



God's Gifts Preschool

1976 Route 25

Oswego, IL 60543

Email: godsgiftspreschool@opchurch.org

www.godsgiftsps.com

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to God's Gifts Preschool. We feel blessed to serve your family in service to the Lord. We promise to strive to meet your child's needs as they grow and develop in many new ways this school year.

...Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." Luke 18: 16-17

Our Philosophy: Each child is a gift from God and shall be made to feel a part of God's abiding love and care. Our mission is to provide our students with a quality Christian preschool experience focused on love, kindness, and faith. At God's Gifts, we encourage the growth and development of our students by combining hands on learning experiences and play. We provide a safe, fun and nurturing environment that helps our children grow in all areas of development. Our focus is on each of our students' growth spiritually, socially, emotionally, and academically. God's Gifts Preschool supports families as they guide their children to grow in faith.

Every child has a special place in God's plan. At God's Gifts, preschool students learn that God loves and cares for them and others through activities designed to guide them as they explore God's world. Children will spend time learning as a group and individually in activities where each child is respected as God's gift.

Parents and families are a valuable part of our ministry. Parents are a child's primary teacher and welcome to assist teachers in the classroom from time to time.

Our Goals

- To honor and serve our Lord.
- To help children become more aware that they are a valuable gift from God.
- To help children learn how to accept and respond positively to others.
- To help set the foundation for lifetime love of learning.
- To help our students begin to build new skills they will use throughout their learning and growing

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (**Office hours**)

Monday through Friday **Student hours** 9:15: a.m. -12:15 p.m. (3-year-old and PreK Program) / 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. (2's program)

Age Requirements: Children in our 3-year-old and 4-year-old classes must be completely potty trained; Pull-Ups are not allowed. Children in our two-year-old program must be actively working on potty training. Pull ups are acceptable to begin with, but children should be on their way to taking care of their own toileting needs. Children should be independent enough to pull clothes off and on, teachers can help with buttons, zippers and snaps. Parents will be called to tend to bathroom accidents. Children can use the bathroom at any time.

Tuition: Tuition is due on the 25th of each month. Payments made after the 25th will be charged a \$20 late fee unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director. Tuition is be paid by cash, check or money order payable to God's Gifts Preschool. There will also be a \$20 charge on checks that come back due to non-sufficient funds. Auto withdrawal from your checking or savings account is available if you prefer convenience of having tuition taken out of your account monthly on the 25th of the month. This option may be selected at any time during the school year.

Drop off & Pick up Procedures: Please have your child at the Preschool on time so that the teachers may start their day promptly.

- At drop off and pick up time, we ask that you drive up to your designated area and wait in your car for a teacher to take your student out of the car.
- At drop off the teacher or assistant will unbuckle your child and help them out of the car.
- At pick up the teacher or assistant will help your child into the car seat; **you are responsible for buckling your child in their seat.**
- **You will need to sign out each day on the clipboard by your child's name and time, per DCFS regulations.**

Please let your teacher know if there will be a change in drop off or pick up person. The alternate pick-up person **MUST BE ON THE AUTHORIZED PICK-UP LIST**. The alternate pick-up person **MUST SHOW** a photo ID, or the child may not leave with that person. Parents can add new authorized pick people to their list at any time by coming to the office to add the names to the list. If a new pick-up person is temporary, parents can send in a signed and dated note with the following information to be put in the child's folder:

- **name of the person**
- **dates of pick up**
- **reason for temporary pick up**

Late Pick Up Policy:

We ask that you pick up your child (ren) on time. If you are going to be late picking up your child, **please call the Preschool office**. If your child is not picked up on time, they will stay with a staff member of GGPS to ensure their well-being until they are picked up. If you pick up your child later than the dismissal time of their class, we charge a late fee of **\$10.00 for 1– 15 minutes**, which begins 5 minutes after the dismissal time of the class. The fee will continue to multiply with each new 15-minute period of time. If we cannot contact you, we will attempt to reach your emergency contacts by phone to try to find someone to pick up your child. If after one hour we have not been able to contact the parents or any of the people listed on the emergency contact list, we are required to contact the proper authorities. **It is essential that you keep your emergency contact list up to date throughout the school year.**

Health & Medication Policy: It is the policy of God's Gifts Preschool that the staff will only administer an epi pen shot or a medication that is needed for an allergic reaction that is prescribed by a physician with a doctor's note which includes the reason for medication, when to administer, how to administer and dosage amount is included. Those medications must be accepted in their original container and be labeled with the full pharmacy label. Please plan your child's doses of medication around school hours.

