

Preschool

Parent Handbook

2022-2023



Sweethaven Christian Academy

A Ministry of Sweethaven Baptist Church

Portsmouth, Virginia

Illness

A health observation of all children will take place daily prior to the beginning of the academic school day. The staff members screening the children will be trained by a health professional.

Children with the following conditions will be excluded from class and the parent will be asked to come and take them home:

- Both fever (any amount) and behavior change
- Fever of 101°
- Diarrhea, defined as a stool not contained by the child's ability to use the toilet
- Vomiting two or more times
- Rash with fever or behavior change

The following are considered communicable diseases: pink eye, lice, scabies, tuberculosis, impetigo, strep throat, chickenpox, whooping cough, mumps, hepatitis A, measles, and rubella. Any student with a communicable disease for which immunization is required by law or is available, shall be temporarily excluded from school while ill and during recognized periods of communicability. Students with communicable diseases for which immunization is not available shall be dismissed from school while ill. Sweethaven reserves the right to make all final decisions necessary to control the spread of communicable diseases within the school.

Future Policies

Sweethaven Christian Academy reserves the right to further refine present policies and/or to establish new policies that are deemed necessary and appropriate.

We intend to maintain a Christ-centered school where learning and character development occur. We will take necessary measures to see that this is accomplished on an uninterrupted basis.

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Welcome to Sweethaven

Sweethaven Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs, and other school-administered programs.

About Us

Sweethaven Christian Academy is an educational ministry of Sweethaven Baptist Church. In compliance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, our preschool is religiously exempt from licensure and is classified as a "religiously exempt child day center."

Sweethaven is a place where learning is made fun. It is our goal to provide the right foundations to build active minds and happy hearts.

The school year runs September through May. The school hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Sweethaven also provides care before school starting at 6:00 a.m. and after school ending at 5:00 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday. Parents have the option of starting their child in June for the Summer Camp program operating the same hours.

The main educational instruction takes place during the morning hours. If needed, we offer a part-time program 8:00-12:00 Monday through Friday.

Our preschool is one unit of a much larger identity. Sweethaven Christian Academy is an educational facility for over 200 students ranging from preschool through twelfth grade. The capacity of the designated preschool rooms in the early childhood wing is 80. The preschool students also share the school gym, playground, and cafeteria.

Constructive Discipline:

Fair and consistent limits

Positively worded directions

Providing reasons for limits

Redirection for unacceptable behavior

Assistance with expressing feelings and frustrations verbally

Arranging equipment, activities, materials, and schedules in a way that promotes desirable behavior

Timeouts: If needed, timeout shall be one minute per year of age, and the child must remain within sight and sound of a staff member.

Child Abuse

If Sweethaven suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, we are required by law to immediately report our concerns to the local department of social services or to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline.

We need not prove that abuse or neglect has taken place; local departments of social services are responsible for making this determination.

Injuries

The school or other appropriate official shall notify the parent immediately if a child is lost, experiences a serious accident, or needs emergency care. The school shall notify the parent at the end of the day of any known minor accidents or injuries.

Note: Examples of a serious accident might include unconsciousness; broken bones; deep cut requiring stitches; concussion; foreign object lodged in eye, nose, ear, or other body orifice. Examples of a minor accident might include a small scratch, cut, or scrape; minor bruise or discoloration of the skin.

nore the set boundaries will be disciplined.

Disciplinary methods will vary according to the seriousness of the infraction, but will always involve firm, yet loving action. The specific action taken by the authority can range from a disapproving glance to expulsion from the school. Scripture makes it clear that a child's discipline is the responsibility of the child's parents; therefore, at certain times, parents may be requested to come to the school premises in order to take part in the disciplinary process.

Unacceptable Behavior:

Repeated distractions in the classroom, such as noisemaking during teaching time, touching other students, running around the classroom, yelling and screaming at the staff or other children, etc.

Kicking, spitting, hitting, slapping, pushing, and biting the staff or other children

Self-inflicted injuries

Daily, consistent toileting accidents

Inappropriate use of language

Dismissal Procedures:

The following steps shall be taken for dismissal from preschool:

1. Phone calls or written daily notes will be sent home informing the parent of the child's unacceptable behavior. Expected Outcome: An improvement must be seen by the teacher in the classroom.
2. Parents and teacher schedule a conference to discuss solutions. Expected Outcome: A noticeable improvement in the child's behavior must be observed within ten (10) school days.
3. A conference is scheduled with the teacher, parents, and administration. At this point, parents will be asked to come and pick up their child when behavior conflicts with the program. Expected Outcome: A daily, consistent behavior change must be observed within ten (10) days or the child may be dismissed from Sweethaven Christian Preschool.

