established marriage as a sacred institution between one man and one woman, the idea that marriage is a covenant only between one man and one woman has been the traditional definition of marriage for all of human history. (Matthew 19:4-6)

Elements of Culture

Values:

1. Health | LEADERS GO FIRST – **We remain healthy by prioritizing personal encounters with God, pursuing purity, putting family first, and protecting our sabbath so we can lead others in health.**
2. Forgiveness | IT'S NOT AN OPTION – **We love mercy, so we show mercy. Forgiveness is for you, not for them. There is no spiritual growth without forgiveness.**
3. Authenticity | WE DON'T DO FAKE – **We disciple through real relationships. We create an atmosphere for people to be open and honest by leading in vulnerability and transparency.**
4. Trust | LEAN INTO AWKWARD – **We build the trust, character, and relationships of tomorrow by engaging in the tough conversations today.**
5. Excellence | GIVE YOUR ALL – **We represent the Lord by doing the best we can with what we have.**
6. Generosity | NO STRINGS ATTACHED – **We don't give to get. We give our time, treasure, and talents from a heart of love with pure motives.**
7. Communication | DOWN SHIFT – **We choose to slow down and communicate clearly today, so that we can move forward faster tomorrow.**
8. Empowerment | OUR HEART, YOUR MIND – **We empower those with our heart to lead with their mind. We trade empowerment for teachability and humility.**
9. Feedback | HEAR HEAR – **We believe healthy feedback is a 2 way street. We welcome opportunities to hear what is in your heart, and we commit to clarifying what is in ours.**
10. Celebration | PUT IT ON THE BOARD – **If you're not having fun, you're doing it wrong! We make time to celebrate the little wins that create a big victory.**

11. Honor | **GOVERNED BY HONOR – Honor reflects Heaven's value. Honor protects freedom, creates safe places, and reflects a Kingdom identity. Honor is about self-control, not control.**

12. Stewardship | **THE THIRD OPTION - We manage Heaven's resources for the Father's business. The heart's cry of a good steward is, "It will never be mine; it will always be Yours!" When given the choice between an ownership or employment mentality, we choose the third option— stewardship. Our Unique Characteristics give perspective to what we focus on as a school. If "it" doesn't line up with our focus, we don't do it.**

13. Holiness | **Come In- We simply want to be like Jesus—holy, set apart unto God, and fully surrendered to the Refiner's fire. We know the closer we get to Him, the more we become like Him. Holiness is found in the presence of God. Our heart's cry is this: "Make me like You, Jesus! Make me holy!"**

14. Gratitude | **It's a Lifestyle- Gratitude pleases the Lord. No matter what we face – valleys or mountaintops – gratitude is the answer. Gratitude is the heart posture that seeks in all things to be thankful and glorify the Lord, because it brings you and keeps you in the presence and favor of the Lord. Because He first loved us, we will forever be grateful!**

Unique Characteristics:

1. Presence Driven School – **We are not built around people or performance; we are built around the presence of God. We consistently ask God for His mind and His heart for His school.**

2. Biblical Worldview – **The Bible is the highest authority. We are uncompromising in our commitment to filter our views, actions, and curriculum through the lens of God's Word.**

3. Consecration – **We choose to be set apart. Our desire is to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, not conformed to the world. While the world chooses and promotes sin, satisfaction and the worship of self, we choose to live above reproach; set apart for His purposes. A consecrated heart asks, "Lord, does this please You?"**

4. Spiritual Covering – **We are submitted to God under the authority of Mercy Culture Church. We know protection, blessing, and impartation are benefits of being fully submitted to our spiritual covering.**

5. We Partner with Families – **We are in this together. Healthy partnership requires families and the school to seek God's heart for the growth of each student. While spiritual leadership begins at home, we commit to supporting and equipping parents through the process.**

Leadership Standards:

1. Daily Encounters | **There is only one way to God, and it's through Jesus - but in Jesus, there are many ways to connect with God. We disciple people by helping them discover how they best connect with God and by teaching them to access the presence of God on a daily basis.**

2. Sound Mind | **We are all led by something, we choose to be led by the Holy Spirit. We have the mind of Christ by submitting our thoughts, will, and emotions daily to the Lord.**

3. Servanthood | We come to serve, not to be served...With zeal we minister to the Lord by serving His people and His school both in the seen and unseen. We believe serving is the highest form of leadership.

