



Preschool Handbook



VICTORY
LUTHERAN
Church & Preschool



**Victory Lutheran Church & Preschool
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Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 15:57

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Victory Preschool! We are excited to be a part of your child's education. Thank you for sharing your child with us during this important time of development. We take our responsibility very seriously and we ask that you pray for us during the school year.

Our staff is comprised of Christian men and women who are committed to your child. They are gifted and trained in the principles of early childhood growth and development. At Victory, your child will experience individual attention in a nurturing, Christ-centered environment.

Our staff works with parents as a team to coach your child for success in school. May God bless our teamwork!

Lord's Blessings,

Elizabeth Howe

Liz Howe
Preschool Director

*Train a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn from it.*

Proverbs 22:6



The clouds of winter were gone. There was always
one when people are watching. But in winter, when
the clouds are absent, the world will talk just like
before the North, the birds fly with wings like a
red kite on the... well... in winter, birds and
to the bottom of the... even though they really
mean. And they will be here.

Like Whitehead to take the... and
we had it!

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Licensed and recognized by
The Florida Department of Children & Families

Florida License Number
C04DU0714

Welcome

What We Believe

Our preschool believes that the guidance and teaching a child receives in early childhood greatly impacts the success he or she experiences in school. We are confident that we can help provide a foundation for your child's success. We will coach your child through play and multi-sensory experiences in a flexible curriculum within a comfortable academic atmosphere. Every day your child will have opportunities to experience challenges and success.

Our goal is to influence your child in five areas:

- 1. Academics.** Your child will discover his/her academic potential and will gain foundational knowledge through new learning experiences and hands-on activities that will help to promote success in school.
- 2. Emotions.** Your child will grow in confidence, responsibility and self-discipline through encouragement and open communication.
- 3. Social Skills.** Your child will have opportunities to share, respect and care for others, cooperate and interact with adults and peers through group and individual activities.
- 4. Physical Development.** Your child will exercise his/her gross (large muscle) and fine motor skills in indoor and outdoor experiences to develop dexterity, strength and coordination.
- 5. Spiritual Growth.** Your child will learn about mankind's sin and God's grace in our Savior, Jesus Christ, through Bible stories and open discussion.

We also believe that it is important for our staff to work closely with parents to provide a comfortable learning environment for your child. Regular, on-going communication between parents and the preschool staff is important to your child's success.

Every day your child will have opportunities to experience challenges and success.



Toilet Training

As your child enters the early years of education, it is important that he/she is fully toilet trained. This is necessary for both the teacher and the child to focus their energies on developing important cognitive skills. Please ensure that your child is toilet trained before enrolling at Victory.

Medications

It is always best if you can administer medication in the morning or evening so you can avoid bringing it to school, but in the event it is necessary, medications may be administered by a designated staff member. A Medication Form needs to be completed and signed by a parent before we can administer the medication. Please give all medication to the preschool administrator for proper storage. *Never* send medication to school in your child's backpack or pocket and *never* store medication in his/her cubby. For prescribed medications, give the preschool administrator the medicine in its original child-resistant container, labeled by a pharmacist with your child's name, the prescription date, the name of the medication, its expiration date, administration, storage and disposal instructions. For over-the-counter medication, provide the preschool administrator with a note from your child's health care provider recommending the medication, indicating the dosage, frequency, method of use and duration of administration. The medication should be in a child resistant container with the child's full name and should include instructions for administration and storage recommended by the manufacturer and its expiration date.

Allergies

Please make sure both the teacher and preschool administrator are aware of any and all allergies your child may have so that we may take the proper precautions.

Illness

If your child is ill, please do not send him/her to preschool. If your child becomes ill at preschool, he/she will be isolated from the other children and you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child for the day. If a fever is present, please ensure that the fever has subsided for 24 hours before returning to school. Infectious diseases may require a doctor's release before the child returns to school and in many cases require 24 hours of antibiotics before returning to school. Please report such occurrences to the preschool administrator.

Injuries & Accidents

A first aid kit containing all the materials required by the Department of Children & Families is readily available in the classroom. It will be used at the teacher's discretion. If a minor injury occurs, an accident report form will be completed by the teacher. The accident report will need to be signed by the parent at pick-up as an acknowledgement of the injury and its treatment.

Parental Liability

In the event that your child experiences a health emergency and the supervising adult considers it necessary to contact the paramedics, parents will be financially liable for all emergency service costs.

Fire Drills

Victory Preschool performs a fire drill each month for the safety of your child. Evacuation routes are posted in the classroom for parents to see.

Weather Related Closings

Victory Preschool is closed for weather in accordance with the Duval County Schools and the National Weather Service advisory. If Duval County Schools are cancelled due to weather, Victory Preschool is also cancelled. Weather make-up days will be scheduled as needed. You will be notified of make-up days as soon as they are determined.