Admissions

Steps for applying for admission into Sweethaven Christian Preschool are as follows:

1. After receiving the information packet, the following needs to be turned in to preschool office:
 - Completed preschool application
 - Registration fee
 - Copy of birth certificate

Note: Prior to attending class, we will need the Virginia Health Form.
2. The administration will review the application.
3. Our Business Office will contact the parent to explain payment options. At this time, a contract will be offered to the parent.
4. Parents need to sign the contract to ensure placement in the classroom.
5. Before the first day of school, the preschool office will send the parent Open House dates and other information.

Registration is not considered finalized or space reserved in a class until the required application fee has been paid and the completed signed financial contract has been returned to the office.

All students must be completely potty-trained. No pull-ups are allowed. Students must be able to attend to bathroom needs without assistance.

Sweethaven is not licensed to accept students that are not potty trained. However, we do understand occasional accidents and will help a child change himself if needed.

Parents will be notified of the possibility of dismissal if it is clear that their child is not ready for our program and needs more time to be trained at home.

Guidelines for 3-year-old acceptance.

- Students must have had their third birthday before attending class.
- Students turning three after February 1, must wait for Summer Camp or the following fall session to attend.

Guidelines for 4-year-old acceptance

- Students previously enrolled in our 3-year-old program will be moved to a 4-year-old class at the beginning of the fall session.
- In order to enroll into one of our 4-year-old classes, new students must have had their fourth birthday by September 30.
- After completing the 4-year-old program, students will be evaluated for entrance into Sweethaven's kindergarten program.

Philosophy and Purpose

It is our conviction that a Christian school should provide both an environment and a curriculum conducive to effective learning. Therefore, we believe quality education includes building strong spiritual character, patriotism, and discipline.

Doctrinal Statement

We believe in the verbal inspiration and authority of all Scriptures. We believe that the Bible reveals God, the fall of man, the way of salvation, and God's plan and purpose in the ages.

We believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the deity, virgin birth, and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

We believe that salvation is "by grace" plus nothing and minus nothing. The conditions of salvation are repentance and faith.

child's account, or parents may bring the child's lunch to the school office and it will be delivered to the child.

We will teach and uphold appropriate eating habits and manners. This includes thanking the Lord for our food, proper use of utensils, the use of napkins and general good table manners.

Naptime

A designated naptime is set aside each day for all of our preschoolers. This period is for rest and quiet, however it is not mandatory that each child go to sleep. It is necessary and required that all children lie still and be quiet. The majority of preschool-age children play hard enough that by lunch they are ready for a nap.

It is required that a top and a bottom cover such as single sheets or beach towels be brought from home; however, no sleeping bags are allowed. Child-sized pillows are allowed. Pillows must be covered with a pillowcase. Please check with your child's teacher as to her preference. All bedding is to be taken home each Friday for laundering and returned on Monday.

Toys

Because the Preschool has a large supply of toys and equipment appropriate for young children, we ask that children **not** bring any toys from home. The school will not be responsible for lost or damaged toys brought to school.

Discipline

Control is the key with regard to classroom discipline. The teacher is charged with the duty to maintain control in his or her classroom consistently. Effective learning cannot take place in an uncontrolled atmosphere. Learning is an active process and activity normally has acceptable levels of movement and sound. Unnecessary, excessive, or disruptive movements or noises will not be permitted. Each child must learn the acceptable levels of movement and sound and adjust to them. The child must also learn the principles of authority. The teacher is the individual who determines the boundaries within his or her classroom. Children who improperly challenge or ig-

11:00	Lunch
11:30	Music, art, language development
12:00	Restroom, story time
12:30	Nap time
2:30	Wake up, restroom
3:00	Snack
3:30	Structured free play/playground
5:00	Facility closes

Summer Camp schedules are sent home in May.

Snacks and Lunch

Mid-morning and afternoon snack are provided by Sweethaven. At the beginning of each term the parents are asked to fill out an informational sheet that notifies the teachers of any allergies. Substitutions for food must be supplied by the parent and accompanied with a medical note from your child's doctor. Other dietary preferences will need to be discussed with the teacher. To prevent hardships in the classroom, we ask that you limit food replacements.

We encourage parents to pack a lunch for their children. For those parents wishing to purchase lunches, our lunch program provides a variety of reasonably-priced, healthful, and delicious options. Lunch money is paid directly to the Business Office and is applied to the student's account.

