

Parents handbook

updated 01/20/2019

Welcome

We are delighted that you have chosen us as your childcare provider. We strive to provide an excellent care and learning experiences at an affordable prices.

About us

Noah's Ark Christian Learning Center was established in 2000 (then a non-profit childcare center); changed its status and name in 2006. It is managed by its original owners. Also, it is licensed by Boise City and complies with all its standards and requirements.

Noah's Ark is open 20 hours per day (4:00am to 12:00 am), Monday thru Saturday.

Noah's Ark Christian Learning Center accepts children from 6 weeks up to 12 years of age, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, nationality or religion, and any who may benefit from our program. We offer full and part time care, before and after school care, as well as summer program for our school age children. We provide transportation to Valley View, Morley Nelson, Horizon and Summerwind schools.

Our staff

All staff members are licensed by Boise City (fingerprinted and undergo a federal and state background check prior to being licensed); and are CPR and First Aid certified. Our staff also participate in the Idaho STARS program "Steps to quality" in order to remain educated to the ever-changing needs of today's families. Annually, each of our staff members are required to complete 15-20 hours of training.

Our Philosophy

The center's purpose is to provide an atmosphere that encourages social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth and development of the child as whole. Our learning program is based on Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) – understanding how children develop and learn at each milestone.

It is our philosophy that early childhood should be a time of fun, warmth, security, exploring, and discovery. It is also a critical time for child to learn about respect, obedience, sharing, trusting - all the values that are endorsed in the Bible. When these values are ingrained in a child's heart they will produce a good citizen in the future.

Immunization Policy

Idaho Code Section 39-1118 requires that each child's record of immunization be on file within fourteen days of enrollment. These records must be updated as additional immunizations are received.

We do NOT accept unimmunized children.

Attendance Policy

The parents shall notify the center of any changes in their schedule at least 48 hrs. in advance during office hours (Monday-Friday 8am to 5 pm) or charged accordingly (hourly fee).

If parents brought child (ren) without notification they will be charged \$20.00/hr. – first hour + same day drop-in rate.

The parents shall notify the center when the child is going to be absent from the childcare every day that the child is absent

If a 3 year old child is not fully potty trained and therefore can't start attending Preschool 1 class, he/she can remain in Toddler 2 class only for 3 more months past their 3rd birthday.

Holiday Closures

We will be closed for the following holidays: New Year's Eve & Day - 3 days, Easter weekend, Memorial Day weekend - 3 days, 4th of July - 3 days, Labor Day weekend- 3 days, Thanksgiving Day – 2 days, Christmas holiday - 3 days. Parents are **not** charged for planned holiday closures.

Policy for Drop-in care

Drop-in care can be scheduled based upon staff ratio and availability, and if there is not any previous unpaid balance. Minimum scheduled time is for 1 hour.

All drop-in charges should be paid at the time of scheduling. If parents choose to cancel the scheduled care; with more than 24 hours' notice they will be charged 50% of total charges; with less than 24 hours' notice they will be charged 100% of total charges.

Arrival / Pick-up Time Policy

At the arrival time the parents shall sign in (**time and initials**) on the attendance roster, **bring the child to the classroom**, wait for a child's well-being check-up, and only then leave the premises.

The parents shall notify their child's teacher about any cuts, bruises, or other body markings that is present at the drop-in time.

The parents shall notify their child's teacher if in the last 24 hours their child was not feeling like him/herself or had any symptoms listed in the "Illness policy".

The parents shall check their child's cubby to make sure that there is **at least** 1 change of clothes (2-3 if child is NOT fully potty-trained).

If your child is brought to the classroom before scheduled time (without prior notification), or picked up from the classroom more than 5 min later than the scheduled time (without prior notification), an early or late fee of **\$5.00 for every 15 min** will be charged.

The parents shall check their child's cubby at the pick-up time for anything that needs to be taken home (art projects, other papers or reports, etc.).

The parents shall sign the child out (after picking up a child from classroom) (**time and initials**) on the attendance roster before taking their child from the premises (no later than 5 min after the scheduled pick-up time. Only people authorized by parents (in writing) can pick up a child from our center. Anyone picking up (including parents) must have proper photo identification.