4. Unity | The favor of God is found in Unity. Our desire is to be in perfect unity with the Holy Spirit which brings us into unity with one another. When we lead through our values, we stay in unity. We understand that unity pleases the Lord.

5. Joy| We choose joy; regardless of our circumstances. In adversity, we know the joy of the Lord is our strength.

ORGANIZATION

Mercy Culture Preschool in Fort Worth, TX, operates within the structure of the Constitution and by-laws of Mercy Culture Church.

Mercy Culture Preschool is a drug, alcohol, tobacco, and smoke-free facility.

*****DISCLAIMER- Policies are based on the Texas State Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers. If you would like to see them, please contact the Director of the Preschool.***

ADDRESS: Mercy Culture Preschool, 1401 Oakhurst Scenic Drive, Fort Worth, Texas 76111 **PHONE NUMBER:** 817.332.3351

GANG-FREE ZONE

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang-related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas Law. These specific locations include childcare facilities. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of the childcare facility.

ADMISSION POLICY

*For admissions, we follow the school's policy on September 8th, being the age cutoff for admissions. For example, a student must be 5 years old by September 8th before they can be admitted to kindergarten.

Mercy Culture Preschool admits children of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities, generally accorded or made available to children at this center.

However, we reserve the right to prioritize applications according to the following:

- MC Preschool Siblings
- MC Preparatory Siblings
- MC Church Staff & Serving Members

Before admitting your child to preschool, *all fees must be paid, and the complete admission packet must be completed and submitted before your child starts.* The packet includes the following required items:

- Completed Application
- Signed Statement of Faith
- Signed Physician Statement
- Copy of Immunization Records or Exemption Affidavit
- Signed Payment Policy
- Signed Parent Handbook Statement*
- Emergency Authorization Form filled out entirely*
- Copy of Birth Certificate and Social Security Card

*Parent Handbook and Parents Rights will be handed out on Meet the Teacher night. In order for your child to start, both must be brought back no later than the first day of school at morning drop-off.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Mercy Culture Preschool opens at 7:30 AM and closes at 5:30 PM. Monday through Friday, twelve months a year from August to July with the exception of School Holidays, breaks and half days.

All children must be picked up by 5:30 PM; a \$35.00 late fee will be charged at 5:31 PM, and an additional \$1.00 per minute will be charged thereafter. When children remain on campus after our operating hours, our license to operate is at risk. To keep our preschool open and operational, any child chronically picked up late will be dismissed.

***Please see calendar on Mercy Culture Preparatory website*

TUITION POLICY

Tuition is billed on a 10-month or 12-month payment plan but may be paid on a biweekly, or annual basis. Tuition will not be prorated. Tuition is not set on an hourly or daily basis. Failure to pay tuition and fees in a timely manner will result in removal from the preschool program.

LATE FEE:

\$10 RETURNED/\$30 CHECK FEE

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Parents may withdraw their child from Mercy Culture Preschool after presenting a written, 30-day notice to the Director. If the written, 30-day notice is not given before the child is withdrawn from Mercy Culture Preschool, parents are held responsible for one month of additional tuition.

FEES

The Re-Enrollment, Facilities, and Academic Fee are non-refundable. These fees reserve your child's placement and help cover annual costs associated with preparing for the school year, including classroom materials, curriculum, facility improvements, and other educational resources.

If a student withdraws from Mercy Culture Preschool at any time during the school year, all fees previously paid remain non-refundable.

In addition, if the Academic Fee is being paid in installments throughout the school year and a student withdraws before the fee has been paid in full, the remaining balance of the Academic Fee becomes immediately due and payable upon withdrawal. Withdrawal from the program does not cancel or reduce the financial obligation for the full Academic Fee.

