

Parent & Volunteer Handbook



Preschool Edition

Revised January 2018

Location: Basement of the Evangelical Free Church - 4590 -5th Avenue
Mailing Address: 701 North Nechako Road
Prince George, BC Canada V2K1A2
250-961-7495

www.cedars.bc.ca

Principal: Curtis Tuininga curtist@cedars.bc.ca

Preschool Director/Teacher: Wilma Sturwold wilmas@cedars.bc.ca

Welcome!

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them..." (Mt. 19:14)

Jesus knows how precious the heart of a child is and how much they understand when we take the time to be with them. Children learn more when they are happy, feel safe and can explore their environment.

Our main focus at Cedars Christian Preschool is a program that nurtures an understanding in our preschoolers that "Jesus loves me, this I know! For the Bible tells me so!" (Anna Bartlett Warner). Therefore, every theme we explore is wrapped up with God at the center.

Learning at Cedars Christian Preschool is play-based. This includes activities that introduce the children to their ABC's, 123's and the colours on the colour wheel. *Hearing* about Baby Jesus being born in Bethlehem is wonderful, but it takes on new meaning when you can dress up like Mary, work with wood like Joseph, carry 'Baby Jesus' in a sling (Mary didn't have a stroller), or wrap Him in swaddling cloth (Mary didn't have baby clothes).

As much as we are part of Cedars Christian School, the Preschool is not on site. One day, when space is available, we will be back onsite. Until then, we are so blessed to have a terrific space in the basement of the Evangelical Free church, located on the corner of 5th Avenue and Killoren Crescent. There we have our own classroom, storage areas, cubby area and gym area. We are also located right next door to Mrs. Sturwold's house where we often spend time outside gardening and playing in the spring. As a parent of a preschooler at Cedars Christian Preschool, you are warmly invited to attend all school events.

It's our prayer and goal that each child feels loved and accepted and that they will grow to know and feel without a doubt "Jesus loves me...!" May each family feel they can come to talk to us to share joys, sorrows and be encouraged in the knowledge that it takes a village and it is by God's hand we have been called and are honoured to be part of your child's village.

Sincerely,

Wilma Sturwold
Preschool Director/Teacher

Cedars' Roots

*He is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.
Whatever he does prospers. Psalm 1:3*

A. HISTORY AND PURPOSE

Cedars Christian School started in 1977. The fact that Cedars has over 40 years of history is a testimony to God's faithfulness, as well as to the visionary leadership of its founding members, and to the many committed people who have built it into the thriving school that it is today. Their persistence and dedication was driven by the belief that all of life, including education, must fall under the lordship of Christ. Today, dedicated and persistent leaders continue to hold a vision for the future growth of Cedars.

Cedars began in September, 1977 with 77 students in grades 1 to 7, in rented facilities on the present site. Subsequently the school was purchased, adjacent property was added, and the facilities were expanded on several occasions. Cedars Christian School presently enrolls about 400 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 on this site. Cedars also runs a preschool off-site located at the Evangelical Free Church. Approximately 30 students are registered as home school students. From its inception, Cedars has been truly interdenominational and presently draws students from over 20 Christian churches.

B. VISION STATEMENT

Parents, under the Lordship and by the authority of God, have established Cedars Christian School to provide a Christ-centered, child oriented environment which will nurture a child academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally, aesthetically and physically.

All instruction, recognized by the BC Ministry of Education, is taught by BC certified teachers and supported by an active parent society, to incorporate a Christian perspective in every aspect of daily education. Both staff and parents unite to help the child to:

- Develop their unique potential
- Internalize spiritual values
- Live a life of **service, fellowship, stewardship, discipleship and obedience** to God.

C. MISSION STATEMENT

To educate and equip discerning disciples of Jesus Christ for restorative work in His Kingdom.

A. PHILOSOPHY

At Cedars our program is for families looking for a Christian Preschool experience for children aged 3&4. We believe each child is a precious gift from God and we hold the care and nurture of every child in sacred trust. We feel it is important that each child knows that God loves them very much and that they feel they are in a loving, caring environment where they are encouraged to develop to their fullest potential. It is our daily effort to provide a new and creative learning environment in which early stage academics, socialization, Christian education and fun are all part of the program.

Cedars Christian Preschool is a play based program. The groundwork and growth for social adult skills grows the most during the first 5 years of life. The students are given many opportunities to interact with each other and are also made aware of what it means to keep someone else's feelings in mind.

How do we as early childhood educators involve ourselves in your child's growth during their time in Preschool?