Security

Checking In & Out

For your peace of mind and for your child's safety, all children must be signed in and out by a parent or by a person whom you have specifically authorized in writing ahead of time. No child will be released to anyone without parental authorization. Identification may be requested from any person picking up your child.. If someone other than a parent will be picking up a child, please notify the teacher in writing and make the individual aware that he/she will be required to show a picture I.D. upon arrival.

At the beginning of the day...

Please sign the attendance log, escort your child to his/her classroom, and be certain that your child is received by a staff member. Classroom staff are expected to acknowledge children with a warm welcome. Separation anxiety can sometimes be more difficult for the parent than the child. We suggest a hug, reassurance that you will be returning to pick him/her up, and then a non-lingering departure. In most cases, the child quickly settles down, regroups, gets involved and continues the day in a happy frame of mind. Please be assured that if this is not the case, you will be consulted, and we will work together to develop strategies to assist in your child's adjustment.

At the end of the day...

When you arrive to pick up your child, please sign the attendance log and notify the teacher that you and your child are leaving. Be certain to check your child's cubby for notes, artwork, etc. Please never leave your child unsupervised!

Visitors & Volunteers

From time to time, Victory Preschool may recruit special visitors or volunteers to help with the education of your child. All personnel working with the children will receive the background screening required by the Department of Children & Families. If you are interested in serving as a classroom volunteer, please speak with your child's teacher or

the preschool administrator.

Security Cameras

For the safety and security of your child and our staff, there are several security cameras located throughout the church and preschool. Security footage is stored for several weeks.

Providing your child with a safe and secure learning environment is our top priority.



Snacks

Parents are responsible for providing their child with a daily snack. Children can store their snack bags in their cubby or in the refrigerator. Snacks should not require any preparation by the teachers.

We urge you to send a snack containing healthy items. The following items are suggested:

1. Protein (meat, cheese, egg, fish, peanut butter)
2. Bread (or another grain product)
3. Dairy (milk or yogurt)
4. Fruit and/or vegetable
5. Water

Here are some helpful tips for packing a snack for your child:

1. Drinks and food can be kept cool or warm with an insulated container or lunch box.
2. Please do not send soda or candy with your child's lunch.
3. Include eating utensils when necessary.

Also, please ensure that your child eats a nutritious breakfast before coming to school. A healthy breakfast will benefit their attention, attitude and overall experience in preschool.

Food Allergies

Please make sure that both the preschool administrator and the teacher are aware of any food allergies your child may have.

Birthday Treats

We believe birthdays are a very special day! We will celebrate your child by providing a birthday crown, taking pictures and singing! Families are encouraged to bring a treat to share with classmates in celebration of your child's birthday.. In cases where families are unable to do so, Victory Preschool will provide cupcakes. **All birthday treats should be commercially prepared with ingredients listed.** Please speak with your child's teacher about any food allergies that may exist in the class before purchasing the treat. We appreciate your involvement in making this day a very special one for your child!



Attendance

Attendance Policy

Parents of children enrolled at Victory will:

1. Arrive in the classroom by 9:00 a.m.
2. Allow their child to participate in preschool activities until 12:15 p.m.
3. Bring their child to school each school day.
4. Absences may be excused for the following reasons:
 - Illness or injury of the child or a family member
 - Physician or dentist appointment
 - Infectious disease or parasitic infestation
 - Funeral/memorial service or bereavement upon the death of a family member
 - Compliance with a court order
 - Special education or services related to a child's disability
 - Observance of a religious holiday or service
 - Family vacation (please avoid if possible)
4. Pick up their child on time. Late pick-up fees will apply if you are late.
5. Call the office at 642-8900 if your child is going to be late or absent.
6. If your child participates in VPK (see page 9), sign an Attendance Verification Form every month.

Preschool Calendar

A preschool calendar for the year is available at www.victorylutheran.org/preschool. The calendar mirrors the Duval County School calendar as closely as possible. The year consists of 540 hours of education. Please take note of the days the preschool will be closed during the year and make alternative care arrangements.

Feel free to visit our website, www.victorylutheran.org/preschool, for more information.



Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

Your child's VPK education is completely free! All children who turn 4 years-old by September 1st and obtain a Certificate of Eligibility from the Duval County Early Learning Coalition will not pay any tuition.

Late Pick-up Charge

Parents are expected to pick up their child on time. We understand that there may be times when you will be running a little bit late, but we also ask you to be respectful of our staff's time. If your child is dropped off or picked up more than 15 minutes beyond school hours, you will be charged \$20, no exceptions.

Discrimination Policy

All Children of the proper age can attend our program regardless of sex, color, race, ethnic origin, disability or religion. We reserve the right to not accept, or to ask for the withdrawal of any child who is unable to participate fully in our program because of our facilities, groupings, or maturation. Every effort will be made however, to meet each child's individual need.

Victory provides quality care and education at a very affordable price.