If lunch is available from the cafeteria, menus will be sent home each month. Menu items will also be posted on RenWeb. Parents may order through RenWeb or when arriving at school each morning.

Students with delinquent lunch accounts may only order a basic lunch to keep costs manageable for parents. See the Business Office to settle all delinquent lunch accounts.

Should a child forget to bring his or her own lunch, provisions will be made by the school and charged to the

We believe that men are justified by faith alone and are accounted righteous before God only through the merits of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We believe in the visible, personal, and pre-millennial return of Jesus Christ.

We believe in the everlasting, conscious punishment of the lost.

We believe in the freedom of religion, and the autonomy of the Baptist Church. Sweethaven Baptist Church is to be self-governed by the local body and is never to be dictated to, or controlled by any outside persons or forces.

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that all forms of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.

We believe that the Sweethaven Christian Academy and Preschool programs are a direct ministry of Sweethaven Baptist Church and have the mission to preach and teach Jesus Christ in order to fulfill the Biblical commission of a daily ministry (Acts 5:42).

Qualifications of Personnel

Our teachers must have fulfilled a high school program or the equivalent, and meet one of the following:

1. Have an endorsement/degree in a child-related field.
2. Have sufficient work programmatic experience received in a field related to the care of children.

All staff employed at our preschool faithfully attend churches that hold to a Baptist doctrine and agree with the doctrinal statement of Sweethaven Baptist Church.

All staff employed at Sweethaven Christian Preschool have had proper fingerprinting background checks and are certified by a practicing physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Hours of Operation

The Preschool opens daily at 6:00 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m.

Emergency closings will be announced on our website and local TV channels.

The Business Office opens daily at 8:00 a.m. and closes at 4:00 p.m. Payments can be left at the front desk and receipts sent to you upon request.

Holiday Closings

Unless otherwise notified, the Preschool will be closed on the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- New Years Day
- Presidents Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

Please refer to the yearly calendar for additional closings such as Christmas Break, Spring Break, and In-Service days. There will be no care during these times.

Lines of Communication

Accurate communication is a vital part of the child/parent/school relationship. It is our goal to keep every one informed of the activities and opportunities available to them.

1. Activities, events, and classroom information will be sent home by note in your child's folder.
2. All initial lines of communication regarding a student will be done through the teacher. A phone call to the office or a note containing numbers where the parent may be reached will give the teacher the convenience of a telephone conference during her planning time, or the ability to set a parent/teacher conference. If

name will be added to the pick-up information. The designated person **must** have proper identification which will be checked before the child will be permitted to leave school.

After Hours Pick Up

If your child is not picked up by 5:00 p.m., the following steps will be taken:

Staff members will begin contacting parents, legal guardians, and emergency contacts at 5:05 p.m.

If no contact has been made by 5:30 p.m., Child Protective Services will be called at 5:45 p.m. to pick up your child. This can be prevented by calling the school and letting us know the reason for your delay.

Curriculum

We use the *Abeka* curriculum. This material offers a very colorful way to teach 3- and 4-year-olds language arts, numbers, and Bible lessons. It also provides a basic reading program called "Six Easy Steps to Reading" for 4-year-olds. The *Abeka* curriculum fully prepares your child for kindergarten.

The children will hear and learn Bible themes every day. Bible verses and songs are taught to the children weekly.

A "Mock" Daily Preschool Class Schedule

This is an example. Schedules vary with classes.

6:30	Before care: structured free play
7:30	Class prep time
8:00	Bible class with stories, songs, and reinforcement activities
8:45	Morning snack and restroom breaks
9:00	Morning activity time (Computer, PE, Spanish, etc.)
9:30	Teaching time (Phonics, Numbers, Writing)

student who has withdrawn because of philosophy differences will not be eligible for reenrollment.

Withdrawal from school must be made by the parent or guardian in person. This is to be done through the director. A Withdrawal Form must be completed in full by the parent in order for the family to be released from the financial contract.

Medication Policy

Sweethaven is staffed with CPR certified, First Aid certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT) certified personnel. We will administer prescription and non-prescription medications in accordance with the physician's or other prescriber's instructions and in accordance with standards of practice in the MAT training.

Written authorization is required before medication can be administered. The needed Medicine Authorization Form must be completed and signed.

All medication must be left at the front office in its original container. If there is a change in the student's dosing a new medication form must be completed with the updated dose. If the medication is discontinued, a written request signed by the parent must be brought in and the parent must pick up the medication within 10 days of discontinuation or we will dispose of it.