If your child is absent due to illness, call the school office and teacher will be notified. If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the class in the Director's office and the person listed as the emergency contact will be notified to pick the child up promptly.

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease (such as: COVID -19, strep throat, pink eye, Impetigo or other rash, Influenza, Rotavirus, head lice etc.) and attended class within one class day of onset of symptoms, please inform the classroom teacher.

Children must be fever free without the use of fever reducing medication or vomiting has ended, symptom free, including rashes, and feeling well prior to returning to school for at least 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to vomiting or a fever, they must wait 24 hours before returning to school.

Should your child be injured at school, we carry insurance to cover any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by you. Please submit medical bills to your own insurance company first and then our insurance will pay whatever is not covered up to \$1,000,000.

Discipline Procedure: As a part of classroom management, it is important for the children to act appropriately and follow the school and classroom guidelines. Children are responsible for their own behavior and actions. We will be modeling positive Christian behaviors and positive behavior management. Any discipline that is needed will be handled by the teachers using positive redirection, age-appropriate discussion, and if persistent the child will be removed from the activity until they can effectively re-join the group. You will be notified of behaviors that need further intervention.

School Snacks: A regular snack time is scheduled each day. Parents pay a snack fee at the beginning of the year. Each fee is different depending on the days the child is enrolled.

- Snacks will include either 100% juice or water.
- Snacks will include at least two of the following: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy
- If your child has any food allergies, be sure it is indicated on the enrollment forms
- **This also needs to be documented by a doctor and an action plan will be set up with families.**
- ***NO PEANUT OR LATEX PRODUCTS ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOMS***

Birthday/Holiday Celebrations: When celebrating children's birthdays at school we ask that you DO NOT send in edible birthday or holiday treats due to allergies. You may however send in a special trinket or goody bag for all the children in your child's class. These items **may NOT** include any food items, balloons, or choking hazards. Teachers will inspect goody bags to ensure there are no food products. You may also choose to donate a book as a gift for the classroom. Teachers may only pass out party invitations if they are for the entire class.

Newsletter, Classroom Email Correspondence

- Parents will receive a monthly newsletter, including special dates, from the Director.
- Your child's teacher will send a bi-weekly newsletter recapping the class activities as well as reminders for upcoming events.
- Teachers will be using the Homeroom app to post pictures and notes for your child's class. More information will be provided at the beginning of the school year.
- Each teacher has their email address through which communication can take place. This email address will be provided to you at Meet the Teachers along with the specific times of the day when email will be read and responded to by the teachers.

School Calendar: Gods Gifts will follow the Oswego School District #308 calendar as close as possible. There will be no school on Columbus Day, the days before and after Thanksgiving; winter break will be over the Christmas holiday as noted on the school calendar, Martin Luther King's birthday, President's Day, and Spring break as noted on the school calendar. **When the school district dismisses early, we still have regularly scheduled classes.**

Parent Teacher Conferences: Parent-Teacher conferences are an important part of your child's education and success at school.

- Fall conferences are **OPTIONAL**.
- All students will have a conference in the spring.

If you have questions or concerns that come up during the school year, contact the Preschool office or talk directly to your child's teacher to set up a time to discuss the issue. Drop-off and pick-up times are not appropriate for this type of discussion as your child's teacher will want to give you accurate information and their full attention.

Withdrawal Policy: If you are moving or taking your child out of the program for any reason, we require 30 days' notice. This will give us time to help your child and their classmates adjust to the change. You will need to pay the full tuition for the month your child leaves if it is before your 30 days end. If we are given less than 30 days' notice, you are still responsible for paying the next month's tuition as well.

Parent Volunteers: Gods Gifts Preschool finds family involvement in their child's school experience as incredibly beneficial to their child's education. Parents are encouraged to help with special events that will come up during the year. The Director and teachers will be in contact with volunteer opportunities indicating how and when we will need assistance. Volunteers will not be invited into the classrooms the first month of school, so the children have time to get acclimated to the new routine.