It goes without saying that we love your children so we:

- Laugh with them
- Encourage them to problem solve together
- Encourage them to help make things right if something has gone wrong
- Are excited about how God creates each of them differently
- Encourage them to also value someone else's turn, thoughts and ideas
- Plan activities to help them achieve optimum success for where they are developmentally.

B. OUR PROGRAMS, ADMISSIONS, REGISTRATION PROCESS AND FEES

1. Our Programs

At Cedars Christian Preschool we run two classes:

- Monday/Wednesday/Friday AM (4 year olds) 9:00-11:30am
- Tuesday/Thursday AM (3 year olds) 9:00-11:30am

2. Admission Requirements

- Children must be 3 years of age by December 31.
- Children must be toilet trained and able to use this skill in the school setting.

If there is space in a class, we will enroll throughout the year.

*** Admission into the preschool does not automatically transfer into admission into the rest of the Cedars Christian School system. **A separate application must be made for admission into Kindergarten.** This can be done at the main office at Cedars Christian School, 701 North Nechako Road. Information may be found at www.cedars.bc.ca or by calling 250-564-0707.

3. Registration Process:

- a. Registration to be done in person at Cedars Christian Preschool.
- b. Please contact the Preschool at 250-961-7495 or email Wilma Sturwold at wilmas@cedars.bc.ca.

- c. A non-refundable registration is required. The cost of your first month's tuition will be accepted as the registration fee. The remainder of the year will be paid through Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD).
- d. New Families must complete a Criminal Record Check (CRC) online. The link is found on the Cedars website: www.cedars.bc.ca. The access code may be found on the letter you received upon registration. Existing Families please check with Wilma to see if your CRC is still valid. Volunteers are also required to fill out the character form and the immunization form for volunteers which can be found in the registration package.

4. Preschool Fees:

- 2 classes/week = \$120/month (\$100/month for families with older children attending Cedars)
- 3 classes/week = \$160/month (\$140/month for families with older children attending Cedars)

There are no refunds or fee reductions for statutory holidays, sick days, or for family vacations that may be taken throughout the school year.

In the event that Cedars Christian Preschool was able to offer the service for which fees have been received, the Business Office at Cedars Christian School would issue refunds to those affected.

5. Holidays and Other Days of Closure

The preschool runs for 10 months of the year and closely follows the calendar year of Cedars Christian School. This includes Christmas Break and Spring Break. The exception being that we start a little later in September and end a little earlier in June.

6. Updating Information In Your Child's File

Information about your child needs to be kept up-to-date at all times. Please inform the Preschool Director of any information changes such as: immunization records, email address, address or phone number, custody or authorized pick up persons etc. We will transfer all the information you provide into your child's file.

7. Withdrawal

It is the parents' responsibility to advise the Business Office of Cedars Christian School of your intentions to withdraw your child and to cancel your PAD.

C. ABOUT YOUR PRESCHOOL STAFF

The staff is licensed to practice in BC as Early Childhood Educators in the capacity that their job requires. They share a love for the churches they attend in which they are also actively involved. Their love for children is also a common bond and they firmly believe each child is a gift from God and feel the students are constant reminders to never lose wonder in the little things as we grow learn and explore God's world together.

All staff members are trained in first aid. Verification of this is posted in the classroom. At the beginning and end of each school year, all staff documentation, which includes ECE/ECEA licenses, First Aid certificates and Criminal Record Checks are checked and updated to ensure they are current.

D. CLASSROOM ROUTINE AND GUIDELINES

1. Class Schedule

Our class schedule will include:

- Free Play
- Craft Time
- Circle Time
- Snack

- Gym
- Show & Tell
- Group Activities
- Ending our day with Prayer

2. Arrival and Pick-up Procedures

Each day your child attends he/she must be signed in and out by an adult. We need a record of who is and is not at the preschool each day. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. All persons allowed to pick up a child MUST be listed on the registration form.

The protocols regarding arrival and pickup are for the safety of your child and must be respected. Parents or assigned substitute must bring in and pick up their child from the preschool cubby area. A staff member will stand at the basement door to ensure all children leave with an adult. In the event that there is no Parent Helper, the staff member will stand upstairs at the outside entrance. Parents or assigned substitute must sign in upon entry and sign out when picking up. Children will only be allowed to leave the facility with parents, guardians, people specified on the registration form or a person who has written permission from the child's parent. The Preschool Director may choose to verify permission by telephone prior to release. The preschool will assist in making alternate arrangements if a parent/guardian appears "unable" to safely deliver the child home. In the event that there is a concern for the safety of the child due to the adult's ability to drive safely, the police will be notified.