Arrival and Departure

Preschool students may arrive at anytime during the day. Most parents will bring their children to school on their way to work and pick up on their way home. Please keep in mind that the majority of the academics are taught 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 each day.

Upon arrival all children **must** be signed in by the parent or guardian at the front desk. The parent must also walk their child to the appropriate classroom. Parents or guardians may pick up their children by going directly to the classroom.

Should you, as the parent or guardian, need to designate someone else to pick up your child, it is required that you write a note in advance to the school office advising by name exactly who will be picking up your child. This

no response is received within 24 hours, contact the administration.

3. Situations or circumstances which are not resolved by the teacher will be reviewed by the administration. A phone conference or office visit may be arranged.
4. Policy reviews or other administrative circumstances will be examined biblically. All participants will be heard and an outcome will be determined through the administrative office.

We ask parents to pledge their loyalty to the aims and ideals of Sweethaven Christian Academy, and to bring any questions and criticism to the administration so that they may be properly considered by those in authority. Parents will be graciously received by the personnel of the school.

Parental Visits

It is the desire of the administration and faculty to be of service to both parent and student. Teachers welcome a visit from any parent. We do request, however, that any visit to a classroom or any parent/teacher conference be scheduled in advance by contacting the teacher or director.

Birthday Celebrations

We welcome and participate in the recognition of children's birthdays. We ask that parents keep it simple when supplying special treats. Simple cupcakes and juice boxes are acceptable. All birthday celebrations will be at lunch time in the cafeteria. See teachers for details.

Parental Dress

We expect parents to dress appropriately when they come to the school or to school functions. Modest dress is expected of all visitors to the school. Please, no short shorts or short skirts.

Children's Clothing and Appearance

Washable play clothes are the most suitable for preschoolers. Each child should maintain an extra complete set of clean clothing at school, including underwear,

socks, pants, shirt or dress. **Please label all clothing items sent to school with your child's full name.**

Sweethaven will not be responsible for any lost articles.

The following guidelines have been prepared in the interest of good grooming and make up the dress code for preschool. This list describes styles and types of clothing that are **not** permitted.

No T-shirts, tank tops, underclothing, or sweatshirts which have offensive language or designs, including any anti-authority group, person, or idea. This includes rock music.

No flip-flop type shoes.

No short skirts or short shorts.

No jewelry on boys, such as piercings, bracelets, and necklaces.

No permanent tattoos.

Hair Styles

Boys' hair must be cut neatly to lie off the collar and ears, and trimmed so it does not hang in the eyes. Permission is granted for boys to wear their hair full. However, it must be a tapered or blocked haircut. Boys may not wear extreme styles such as men-buns, spikes, razor designs, tails, corn rows, dreadlocks, braids, Mohawks, or dyes in bright colors.

Girls' hair must be cut or styled in a way to keep their hair out of their eyes. No extreme styles such as spikes, razor designs, tails, or dyes in bright colors are permitted.

Financial Information

Sweethaven Christian Academy seeks to maintain reasonable and affordable tuition rates for our families who desire Christian education. The school does not receive government assistance or funding, and is not endowed or supported by outside organizations.

Prompt payment of tuition is vital to the organization of Sweethaven Christian Academy.

The administration retains final authority with all parent accounts.

The Registration Fee must accompany all applications and re-enrollment forms. This fee will not be refunded.

All parents are required to set up an online account with FACTS Tuition Management through our website, www.sweethavenchristian.org.

Payments will be automatically withdrawn from the bank account on the selected date(s) each month. Payments may also be made by credit card through FACTS but will be charged a convenience fee.

Late payments will be charged a late fee and may also be subject to overdraft fees.

All changes to accounts must be requested a minimum of 2 business days prior to the withdrawal of the payment.

If accounts are not paid, the student will be held from class. If you anticipate a problem with making a payment, contact the Business Office in advance.

No student may continue on to the next grade until the previous year's balance has been paid in full.

Sweethaven assumes no responsibility for any monies sent to school with students. All payments should be made in person by an adult during the school's business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Two convenient drop boxes are also available. The outside drop box is located to the left of our front entrance. A drop box is also available at the front office. We will not assume responsibility for any cash payment left in the drop box.

Public Liability Insurance

Sweethaven is covered by public liability insurance which provides coverage in the event that someone brings suit for personal or bodily harm suffered during the operation of the school as a result of negligence.

Withdrawal Procedures

Students and parents must remain in full agreement with the policies and procedures of Sweethaven Christian Academy. If at any time it becomes evident that agreement is lacking, withdrawal from school is expected. Any