Volunteer Check-In: When you arrive at the preschool to volunteer for any activity including but not limited to classroom volunteer, office helper, or special speaker/reader please stop by the preschool office and sign in upon arrival. There will be a **VOLUNTEER** clipboard on the outside of the office door for you to sign your name, date, and time you arrive. Before leaving the preschool, please sign out the time you are leaving. This will help us keep track of everyone in case of an emergency or fire drill while you are visiting. We strive to keep everyone safe and accounted for at all times.

Field Trips: When a class participates in a field trip, permission slips and specific information will be sent out at least 2 weeks prior to the trip. We ask that parents drive their own children and participate with the children on the trip. During planned field trips there is no in class session. Children unable to attend the trip will have to have other childcare arrangements for the day.

Picture Taking: Gods Gifts Preschool will take many pictures of the children throughout the year. Some of these may be used in advertising or posted throughout the school without the children's names. The preschool also has Facebook page where pictures are frequently posted. Enrollment forms have a photo permission section where your photo permission will be indicated. We will not post or use pictures if permission is not obtained.

Dress for School: Please dress your child appropriately for the weather of the day including gym shoes or boots that allow for active play and safety

- **no sandals, crocks, or open toes shoes.**
- Send your child in clothes that can get messy.
- Put extra pants, shirt, socks, and underwear in a labeled bag to be kept in your child's backpack in case of an accident.

During winter months, the teachers will send home a note to let you know when they would like snow pants sent in for outdoor play. Please label all clothing!

Special Events: We will be hosting special events including fundraisers for the preschool as well as special programs for families to attend. You will be notified of these by newsletters so please read them thoroughly each month.

Winter Weather: In case of inclement weather be advised that we will be **closed** when Oswego School District #308 closes. Listen to WSPY (107.1) or visit www.oswego308.org to find out the school closings. Families will be notified through email and through our Facebook page when school is cancelled. If the Director and Preschool Board make the decision (other than what is decided by the Oswego Superintendent) to close school due to inclement weather or other problems at the church facility, families will be emailed as soon as possible.

Personal Belongings: Send a regular sized backpack with your child each day. A folder will be provided by the teacher to send home any work and notes from the teacher or Director. Please send any notes to the teacher in the folder. **Any payment that is sent in needs to be put in an envelope labeled with your child's name and teacher's name.** We ask that you check your child's backpack each day and empty it. **Do not bring toys or items from home unless requested by the teacher for something special in class.**

Registration Policy: We will open registration to returning preschool families first, church members second, and the community third. Registration will be open to the public in early February with the current families getting forms in January. At the time of signing up the registration fee is due to hold your child's space for the next year. The registration fee is set each year by the Preschool Board.

Privacy Policy: Any personal information given to the staff of preschool students and families will be kept confidential. No one will have access to your child's file besides the staff.

Daily Schedule: Each classroom will have its own schedule for large motor activities so that the outside area and inside large muscle area can be used separately. A daily schedule will be provided to each family on Meet the Teacher Day. Each Morning at 9:15 a.m. our teachers will meet you in the drop-off line, greet your child and walk them into the building. We take off coats, wash hands and start our day. A typical day will include these activities....

- Circle Time (Calendar, weather, other age-appropriate large group activities)
- Large Motor Time (We will go outside or into the large motor area)
- Snack (Parents are asked to bring a snack in for the class from our approved snack list a few times throughout the school year.)
- Center Time: (Learning activities will be set up in each of the centers in the classroom. These centers may include art, writing, science, math, reading, dramatic play, and sensory.)
- Closing Circle Time: (Bible Story, prayer, goodbyes, coats and backpacks.)

Nondiscriminatory Policy Statement: God's Gifts Preschool admits students of any race, color, national ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the preschool. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration for its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, and any other school-administered programs.

Pest management: Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common-sense practices. The EPA recommends that schools use integrated pest management (IPM) to reduce pesticide risk and exposure to children. Put simply, IPM is a safer and usually less costly option for effective pest management in a school community. A school IPM program uses common sense strategies to reduce sources of food, water and shelter for pests in your school buildings and grounds. An IPM program takes advantage of all pest management strategies, including the judicious and careful use of pesticides when necessary. Oswego Presbyterian Church and God's Gifts Preschool contract Orkin for our integrated pest management program. Orkin comes on the first Tuesday of each month. We use the same program that the public school system is currently using.

Social media & Pictures: When volunteering at God's Gifts Preschool or attending a preschool program you may take pictures of **your child**. However, for the safety of all students and staff we ask that you DO NOT post the pictures on any social media outlet that include staff, families or students.

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