If the parent does not arrive to pick up the child the teacher will:

- contact parent(s) work and home number(s) and all emergency contact people listed
- keep trying for two hours at which time Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) will be contacted

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up the child the teacher will:

- contact the parents

If the unauthorized person becomes confrontational to the teacher's request, the teacher will:

- attend to the children in her care including the child in question

If the unauthorized person forcefully removes the child a staff member will:

- write down the license plate number of the vehicle in question
- call the police and MCFD

If staff feels that the authorized person picking up your child is under the influence of drugs, alcohol or in extreme emotional despair, the staff member:

- cannot legally refuse the parent or guardian access under any circumstance
- will call the RCMP to report a possible DUI
- will call MCFD to report a child at risk
- will report the incident to licensing

If an authorized person, aside from the parents, arrive to pick up a child appears to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or in extreme emotional despair, the staff member will:

- not release the child to this person
- contact the parents to arrange another person to pick up the child.

If this person insists on taking the child, staff will communicate to this person that they will:

- a. call the RCMP to report a possible DUI
- b. call MCFD to report a child at risk
- c. report the incident to licensing

3. Parental Access

If a parent has a family emergency and arrives unexpectedly, the parent can knock on the classroom door and walk in.

The preschool must have all copies of custody agreements, restraining orders or court orders denying a parent access. If a parent informs the school that the other parent no longer has access to the child, the written documents must be submitted before access is denied. If a prohibited parent arrives to pick up the child or visit, the police will be notified immediately and asked to intervene. The supervisory parent will be contacted and asked to pick up the child.

4. Separation

Our goal is that preschool is a positive and happy experience for each child. Separation can be difficult for children and parents. Should this be the case, be encouraged, "it takes a village," and together with you we will personalize how we can best deal with the situation.

If there is something specific you would like to discuss, or we would like to discuss, it is important that we keep in mind not to discuss a potential problem or concern when your child is within earshot.

5. Attendance, Parent/Volunteer Participation & Communication

If you are going to be away or your child is sick please let us know by calling the Preschool at 250-961-7495.

We are a parent-participating preschool. Your Parent Helper days are a special day your child looks forward to. Alternate arrangements must be made for younger siblings on Parent Helper days. Criminal record checks, character reference forms and immunization forms must be completed for all volunteers. We ask that parents arrive 10 minutes early and be prepared to leave 10 minutes after class. During these times, please position yourself upstairs to monitor younger siblings that remain in the car while preschool children are being dropped off/picked up.

Some volunteer expectations may include:

- supervising and participating in free play
- supervising bathroom trips
- assisting with handwashing and opening of snacks
- classroom/toy cleaning
- preparation for future crafts
- assisting with art projects

Throughout the year you will be receiving newsletters to inform you of things happening in the preschool such as field trips, classroom needs and requests and our annual parent and child party. This is a special event. Each child will need a parent to stay for the morning. You will be given plenty of notice as to when this will happen. Please make arrangements to have someone come in your place if you are unable to attend.

Please make us aware of any events or problems that may affect your child's behaviour, whether it is his/her health or just a matter of "getting up on the wrong side of the bed". Also, please let us know if your child is going to be away for a period of time or if they will be dropped off and picked up by someone else because you are away.

6. Guidance and Discipline

Children feel accepted and secure when they know what is expected of them. The classroom is a happy place when it is free from confusion and disorder. There are clear guidelines that we use to encourage appropriate social and behavioural development such as:

- Setting limits early in the year to recognize appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Using choices and natural consequences
- Redirection and distraction
- Teacher-facilitated problem solving
- Giving clear instructions

In the event that a child is having a hard time settling down for circle, into a routine, or has had an altercation with another child we will give the child an opportunity for “Chill Time”. This may mean that he/she is sitting in the big chair looking at the bubblers, at a table with a quiet activity or they may choose to sit and watch. Sometimes the children are given a choice as to how they would like to “chill”.

7. Active Play Policy

The children have daily active play in the gym. In the spring, we spend time outside at Mrs. Sturwold’s house. This playtime consists both of gross and fine motor skills and development. It gives the children a chance to raise their heart rates and use muscles and coordination skills different from those used in the classroom.

8. Screen Time Policy

There is no screen time at Cedars Christian Preschool.