Failure to complete child sign in and out procedure (**time and initials**) will result in a **\$4.00 charge per child per occurrence**.

The parents shall notify the center in writing when someone, other than those named on the emergency pick-up information, will be picking up their child.

Failure to pick-up your child after 2 hours of non-notification will result in contacting proper authorities and placing your child into protective service.

Nap time

Most young children need naps or at least quiet time. Children in our 1 through 5 year old classrooms will be required to have nap/quiet time from 1:00-3:00 pm each day. Infants may have additional naps throughout the day depending upon the individual child. We will provide your child with a nap mat/cot. Parents should provide their child(ren) with a small blanket and pillow.

If parents bringing a toddler at nap time and he / she are having a hard time, we may ask parents to change arrival time to either before or after nap time.

Meals and Snacks

All meals served at our center are nutritious and follow recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Lunch, dinner, and some snacks are home cooked and made from scratch.

We have a 4 week rotation of menus. The current week menu is always displayed on the entryway bulletin board. We are **NOT** a peanut free center.

At Noah's Ark all participants are served the same meals at no additional charge, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. There will be no discrimination in the course of the food service.

If your child(ren) have a food allergy, we can and will provide substitutions- according to a doctor's filled "Medical Statement: Request for Special Meals and /or Accommodations".

Supplies

As we know, children can be messy and learning can be messy. Please be prepared as accidents happen, often at meal times or even to a potty-trained child. We expect parents to provide at least 3 changes of clothes for not potty-trained children, and at least one change of clothes for potty-trained children. We do not always have extra clothes. If anything is borrowed, please remember to wash and bring back to our center as soon as possible.

If extra clothes are not available, you will be called to bring clothes or pick-up your child within 1 hr. A charge for any items that center provided will be added to your weekly bill

Also, all children need to come dressed weather appropriate (this includes proper shoes). We highly discourage and ask that you refrain from bringing sandals/flip-flops, shoes without a backside, or any boots with leather soles.

The parents shall provide the child with a clean small blanket and small pillow (which should NOT have any dog or cat hair) to use during nap time. It needs to be taken home every Friday and washed.

The parents shall provide all other necessary items in a timely manner (for toddlers: spill-proof sippy cup, diapers / pull-ups)

Sunscreen

Children's skin is sensitive and it is important to protect it from the sun. Because of allergies we do not provide sunscreen - parents should bring a bottle of sunscreen with your child's name on it.

Breastfeeding

We encourage mothers who breastfeed. We have a small refrigerator (with a freezer compartment) to store expressed breast milk (bottles or pouches should have a child's name and a date – it will expire in 72 hours). We will follow your instructions concerning feeding schedule, use of the pacifier and new foods.

Potty Training

All children must be fully potty trained before they can move into our Preschool 1 room and begin our preschool program. Potty trained meaning; self-initiated, accident free and in underwear for at least 2 weeks. Since every child is unique in how much time he/she will require to become fully potty trained, we recommend that parents will start diligently working on it as soon as child turns 2. This may help take off pressure from parents to have their child ready for our preschool classroom.

Some tips that may be helpful for parents include:

- Dress your child in clothes that he/she can easily take on or off.
- Consistency, be sure to let your child's teacher know anything you may be doing differently at home.
- Reward you child each time they try, even if nothing happens. (Praise, hugs, stickers, etc.)
- Encourage your child every step of the way, and be very patient.
- Allow your child to help pick out their favorite underwear (cartoons, sports, color etc.)

Self Sleep Practices

Our facility participates in safe sleep practices to help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). We always place babies to sleep in cribs, on her / his back, with nothing in the crib – completely free of toys, blankets, quilts, pillows, etc (swaddle blankets and sleep sacks are used instead of blankets)

No bottled or sippy cups allowed when baby is in the crib.