DISMISSAL POLICY

Mercy Culture Preschool reserves the right to dismiss a child upon one-week notice for serious behavioral problems or non - payment of fees. Dismissal may also result immediately if the Preschool feels the preschool, teacher, parent or child is in jeopardy or parents have not followed the policies.

***** See page 20 for our discipline, guidance, suspension & expulsion policies.***

ARRIVAL TIME

Each classroom begins with Connect with God at 8:45 AM. Children who arrive after 8:45 AM will miss this crucial part of their daily spiritual education and learning experience. We ask that all students arrive before 8:30 AM when possible.

SIGN IN/OUT PROCEDURE

When arriving at preschool, you will bring your child to the classroom and sign in on the Brightwheel App by scanning the QR code posted outside your students' classroom. When picking up your child, you will sign out on the Brightwheel App.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

The classroom **MUST** have on file the name, phone number, driver's license number, and relationship of each adult whom you have designated to pick up your child found on the Student's Emergency

Information form. **We cannot release a child to unauthorized adults.** If someone other than the parent or legal guardian will be picking up, the office must be notified in advance. A picture ID is required for anyone not regularly picking up your child. This procedure will be enforced for the safety of your child.

NOTE: Children cannot be released to anyone younger than 18 years of age.

Mercy Culture Preschool must have a current court order on file to restrict a parent or guardian's access to a child. Without legal documentation, both parents will have equal access rights.

PARKING

Parents must park in the designated VISITOR PARKING SPACES. Per the city fire marshal, vehicles are not to be parked along the curb and left unattended in the marked fire lane. That is a violation of city ordinance. Vehicles parked in the fire lane may be ticketed and/or towed at the city fire marshal's direction. Mercy Culture Preschool has no discretionary power and assumes no liability for illegally parked vehicles.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

During drop off and pick up, you may park underneath the awning. We ask that you do this in a timely manner to not hold up the drop off/pick up line. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please park in a visitor parking space. If your conversation may be more extensive, please schedule a meeting with your child's teacher to not take them away from the class for a long period of time.

We ask that you not drop off or pick up during nap time from 11:30am-2:00pm to not disrupt the classroom.

If you arrive to pick up while the students are walking to or from the playground or on a walk, please meet us at our destination and refrain from picking your child up while we are in transition for the safety of the children.

***If you are dropping off at the playground, make sure to take your child to the bathroom before dropping them off.**

VISION/HEARING SCREENING

According to the Texas Minimum Standards in section§746.629, the state of Texas requires vision/hearing screening for all four-year-olds. This testing should be completed at a well-check visit, and the results must be on form as well. Please provide copies of this screening to the Director of Mercy Culture Preschool.

IMMUNIZATIONS

A current record of the child's immunizations must be present for the student to enter into Mercy Culture Preschool Program. The child must meet all requirements for immunizations according to their age as determined by the Texas Dept. of Health or have a physical immunization exemption affidavit on file. Parents are ultimately responsible for keeping up with their students' immunization records. For more information on immunizations, you may go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunization

VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASE FOR EMPLOYEES

Mercy Culture Preschool has implemented the following policy for employees to be in compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Minimum Standard Rule #746.501 (27), requires a policy for protecting children from vaccine-preventable disease. While safety of our employees and children in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable disease optional to Mercy Culture Preschool employees.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Each child must have an emergency treatment authorization on file in the office. Parents are responsible for keeping the name of the child's physician, as well as the name of the person to contact in an emergency when the parent cannot be reached in our files. In the event of an accident or illness requiring medical attention, the child's parents will be called immediately. If we are unable to locate the parents in an emergency, the Director will call 911, and the parents will accept responsibility for payment for any expenses incurred as a result of the 911 call.

DISPENSING MEDICATIONS

Mercy Culture Preschool Teachers may not administer medications. Only the director or person in charge may administer medication to a child. Mercy Culture Preschool will only allow medication to be administered if it's prescribed to be administered 3 times a day (middle dose). If your child is needing medication during the day, the parent must sign the medical authorization log. ALL MEDICATION WILL BE KEPT IN THE DIRECTORS OFFICE.

ALL MEDICATION MUST BE IN ORIGINAL CONTAINER AND ADMINISTERED EXACTLY AS PRESCRIBED.