Classroom Guidelines

Student Conduct

Early education needs to occur in an environment that is conducive to learning. Any behavior that prevents learning from taking place is unacceptable. Correct behavior will be positively reinforced with encouragement and praise. All inappropriate behavior will be corrected immediately. Unacceptable behavior includes fighting, hitting, kicking or rough play of any kind; obscene or vulgar language; deliberate disobedience or disrespect to any adult; disruptive noises or sounds; throwing items inside; running inside; damaging property; leaving the classroom or playground without permission; and lack of cooperation.

Discipline

At Victory Preschool, we use positive discipline, redirecting behavior and providing alternatives. We guide the children toward acceptable actions and words rather than focusing on the “don’ts.” We never use physical punishment. If necessary, a teacher will remove a child from a particular situation and give them a “time out” to help them consider better choices.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule is posted in the classroom for you to see. Each day will include Circle time, Cognitive or Group times, Language Arts, Indoor & Outdoor play, Math, Creative Arts and Snack.

Clothing

Please keep the following guidelines in mind as you dress your child for class:

1. Children must always wear underwear. Pull-ups are not allowed.
2. Dress your child appropriately for the weather. If it is cold outside, make sure they have a jacket.
3. Shoes should be closed toe with rubber soles. Socks are always required. Crocs, thongs, sandals, slides and platform shoes are unsafe for the playground. Shoes without socks will cause blisters and will smell. Inappropriate footwear may result in your child not being permitted to play on the playground.
4. Clothing should not depict any violent, rude or disrespectful characters or actions, nor advertise items that are inappropriate for children. If you are unsure, please ask the preschool administrator before permitting your child to wear the item.
5. Items with belts and buckles make timely and independent bathroom usage a challenge. Please ensure that your child can manage their own clothing in the bathroom.
6. Watches, rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings and any other type of jewelry are discouraged. These items can easily be lost, broken or cause injury on the playground. Please leave these items at home.
7. Please put your child’s name on jackets, sweaters and any clothing items that might be removed during the day.

Website

Victory Preschool's website will be able to answer most questions about the preschool. Please be familiar with the information located there. You're also encouraged to peruse Victory Lutheran Church's website to be familiar with the church where your child attends preschool. If you have any questions, the preschool administrator will be happy to answer them. You can find Victory online at www.victorylutheran.org

Parent Grievances

If you have a complaint or concern related to Victory Preschool, please speak with the preschool administrator about it, and not to other parents or staff members. The administrator will work with you to resolve any issue that is troubling you.

E-mail

Please be sure that the preschool administrator has a current e-mail address on file for you. E-mail will be used to keep you informed about what your child is learning, provide you with reminders and to notify you of upcoming events and calendar changes. We do not sell, share or distribute e-mail addresses.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will only be scheduled if needed. If you are interested in scheduling a conference to discuss your child, please speak with the preschool administrator to arrange day and time. You can count on your preschool staff to speak with you about difficulties your child may experience. We will also share successes your child enjoys during the preschool day. We'll communicate our thoughts through face-to-face conversations, e-mail and telephone calls. Our goal is to have every child achieve positive growth in all areas. Parents and teachers will work together as a team to ensure that your child's needs are met.

Regular communication between parents and the preschool staff is important to your child's success.



Getting Started

Pre-enrollment Tour

It's a good idea for parents to visit the preschool with their child at least once prior to enrollment. The visit gives your child a chance to meet the teachers, explore the classroom and become familiar with the new surroundings. Talk with your child about the preschool and some of the activities that take place there. This will help prepare them to return to preschool and to anticipate the fun times ahead.

Enrollment Information

Before your child joins Victory Preschool, you will need to complete an enrollment application, medical forms, and other forms required by local and state government. This enrollment information is important for the safety of your child while he or she attends Victory. Victory considers applications for enrollment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability or any other basis prohibited by law.

Helping Your Child Adjust

New situations affect every child differently. Sometimes a child does wonderfully on the first day because everything is new and exciting, but they are anxious in the days which follow when they realize this will be a set routine. Most children need two or three weeks to fully adjust to their new environment. The best way to support your child is to show excitement, encouragement and patience. If you need suggestions to help your child feel more at ease, speak with your child's teacher.

Beginning preschool may bring about some anxiety for parents too. Feel free to call the preschool anytime to see how your child is doing. Remember, Victory's goal is to provide a safe and fun environment where your child can learn and develop. We are happy you have chosen Victory Preschool!

The First Day of Preschool

The first day of school can be an emotional time for everyone. Kids may be nervous about the unknown while Mom and Dad are overwhelmed at how fast their child seems to be growing up. There are some positive steps you can take to help make the first day of preschool a good experience:

- Talk with your child about what to expect: new friends, a nice teacher, fun activities.
- Bring a special security item to the preschool. The item will be stored in your child's cubby during the day, but will give your child comfort to know it is there.
- Go to bed early to get plenty of sleep.
- Eat a well-balanced breakfast.
- Start early so you are not rushed. Give yourself and your child plenty of time to get ready.

**We are excited for you
to join our family at
Victory Preschool!**



Come for a Visit!

Call (904) 642-8900 or click www.victorylutheran.org