We encourage parents to follow same sleep practices at home (we have flyers for you)

Open Door Policy

Parents and Guardians are welcome here at any time. If other relatives is stopping in for a visit with your child without you (grandparents, uncles, aunts), please, let us know ahead of time and remind them to bring a proper identification

Illness Policy

The parents shall NOT bring a child to the center if in the last 24 hours child had:

- a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- diarrhea, or vomiting
- any rash (especially with fever)
- pink or red looking eye with white or yellow discharge
- greenish discharge when sneezing,
- head lice or nits, until after a letter from a doctor or professional is given stating that the hair is CLEAN from head lice and / or nits.

If (while in our care) the child will start having any symptoms from the list above OR

- if the child cannot participate in normal activities in his/her classroom
- if the child develops mouth sores
- if a child has an abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours, even if it is intermittent
- if a child has a severe cough or difficulty breathing (rapid or wheezing)
- if the child requires a greater level of care that we can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children

If any of this criteria are met, the child will be excluded from attending. Parents need to pick-up ill child **within 1 hr** of phone notification. An ill child shall be isolated from other kids and given appropriate care until child is picked up by a parent.

If the child was excluded from the child care center, he/she will be allowed to return to the center if:

- a) parents bring a note from a doctor, stating that child may return to a social setting OR
- b) full 24 hours has passed since the last symptom that was the cause of exclusion

The center shall notify the child's parents of a suspected exposure to a communicable disease.
The parents shall notify the center of the child's possible exposure to a communicable disease.

Injury policy

The center shall give appropriate first aid to hurt children. A parent shall be contacted if it is the judgment of the staff that immediate medical attention is necessary. If the injury requires immediate emergency care, 911 will be called, and then parents will be contacted. Any medical, dental or hospital bills is the responsibility of the parents.

The center will maintain a parents' or caregivers' signed consent form agreeing to this provision. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the center up-to-date on phone numbers, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information.

Medication Policy

The parents shall bring physician-prescribed medication only in original pharmacy bottle or package, and fill out the Medication Form completely for every day that medication needs to be administered. The center shall have no responsibility for any adverse reaction caused by the administration of such prescribed medication.

Communicating with Staff

1. It is NOT our teacher's responsibility to handle any office procedures. The parents should make arrangements with the office to discuss any questions about billing, fees, schedule changes or food substitutions.
2. The parents shall come to the office for conferences when asked to do so by a member of the management team.
3. The parents or guardians shall remain calm and respectful toward any staff members at all times.
4. The parents shall respect the Christian nature of our center and its staff (we do not allow paraphernalia or clothes with symbols of death, ghosts, witches, monsters, etc).
5. The parents will **timely notify** the center of **any changes in contact information = address, phone numbers, etc)**

Child Abuse & Neglect Policy

As a childcare provider, we are all legally mandated to report any signs or suspicion of child abuse and neglect. All staff members annually review guidelines for recognizing any signs or suspicion of child abuse and neglect. Abuse can be physical, emotional, physiological or sexual. Neglect is the failure to provide any necessary care, hygiene, clothing, food, shelter or medical care.

To prevent child abuse and neglect in our program:

- All our staff are licensed through Boise City (finger printed and back ground checked)
- We annually review guidelines for recognizing child abuse and neglect.
- All our staff are trained in the Strengthening Families Protective Factor Framework
- We teach children that if they have questions about someone's behavior, they should ask an adult they trust about it
- We develop and maintain positive relationships with parents
- We will communicate to the parents any concerns of their child's progress
- We strive to provide an atmosphere for parents to share any experiences and help develop a support system + information about community resources
- We provide an opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's care
- We offer parents tips for specific challenges

A report of child abuse is not an accusation. It is a request for more information by someone who has reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect may be occurring. A report does not mean that our employees must determine that abuse and/or neglect has occurred. In Idaho, Child Protective Services is responsible for that determination.

Our Curriculum

Noah's Ark Christian Learning Center's curriculum includes: exposure to letters, numbers, shapes and colors, basic concepts; Bible and life lessons; sharing and conversation time; stories, songs and finger plays; creative art activities and crafts; games and large muscle activities; field trips; food preparation; science and nature activities; and celebration of holidays and birthdays.