WE WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS.

If a parent or authorized guardian wishes to administer medication to their child during the school day, they must first check their child out through Brightwheel before administering the medication. Once the medication has been administered, the parent or guardian must check the child back into Brightwheel before the child returns to the classroom.

DIAPER CREAM

Items such as diaper rash cream and powder can be used on the child that brought it without having to fill out a form unless it is a prescription. If it is in their bag, it is implied that it is intended for the use of their child.

SUNSCREEN AND INSECT SPRAY

Mercy Culture Preschool will not provide or apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent. We ask all parents, if you wish your child to wear sunscreen or insect repellent, that you apply it on your child before they come to school.

HAND WASHING

A teacher will supervise the hand washing of each child as they enter the classroom. Students will also wash their hands before and after eating and after outdoor playtime.

POTTY TRAINING

For sanitation reasons children must be FULLY potty trained and in underwear before entering the three-year-old classes. If your student is not potty trained by 3 - they will be placed in the 2-year-old or bridge class until fully potty trained.

NOTE: If there is no room in the 2's for an additional child, you will not be able to bring your student to Mercy Culture Preschool until they are fully potty trained and then my return to the 3's class.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

We will use the traditional date of September 1st for cut off when enrolling students entering into our 4's class and above.

Staff-to-child ratios are in accordance with the Texas State Licensing Requirements as stated in Subchapter E of the Minimum Standards.

NAP TIME

Following lunch, children will be provided with a nap or rest period. Each child will be required to rest for a minimum of 60 minutes. Each student will be required to provide a folded nap mat and a small blanket or roll up nap mat; pillows are not permitted.

- ALL nap items must be taken home every Friday to be laundered.

LESSON PLAN

Each classroom will have the daily schedule and weekly lesson plan both posted in the classroom. Each teacher will create and communicate daily updates and monthly plans to parents via the Brightwheel App, newsletters, and bulletin boards.

ILLNESS

A child who appears ill will not be admitted to preschool unless approved in writing by a physician. **The following symptoms will be used as guidelines for dismissal, but are not all-inclusive:**

- Fever of 100 degree or more within 24 hours
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Mouth sores
- Infected sores
- 2 cases of diarrhea in an hour
- Severe itching of body, scalp; or scratching of the scalp
- Pinkeye - conjunctivitis, viral or bacterial
- Difficult or rapid breathing, persistent coughing

Parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately if signs of illness occur during the school day. We are asking that all parents partner with us by ensuring that their student is picked up within 60 minutes of contact and does not return to school prior to being 24 hour symptom and fever free without medication. This is for the health and safety of all students attending Mercy Culture Preschool.

Mercy Culture Preschool will notify parents when an illness needs attention or is contagious. The child will be isolated until the parent can pick up the child. A doctor's note stating what your child had and is NO LONGER contagious will be required for your child to be readmitted into preschool.

PARENT CONCERNING INJURIES AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Parents will be notified when a child has been exposed to a communicable disease within school. Parents should likewise notify the school when children are exposed to a disease outside of preschool.

In case of a child being hurt, the parent will be notified. An accident report will be written up and signed by a teacher, witness, parent and director or person in charge. A copy will be made and kept in the teacher's file, the child's file, and the parent will also receive a copy to take home.

If the injury is serious enough that it requires immediate attention, 911 will be called, a designated person will stay with the child at which time the director or person in charge will contact the parents. If the parent cannot be reached, the director or person in charge will call all the people on the emergency contact lists until someone is reached. In case of severe injury or communicable disease reportable to the CDC, a report will be written and the state will be informed.

If it is a communicable disease, the child will be separated from the other students and the parents will be contacted and asked to come pick up the child.