9. Snacks

Snacks are NOT provided by the preschool. Please send a healthy snack with preferably two food groups. The snack should also be an appropriate size. When you arrive the snack can be put on the lunch kit cart in the cubby area. Please note that we are an ALLERGY AWARE preschool. Snacks must be nut free. If, inadvertently, a “nut snack” comes to preschool we will rewrap it so that the child can enjoy it at home. If he/she does not have anything else to eat we will use our emergency snack supplies.

The preschool staff will encourage eating and drinking but will not force your child to eat. If your child has difficulty with a snack, the staff will apprise you of their observation at the end of the day. Children may not share snacks.

10. Birthdays and Special Events/Holidays

These are recognized throughout the year. Parents are welcome to bring cupcakes or cookies to share with the class. Please let us know ahead of time (allergies). As a Christian preschool, our emphasis is on the Christian meaning of Christmas and Easter. We do not participate in Halloween.

11. Show N’ Tell and Special Helper

Scheduled Show-N-Tell days are a highlight to the preschool experience. Help your child pick one small toy/item that is not expensive or breakable. Items should only be brought on scheduled days. On your Show-N-Tell schedule one name will stand out with a *. This signifies that your child will be our special helper and may bring Show-N-Tell. They will have extra privileges for the day. These are great times for parents to volunteer.

12. Clothing

Your child will need to bring a pair of indoor shoes to keep at the preschool. Please send your child to preschool in comfortable/washable clothes so he/she is not restricted or choose not to participate in an activity for fear of getting dirty. Please label all your child's belongings.

13. Supplies

To help keep our preschool fees down, we ask parents to help buy supplies for the classroom. Please remember to bring the post-it-noted items as soon as possible.

14. Field Trips

On occasion we will plan a field trip. Parents are encouraged to join us. Field trip forms will go home as needed. **We require that parents accompany and drive their child on the field trip or find someone who can take his/her place or they may not be permitted to attend the event.** Carpooling is recommended, parents are responsible for arranging this prior to class. Any drivers not listed on the child's registration form must be added as approved for pick up.

15. Photographs

Throughout the year photos will be taken of your child in preschool. If you do not wish to have your child photographed please indicate this in the registration package. The preschool is required to keep one photograph of your child on file (confidential). This photo will be provided by parents upon registration.

16. Conflict Resolution

Following the teachings in Matthew 8:15-20 when a parent/guardian has a concern, complaint or a grievance first this must be brought to the attention of the person involved with the willingness and intention towards solving the problem. If a solution has not been found and healing does not occur the teacher shall notify the School Principal and all parties shall meet with the Principal in an effort to restore communication and mutual respect. Should this not be accomplished the concern may be brought to the Cedars Christian School Board.

E. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

1. Illnesses

Our preschool is committed to provide a safe and healthy place for each child. A child with a communicable disease must be kept at home. This includes fever, cold, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, chronic cough, pink eye, etc. Everyone appreciates you leaving a sick or potentially sick child at home. Please be considerate of germs that spread so quickly among children. For more information on when to keep you child home please refer to **Appendix A: Illness in Child Care – A Quick Guide** (page 10 of this handbook).

The following points are observed:

- Parents should call the preschool if their child is not attending
- Children must be kept home if not able to participate in regular activities
- If a child has been exposed to any contagious disease (Chickenpox, mumps, measles, etc. or a parasite like lice) the school must be notified. A child may only return to the school with a doctor's consent.
- Children must be fever free and have stopped vomiting/diarrhea for a twenty-four hour period before returning to school.

If your child becomes ill at school:

- Your child will be isolated in comfort and with supervision
- The parent or emergency number will be contacted
- If no contact person can be reached, the child will remain isolated and observed.

2. Children With Allergies

Your child may be allergic to various substances and this needs to be brought to the attention of the teacher. This is especially true if the allergy or insensitivity is to any food type. This information must be included on your registration form.

3. Life Threatening Allergies

If your child suffers from a life-threatening allergy (ie: anaphylaxis), it is of paramount importance that you fill out an extended medical form prior to admission in to the preschool. **NO CHILD WITH A LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY WILL BE ADMITTED INTO CEDARS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL WITHOUT EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS BEING ESTABLISHED AND IN PLACE.** This is required by licensing.

4. Medications

Medication will not be administered unless, "the medication is immediately necessary to address a significant risk to the child's health" (53/1.1 Community Care Assisted Living Act Child Care Licensing Regulation). This will require the completion of 'Permission to Give Medication' form. For any other medications please ask your doctor to adjust the dosage schedule to fit your home schedule.