Our program is geared toward helping children develop habits of observation, questioning, and listening. It gives them an awareness of their own feelings and right to express them. They learn that they are free to make choices as long as they stay within limits of consideration for people and things.

As a Christian based daycare, we will be sharing stories and truths from the Bible.

We will also encourage the children to learn and enjoy the privilege of prayer.

Classroom Events

We celebrate several holidays throughout the year. We have a Birthday Celebrations, Friendship Celebration for Valentine's Day, Easter Egg Hunt, and others. Parents are welcome to bring cupcakes for their child's class to celebrate their Birthday, and to contribute to other class celebrations.

Events for Families

We encourage families to get to know one another and our staff. We want to build strong and lasting relationships with all our families and staff. Throughout the year we hold several events and activities to promote building relationships: Mother's Day Tea; Doughnuts for Dads; Hello, Summer Picnic; Fall Open House; Preschool Christmas Program.

Toys from Home

Toys from home are to stay at home - they often get broken or lost, because of disagreement or go to another child's home. We have a Show and Tell Time on Fridays - that is when we encourage kids to bring their favorite toy. The center shall not be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Severe Weather Closure

In the event of severe weather or snow, we will delay opening until travel is safe or remain closed for entire day. If this may happen, we will notify families through our Facebook page (Noah's Ark Learning Center) and local news channels.

Child Guidance & Discipline Policy

Communication builds relationships and helps children develop. We will take a preventative approach to discipline to help teach children positive behaviors. Our goal is to provide children with the opportunity and motivation to make **good choices**, function independently, learn social skills through guidance, respect other children and adults, adapt to routines & rules and become responsible individuals. This program will focus on preventing behavior problems by providing an organized physical environment and a variety of age appropriate, adult-directed, and child-initiated activities. Whenever possible, children will be given the opportunity to make real choices about what they will do and where they will play. Teachers will give instructions or expectations for every activity.

The following is a basic outline of the child guidance procedures used in this childcare program:

- Positive methods of guidance, which demonstrate problem-solving skills and self-control, will be used
- Children may be firmly- but gently- held to prevent them from harming themselves, others or property

Some basic rules that the children will be asked to follow in this day care are:

- No Hitting, No Pushing, No Biting
- No Name Calling, Respect the Property and Feelings of Other Children
- No Running or Loud Voices Indoors (use soft voice)
- No Fighting, No Play Shooting, No Sword Play, No Rough-Housing

If child makes a wrong choice, the following steps will be taken:

- A verbal warning, the child will be redirected to another activity if possible
- Natural & logical consequences are implemented (if a child misuses a toy, it will be taken away)
- Time-out will be used if the child needs to calm down or to be removed from a situation
- The teacher will fill out a Discipline report
- If child will not cooperate or calm down, he/she will be brought to the Office for a time-out in the "Principal's Office"
- If child will not cooperate or calm down, we will call the parent to help calm the child
- If child will not cooperate or calm down after the phone call, parent will need to pick up the child, if child is not picked-up within 45 min, he/she will be taken off schedule for the next day
- If child has to be picked-up second time from the office - he/she will be taken off schedule for the next day.
- If child has to be picked-up third time from office - he/she will be taken off schedule for 3 days. (Parent - office conference should take place before the child can come back to the center).

We reserve the right to not follow this procedure if; a child is in danger of hurting him/herself, other children or teachers; uncontrollable outburst of anger or rage, OR his/hers behavior is negatively affecting other kids.

If it is considered that the continued care of a particular child enrolled in the day care either

- detrimental to that child or the other children enrolled
 - is not in the best interests of the child is concerned OR
 - we do not have the cooperation of or have a good working relationship with the parents
- the contract for child care may be terminated by the provider at any time.