DRESS CODE POLICY

Shirts

- MC Prep Polos purchased from Lands End is required *daily* aside from Fridays for all K4 students
- Shirts must touch the beltline and never expose midriff
- No spaghetti straps, backless attire and off the shoulder tops

Dresses, Jumpers, Rompers Skirts, Shorts, Pants, and Jeans

- Dresses & skirts shall be worn at a length that is mid-thigh or longer and must have shorts underneath
- Shorts must be mid-thigh or longer
- Rompers & jumpsuits are discouraged

Shoes

- Shoes **MUST** be worn at all times.
- Only secure, well-fitting shoes are allowed for the safety of the students.
- Children are required to wear closed-toe shoes each day. Unsafe footwear is not permitted (i.e., Crocs, sandals, slippers, play/kids heels & backless shoes)
- Shoes must be accessible for all children 3+ to put on by themselves. High-Top or other difficult to put on shoes are discouraged. (*Velcro shoes are preferred*)

Hair, nails & makeup

- Hair shall be neat, clean, and well groomed, and worn in a style and color that is not distracting
- Makeup for preschool students is not allowed

- Nails may be painted for girls (boys cannot wear nail polish), but fake nails are discouraged

Miscellaneous

- All garments must be sized appropriately
- Proper undergarments shall be worn at all times
- No pajama wear of any type except, on campus designated days
- Ball caps, beanies, headbands, bows, clips & sunglasses may be worn but understand that they are easily misplaced
- During the colder months, warm coats, jackets, hats & gloves are required

****ALL ITEMS NEED TO BE LABELED WITH CHILD'S NAME**

FOOD ALLERGY PLAN

Every child in our care, who has a food allergy, must have an emergency food allergy plan. This plan is an individualized plan prepared by the child's health care professional that includes:

- A list of each food the child is allergic to
- Possible symptoms if exposed to a food on the list
- The steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction
- Signature of the health care provider and the parent/guardian
- If a student has a severe allergy, we will ensure that class is free of that food

FOOD INTOLERANCE OR SENSITIVITY

If your child has any type of food sensitivity or intolerance that is not considered a diagnosed allergy, we ask that you state that on your child's emergency information form. We will also need to know if you will be bringing your child's meals daily or if we can continue to provide our school-made lunches and snacks.

NOTE: We cannot provide any food substitutions or withhold giving any part of the school provided meals due to state regulations unless a substitute is provided by the parents.

LUNCH & SNACKS

A hot lunch and snacks (morning and afternoon) are provided for the children every day and meets nutritional requirements by Licensing in Subchapter Q,§746.3301.

- Menus are sent home and are posted in each classroom.
- You may send a packed lunch with your child on any given day.

- We are unable to refrigerate or heat any lunches from home, so please pack a cold pack if necessary.
- Things that are not allowed in lunches are anything with peanuts, sugary drinks or candy (this includes cookies and brownies).
- Grapes must also be cut in half to avoid choking.

***When children bring their own lunch from home, the school is not responsible for its nutritional value or meeting the daily nutritional needs of the child but *must* meet the classroom allergy restrictions (if applicable).**

BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday will be celebrated at Mercy Culture Preschool during the school year. If you wish, you may send a store bought/package birthday treat for your child's class. Please check with your child's teacher about what are appropriate birthday treats for each age. Please let your child's teacher know in advance. The teacher will tell you how many children there are in the class and if there are any allergies. We ask that invitations to birthday parties outside of the preschool will only be distributed if there is one for each child in the class (to spare hurt feelings).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Mercy Culture Preschool is committed to providing children with daily opportunities for physical activity that support healthy growth, development, and overall well-being. Each classroom will provide children with at least two opportunities each day for active play, including outdoor play when weather conditions permit or indoor active play when outdoor activities are not appropriate.

There will be a daily schedule posted in the classroom with the hours of outdoor play, and this should also be communicated by the teacher. If the weather does not permit outdoor activities, such as temperature over 95 and under 40 degrees, there will be a time scheduled to have vigorous activity inside our playroom.

For the safety of all children during physical activity and outdoor play, children are required to wear closed-toe shoes each day. Shoes should fit securely and allow children to safely participate in running, climbing, and other gross motor activities. Open-toed shoes, sandals, or shoes that do not provide adequate support are not permitted during the school day.

WEATHER POLICY

In the event of inclement weather, a FACTS parent alert text message will be sent out as well as a Brightwheel Notification.