5. Immunization

Community Care Licensing recommends that children have completed the standard course of immunizations. The student registration package has a form for providing this information and parents are required to notify the preschool with updates to their child's immunizations. If you choose not to immunize this can also be noted on the form. In the event of an outbreak, if your child has not been immunized, for their safety, you will be asked to keep them home.

6. Safety: Fire Drills, Evacuation and Disaster Planning

Fire and evacuation drills are posted in the centre and practiced monthly in accordance with regular Cedars Christian School procedure. Drills are timed, recorded and posted in the classroom.

For fire drills a staff member will blow the whistle and the children will line up at the designated exit door and we all leave the classroom together. We go upstairs and meet on the steps leading to the church sanctuary. One staff member goes ahead of the children and the other staff member follows behind, closing the classroom door. This staff member also takes the cell phone and the backpack, which contains each child's registration package, including photos of each child and emergency contact numbers. Parent volunteers will help ensure that the children leave the classroom safely.

Once upstairs, staff take a headcount and talk with the children regarding our plans if we could not stay at the Preschool. Sometime within the first month we will walk with the children to our safe house which is located next to the Preschool site at the home of Wilma Sturwold, 452 Killoren Crescent. At that time all families enrolled are encouraged to join us for this walk. Families enrolling later in the year will be informed of the location and procedure.

Should an emergency arise in which we would have to stay overnight at the Preschool, we will access the food, water and blankets that we are required to have for 72 hours survival.

If we are unable to remain at the preschool, we will walk to Mrs. Sturwold's house. You will be called from there to pick up your child. ALL release protocols must be followed. All preschoolers will be supervised and attended to until a parent or certified designate is able to pick up the child. Help us protect your child during a disaster, please be patient with the student release procedure.. Familiarize yourself with the evacuation procedures while visiting the preschool. Staff are trained in first aid.

Procedures for emergencies are reviewed at the Parent meeting prior to the start of school and reviewed with volunteers when they help out in the classroom.

If we are unable to remain at the current Preschool location, classes will be held in a vacant classroom at Cedars Christian Preschool.

7. Other Early Childhood Professionals

On occasion, we may have various professionals, such as Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists that visit the preschool. I will notify you if they have any concerns about the development of your child. If you have any concerns, please let us know so that we can make a referral as soon as possible. Wait lists can be very lengthy and the younger the therapy starts the better chance your child has at overcoming the obstacle.

8. Child Abuse Policy

We hope and pray that all children attending our school are growing up in a secure and loving environment. Should a situation arise in which a staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is abused or neglected, that staff member is morally and legally obligated to file a report immediately with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. In these matters, we follow a protocol published by the Society of Christian Schools in B.C.

APPENDIX A: Illness in Child Care – A Quick Guide

Disease	Symptoms	Infectious?	Remove from Centre?
Chicken Pox	Fever Blister type rash	YES 5 days after onset	YES When spots first appear and 5 days after
Cold with fever	Runny nose, clear discharge, doesn't want to eat, slight cough, plus fever – above 37 C. Runny nose-green discharge, tired, severe cough, hurts all over.	YES Before and during symptoms	YES
Diarrhea #1	Runny stools, if no other problems, check with parent. It could be normal or because of diet.	NO	NO
Diarrhea #2	Runny stools, fever about 37C, bad smell, fussy, cranky, pain and/or vomiting.	YES	YES Until doctor says it is not infectious.
Ear Infections	Fever, clear discharge from nose, cranky, pulls on ear.	NO	NO
Flu	Fever is about 37C, cranky, in pain, may have runny nose, nausea or vomiting.	YES	YES Until symptoms are gone.
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	Spots on palms of hands, fingers and soles of the feet. Sometimes on buttocks; for 7-10 days.	YES	NO
Herpes Simplex (common cold sore)	Fever blister or sore around mouth.	YES	Decide each individual case with a Public Health Nurse.
Impetigo	Crusty rash, mostly on face, arms or legs.	YES	YES Until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
Nausea/Vomiting		YES	YES Until it stops.
Pink Eye	Thick discharge from one or both eyes, redness or itching of one or both eyes	YES	YES Until seen by a doctor who says child may return.
Rashes	Red spots anywhere—can be measles, chicken pox, allergies, impetigo	YES	YES Until doctor says it is not contagious.
Sore Throat	Fever, red throat, hurts to swallow (could be strep throat).	YES	YES Until on antibiotics for 24 hours.