The following types of discipline are prohibited:

- Physical punishment of any kind
- Humiliation, yelling, harsh language, ridicule or rejection
- Placing a child out of sight of caregiver: closets, restrooms, hallways. etc
- Punishment associated with foods, naps, outside time or toilet training

Billing / Payment Policy

1. Payment obligation is based upon the block of time you agreed to use childcare, not the actual hours of attendance. Fees will be charged for all days in which childcare is in operation and your child is scheduled to attend.
2. Tuition is figured as a weekly fee. It is to be paid weekly, biweekly or monthly no later than the Sunday of the current week. Any other payment arrangements for special circumstances must be approved in advance and set up in writing.
3. **10 %** late payment fee will be charged on Monday, following the unpaid for week.
4. All checks issued with insufficient funds will be charged a **\$30.00 fee** and future payments have to be made by debit /credit cards, cash or money-orders only.
5. If tuition is not paid for 2 consecutive weeks or the balance is greater than \$250.00, **children will be taken off schedule** until tuition obligations are met (including any late payment fees).
6. If balance (including late payment fees) are not paid within 30 calendar days, the child (ren) will be un-enrolled and a delinquent account will be turned over to a collection agency.
7. Parent(s) **participating in the ICCP** must pay their copayment by the 15th of the current month (if the amount is no greater than \$250.00; if it is greater than \$250.00, for, example, \$400.00, than the difference -\$150.00- should be paid by the 7th)
8. If you have not received the current month letter from ICCP, then the previous month amount should be paid, OR at least the first week balance.
9. If a family part is not paid by the 15th, the late payment fee of 10% of the remaining family balance will be added every week until payment is made. If copayment is not made by the end of the month, the child (ren) will be taken off the schedule until balance is paid in full; if you will want to restart schedule with less than 48 hrs notice, drop-in hourly rates will apply.

All fees are subject to change upon consideration due to variation in circumstances or market rates.

Termination of the care

This agreement shall be terminated if any one or more of the following occur:

1. Parents give a 2 weeks written notice. If notice is not given, the parents are responsible for the last two weeks tuition, even if child is not attending.
2. The parents allow their account to become delinquent.
3. Failure of the parents or guardians to honor the obligations listed in this agreement or in any rules, regulations, or manuals promulgated or provided by the center.
4. The center in its sole and unfettered discretion determines that it is unable to meet the needs of the child.
5. The center in its sole and unfettered discretion determines that it is not in the best interest of the program or other children enrolled at the center to have the child in attendance.
6. If child was not in attendance for one FULL CALENDAR MONTH.

Cell phones

Please, do not use cell phone in the center. If it's an urgent matter, you may finish conversation in the lobby, before entering the classroom.

Smoking

We are a smoke-free facility, including our parking area and playground. We do NOT have a designated smoking area.

Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan

It is very important for our center to be prepared for a wide range of emergency situations. Preparation includes emergency preparedness training, plan development, and practicing emergency plans. We have policies in place for: disasters (business and natural), emergency closures, evacuations, relocation, sheltering in place, safe place / lock down, communicating and reuniting with families. We have plans to ensure greater safety for the children in our care in any emergency situation.

In the event of an emergency situation we outlined the attached response plan. Please know that we will make every attempt to notify you so it is vital that you keep your emergency contact information up-to-date. Keep this letter with you so that you will know how to contact us in the event of an emergency.

Evacuation / Relocation

If the emergency is confined to the immediate area at the CENTER e.g. fire, and the children cannot stay on the premises, the children will be taken to Church across the street. The children and staff will remain at this location while you or your emergency contact is notified of the situation.

Notification

Every effort will be made to contact you as soon as the children and staff are safe. If we cannot reach you, we will contact your alternate emergency contact. Children will only be released to you or your alternate emergency contact during times of emergency.

Information about the event can be obtained through local radio stations, with information posted on our Facebook page.

Emergency Supplies

We will maintain food & water supplies with a minimum of 72 hours of emergency sheltering on site at the CENTER. If children have medical needs that require prescription medication, parents are responsible for ensuring that a 72 hours' worth of dosages are stored in the locked medicine box at the CENTER. These medicines must be in an individual container with the prescription and expiration date of the medicine.

Please rest assure that our staff will remain with and care for the children at all times during an emergency to ensure the children's safety. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Our Emergency Relocation Shelters are King of Glory Lutheran Church, located across the road from our facility and, in case our immediate area is in danger, Life Church, located at 3225 E Commercial Ct, Meridian, ID 83642.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at <http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complainfilingcust.html> or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.imake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

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