SUPPLIES

Each class has a supply list written specifically for that age group. All items need to be brought to preschool no later than the day your child starts. All children need to have two spare changes of clothing in their backpacks at all times. This includes socks and shoes. Clearly label each article that is brought to the facility. PLEASE, NO TOYS FROM HOME.

PARENT TO TEACHER COMMUNICATION

At Mercy Culture Preschool, being present with your child is a priority. You are welcome to send your child's teacher messages whenever is convenient for you although please do not expect a response immediately. Our teachers will check their messages daily from 7:15am-7:30am as well at 11:30am-2:00pm. If you need to reach your child's teacher outside of those times for more pressing matters, please call the front office at 817-332-3351.

At Mercy Culture Preschool, we operate through our values. If you have a concern or feedback, we welcome the opportunity to downshift with you and bring clarity. We ask that as the parent, you operate in the values as well when bringing a concern.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Mercy Culture Preschool maintains an open-door policy. Parents or legal guardians may visit and observe their child at any time while the child is in care, in accordance with Texas Minimum Standards. This means that you as a parent are welcome to visit and observe in your child's classroom for a 30-minute window. For the least disruption to classroom routines, we encourage families to notify the Director or teacher in advance when possible. All visitors must check in at the office and receive a visitor badge before entering a classroom.

DAILY REPORTS

You may view your child's daily report through the Brightwheel app. Children in the K3 and K4 classrooms will receive an assessment at the beginning and end of the school year.

Kindergarten screening is administered to all children entering Mercy Culture Preparatory Kindergarten.

POLICY CHANGES

Parents will be informed in writing of any changes made to our policies and procedures.

HOLIDAY POLICIES

Halloween- October 31st is traditionally recognized as Halloween. Mercy Culture Preschool does not recognize this day in room decor, art projects or in any type of celebration. Believing that this is a pagan holiday, we will not acknowledge this day in any way.

Christmas/Easter- We understand that families will have their own standards in regard to Christmas and Easter. At Mercy Culture Preschool, we will be focusing on the celebration of Jesus' birth and resurrection. We will not have any room decor, art projects or activities that focus on Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny/Egg Hunts. With this understanding, if the subject comes up in our classroom, and if the child asks the teachers if Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny is real, we will encourage them to talk to you, the parents. Teachers will not answer "yes" or "no".

HOLIDAY PARTIES

Scheduled parties for the school year will be Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and End of the Year. All parents are welcome to attend. We do not celebrate Halloween, so please do not bring Halloween related items as treats. We will have a Fall Festival in the last week of October.

Teachers may request room parents to help with planning parties and added support during classroom parties. Please reach out to your student's teacher if you are interested in participating

BABYSITTING

If you choose to hire one of Mercy Culture Preschool employees to babysit for you, the employee is doing it on their own and not in conjunction with the preschool. Mercy Culture Preschool is not held liable.

ABSENCES

The full tuition rate is charged whether a child is present or not. There are no rebates or discounts. Please understand we make no exceptions. If your child is absent due to being sick, family days or vacations, please notify your child's teacher.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A fire drill will be held once a month for Mercy Culture Preschool. During a drill, children will evacuate the building and proceed immediately with their teacher to the designated area outside.

Fire Evacuation Plans are posted in each classroom as well as the preschool hallways and are available for observation at any given time.

Severe weather drills and lockdown drills will be held 4 times a year, and children will proceed immediately with their teachers to the designated safe room in the building. Staff will teach children the proper procedures to follow and be with them throughout the drill. It is important that children are given several opportunities to practice these drills so that they will not panic and will know what is expected of them in the event of a real emergency.

In an emergency, the first responsibility will be to move the children to our alternate location. If any of our children require assistance in any way a staff member will be assigned to that child to help them in accordance with their need to reach our new location safely.

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

Here at Mercy Culture Preschool, we value the safety of our students and maintain that as a high priority. Every Mercy Culture Preschool family is given a badge, and it must be worn during drop off and pick up times, classroom parties, and any time present at the center. No one is exempt from this. Any MC Prep Staff member reserves the right to ask any parent not wearing their badge to go get it. This is done for the safety of your child and the other children in preschool. Anyone that is not an authorized pickup is not allowed in the hallways. If you do not have your badge, you can obtain a temporary one by checking into the security desk or in the office. If you need additional tags, they will cost \$5 each.

BITING, HITTING, KICKING & SPITTING

At Mercy Culture Preschool, we take all physical behaviors seriously and are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for every child. Physical behaviors such as biting, hitting, kicking, and spitting require immediate attention and support to help children learn appropriate ways to communicate their needs and emotions.

For children under the age of three, we understand that biting and other physical behaviors can be a part of early childhood development as children are still learning communication, self-regulation, and social skills. The first occurrence of biting will be addressed with the child through guidance, redirection, and a partnership with the family to help prevent future incidents. If biting continues beyond the initial occurrence, the child will be sent home for the day.

For children three years of age and older, biting, hitting, kicking, and spitting are considered serious behaviors and will be addressed immediately. Repeated physical behaviors may result in the child being sent home and a meeting with the family to create a plan for support.

If physical behaviors become chronic or continue despite intervention and partnership with the family, Mercy Culture Preschool reserves the right to dismiss the student from the program, to ensure the safety and well-being of all children.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

At Mercy Culture Preschool, our desire is for every child to thrive in a safe, loving, and Christ-centered environment. Suspension or expulsion is always considered a last resort. We are committed to partnering with families to understand each child's unique needs and to provide support that encourages growth, learning, and success.

When behavioral concerns arise, Mercy Culture Preschool will make every reasonable effort to support the child before considering suspension or dismissal. These efforts may include:

- **Observing and documenting behaviors and patterns.**
- **Maintaining open communication with parents or guardians.**
- **Implementing classroom interventions and behavior support strategies.**
- **Meeting with parents to develop a collaborative plan for success.**
- **Recommending additional evaluations or outside resources when appropriate.**

Behavior concerns will generally be addressed through the following progressive intervention process:

1. **First Concern: The teacher will redirect the child using age-appropriate guidance techniques and communicate the concern with the parent.**
2. **Continued Concerns: Additional interventions will be implemented, behaviors will be documented, and ongoing communication with the family will occur.**
3. **Parent Conference: If behaviors continue, a conference will be scheduled with the child's teacher and the Preschool Director to review concerns and develop a support plan.**
4. **Further Intervention: The school will continue to monitor progress and determine whether additional supports or modifications are appropriate.**
5. **Administrative Review: If, despite reasonable interventions and family partnership, the child's needs cannot be safely or effectively met within the program, administration will determine whether suspension or dismissal is necessary.**

While Mercy Culture Preschool believes in intervention whenever possible, certain behaviors may require immediate administrative action, including suspension or dismissal, if they pose a significant risk to the safety or well-being of children, staff, or others.

Reasons that may result in suspension or expulsion include, but are not limited to:

- **The preschool is unable to safely or appropriately meet the child's individual needs despite reasonable interventions.**
- **Repeated or severe behaviors that endanger the child, other children, or staff, including but not limited to aggressive behaviors such as hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, throwing objects, or other actions resulting in injury or creating an unsafe environment.**

- Continued disruptive behavior that significantly interferes with the learning environment after appropriate interventions have been implemented.
- Repeated failure of parents or guardians to comply with preschool policies, including excessive late pick-ups or failure to participate in required conferences or behavior support plans.
- A breakdown in the cooperative partnership between the family and Mercy Culture Preschool that prevents the school from effectively supporting the child's educational and developmental needs.
- Threatening, abusive, or disrespectful behavior toward staff, children, or other families.

Mercy Culture Preschool reserves the right to determine the appropriate course of action based on the severity of the behavior, the safety of all children and staff, the child's developmental needs, and the school's ability to provide appropriate care.

Our goal is always restoration, partnership, and helping every child succeed. However, when a child's continued enrollment prevents the preschool from maintaining a safe, healthy, and effective learning environment, suspension or dismissal may become necessary.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Under Texas law, the staff and administration of Mercy Culture Preschool are obligated to report any suspected abuse that comes to their attention. The statute provides in part as follows: "A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall be reported." Mercy Culture Preschool will comply with the law.

PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT

The goal of Mercy Culture Preschool is to direct students toward Christ-centered behavior that helps them Spiritually grow and develop their Fruits of the Spirit. As part of our mission, we expect Mercy Culture Preschool parents to partner with us and follow the same guidance and discipline policies as our teachers if on school property. If a parent violates our discipline policy, it could result in grounds for dismissal of the student.

Two of our values are Communication and Feedback. Here at Mercy Culture Preschool, we value your feedback. If you have a concern of something that is happening within the classroom, we ask that you first talk to the teacher of that specific classroom. If the concern remains unresolved after following these steps, please bring the matter to the director for further support and guidance. We also expect all parents to operate in the values of Mercy Culture Preschool as they are bringing feedback or concerns.

POLICY FOR PERSON-TO-PERSON ISSUES: MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE

In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus gives His formula for solving person-to-person problems. The following are the words of Jesus:

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he shall not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglects to hear the church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

There are several clear principles that Jesus teaches in the above passage:

1. Keep the matter confidential.

"A hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered." (Proverbs 11:9)

2. Keep the circle small. **Most problems are solved at the two people level.**

"...if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell his fault between thee and him alone..." (Matthew 18:15).

3. Be straightforward... **tell him his fault... Restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly yet clearly presented. The scripture says**

"...faithful are the wounds of a friend." (Proverbs 27:6)

4. Be forgiving.

...if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. This implies that once the matter is resolved we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us.

If after the above steps have been followed, an individual will still not "hear" you, or openly disagrees with you, the next step is:

5. The parent and teacher or teacher and fellow staff member should agree to share the matter with the school administrator. **Each person should come to the meeting in a spirit of humility, willing to submit to the Lord's will in the matter, and also willing to submit to reproof or correction if needed. If the problem still exists after the above methods are applied, the next step is:**

6. The school administrator shall explain the problem to the pastor. **The pastor will decide what the next step should be in the reconciliation process.**

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Mercy Culture Preschool believes that all students are "disciples taught of the Lord and great is their peace and undisturbed composure." - Isaiah 54:13

Mercy Culture Preschool understands that children are not perfect and there will be times when children will require discipline due to our sinful nature. Mercy Culture Preschool believes that there can be no true change in behavior if there is no change in the heart of the child. One way that Mercy Culture Preschool leads a child to change their hearts is by using Scripture to reproof and encourage the child. This allows us to not just focus on disobedience but teach children how to overcome their own sin-nature by applying how the Bible tells them to live and treat others. We also commit to reminding the children of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements and redirecting behaviors.

To fulfill the mission of MC Preschool, partnership is required from each family when dealing with disruptive behavior. We believe that consistency from all parties involved is the best way to handle these issues. When your child's teacher notices consistent behavioral issues, they will inform you of these issues and seek your partnership in helping your child understand their own sin-nature and change their heart. This will look different for each child. If a child puts themselves, the other students or teachers in immediate harm, is inconsolable for an extended period, or is consistently not following instructions to the point to where it becomes a disruption to the rest of the class, being sent home for the day may be required. If behavioral issues continue, we may request a parent meeting to come up with a plan on how we all can best help the child.

Mercy Culture Preschool reserves the right to terminate care permanently or excuse for the day for disciplinary problems at any time.

LICENSE AND ACCREDITATION

Mercy Culture Preschool is licensed through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Care Licensing Division. To contact the local Licensing office, you can call 1.800.582.8286.

Minimum Standards can be viewed at this link:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

HHSC Website:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov>

Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline:

https://www.dfps.texas.gov/contact_us/report_abuse.asp#:~:text=Call%3A%201%2D800%2D252,TxAbuseHotline.

Parent Agreement

By signing this page, I acknowledge that I have read the Parent Handbook. In addition to reading it, I acknowledge that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I understand and agree to abide by what is written herein.

Parent- Print Name

Parent Signature

Date

****On the following page is the Parent's Rights form from Texas State. Please sign, date, and return both the parent agreement and the Parent's Rights form. Thank you!**