



Preschool Handbook

Dear Parents,

God has ordained the family to nurture, instruct, and discipline children. In the book of Proverbs, parents are instructed to "Train up a child in the way he should go . . .". As an extension of the Christian home, Morning Star's goal is to help you carry out this biblical mandate.

God has designed each child to be inquisitive about His world. Preschoolers are naturally curious: seeking to gather information through their senses, by asking questions, through movement, and by examining and exploring. Morning Star's preschool provides a creative learning program that will help satisfy the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical needs of your child.

In short, we desire to work closely with parents to raise children who love and obey God, enjoy learning, and grow to their full God-given potential.

In Christ,

The Staff and Directors of Morning Star Academy

October 1, 2019

A SEASON TO GROW

Ecc. 3:1 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.

The following outline is to help you understand the objectives of our program.

Preschool is a season for children to grow:

1. Spiritually:

- a. To learn about God and Jesus Christ through the Bible
- b. To know that they are created by a loving God
- c. To worship God through prayer and songs
- d. To appreciate and be content with God's blessings
- e. To fellowship with other Christian children
- f. To follow God's word in their thoughts, words, and actions

2. Intellectually:

- a. To develop an enthusiasm for learning
- b. To learn basic skills and concepts such as colors, numbers, letters, size, order, body parts, likenesses and differences, and left and right
- c. To study the physical world and understand that God created it and has a plan for it
- d. To develop their communication skills through dramatic play and story telling
- e. To express themselves creatively through art and music
- f. To increase their vocabulary by listening to stories

3. Socially:

- a. To respect those in authority in the home, church, and school
- b. To play cooperatively and respect the rights and property of others.
- c. To take turns
- d. To listen and obey
- e. To learn to deal with anger in an acceptable way

4. Physically:

- a. To improve strength and coordination
- b. To learn hand-eye control
- c. To become self-sufficient in personal care
- d. To develop large motor skills such as skipping, running, jumping, throwing, catching, and balancing
- e. To learn small motor skills such as cutting, coloring, tracing, painting, and working puzzles

TUITION

Please refer to the current tuition schedule.

You may pay tuition on a monthly, semester, or annual basis. We partner with FACTS Tuition Management Company to process the monthly tuition payments. During enrollment, the plans will be explained to you. A \$25 late fee will be charged on past due tuition payments. Returned checks will be charged a \$10 fee.

Make checks payable to Morning Star Academy.

Two weeks notice must be given before withdrawing a child from the preschool.

We will not refund tuition for absences or when a child is withdrawn from our preschool in mid-month.

Please consult the school business office with questions about tuition and payment plans.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Discipline is one essential element in the process of developing Christian character in young children. Preschoolers need reasonable and consistent limits set on their behavior until they are able to set limits for themselves. Through loving correction, Morning Star's goal is for each child to become self-disciplined. Our rules are kept to a minimum: honesty, obedience, and respect. In some instances, a "time-out" will be given to a child. Corporal punishment is not used at Morning Star Academy.

SCHEDULE

3 year old class - Tuesday & Thursday, 8:15 - 11:15 a.m.

4 & 5 year old class - Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, 8:15 - 11:15 a.m. or 12:15 - 3:15 p.m.

Please refer to the school calendar for holidays.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

Morning Star Academy will close or dismiss early for inclement weather. There may be days that Morning Star cancels classes when local public schools do not because of the distance traveled by many of our families.

Please check our website, look for our MSA text alert, or watch for school closing announcements on local television.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL

For the first week or two of school, parents may accompany their child to the classroom. The preschool teachers will instruct you about the drop-off procedure. Please try to arrive no more than 5 minutes before class begins. If you arrive sooner, please wait with your child until the teacher is ready for you.

Parents are asked to not bring younger siblings into the preschool area to play before class time. Children who are not enrolled in the preschool should not be left unattended in the preschool area.

DEPARTURE

Children are to be picked up promptly at the close of each session. The teacher will accompany the preschoolers to the front doors of the building when class is dismissed.

Children are to be picked up only by persons over the age of 18 who are authorized by the parent(s). The names of these adults are to be listed on the pick-up permission form. We will not release a child to anyone who is not on the pick-up permission form.

ILLNESS

Please do not send your child to preschool if he has any symptoms of illness. When your child has an infectious disease (strep throat, chicken pox, etc.) please contact the office so that we may inform other classmates' parents. If your child becomes ill at school, we will notify you. We will provide a supervised quiet area for a child who appears to be ill. A child must be fever-free for 24 hours and not have vomited for 24 hours to return to school or to participate in extra-curricular activities.

If for any reason your child will be absent, please call the office. Messages may be left on our answering machine before or after school hours. Morning Star's number is 563-359-5700.

ATTIRE

Preschool is for having fun. Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and rubber-soled shoes. Each child should bring a tote bag to school every day. Please label personal items such as coats, boots, mittens, etc., with your child's name.

GENERAL (CONTINUED)

FIELD TRIPS

Do to the expense of background checks and fingerprinting necessary for parents to transport children other than their own on field trips, Morning Star preschool does not take field trips.

Teachers/assistants are not allowed to transport children. For insurance purposes, all transportation must be done by parents.

Non-center activities (i.e. private music, dance, or gymnastics lessons or participation in sports teams) are not a part of the normal routine of our preschool. If a parent should choose to enroll their child in private lessons that conflict with preschool hours any and all transportation would be the responsibility of the parent.

VISITORS

Morning Star encourages parents to visit our school. Please talk to your child's teacher to arrange a convenient time to visit. All visitors are asked to sign in at the school office to receive a visitor's badge. In the event of an emergency, we need to know who is in the building.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special occasions in the heart of a preschooler. Your child may bring treats to share with the class on that day. Children with summer birthdays will be assigned a "half-birthday" to celebrate at school. Please make arrangements concerning birthdays ahead of time with your child's teacher. Parents are welcome to attend on this special day.

If you would like to commemorate your child's birthday in a lasting way, you might consider donating a book to Morning Star. Your child's teacher may have some suggestions.

SNACKS & SUPPLIES

Morning Star expects parents to take turns providing simple snacks for the children. We will give you a sign-up sheet and a menu of nutritious snacks for you to follow. Please let the teacher know if your child has any allergies or medical conditions that affect the foods he or she can eat.

The preschool teacher will provide you with a short list of school supplies prior to the first day of class.

GENERAL (CONTINUED)

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year. Refer to the current school calendar for the dates. Parents should feel free to ask for a conference any time they believe it necessary. The teachers welcome such opportunities.

DISCHARGE POLICY

If a child demonstrates behavior problems during preschool, we will consult with the child's parent(s) to determine a plan of action. We reserve the right to dismiss any child.

Failure to pay tuition is also grounds for dismissal.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

In the event that a child becomes ill or injured while at school, the teacher will call the parent(s) or emergency contact person immediately. If necessary, the teacher will call 911. A written accident/incident report will be put in the child's file and given to the parent(s) or person who is authorized to pick up the child from school. Parents are notified on the same day.

If the teacher has concerns about behavior including, but not limited to, inappropriate, sexually acting-out behavior, these incidents must also be reported immediately to the parent(s) or emergency contact. A written incident report will be put in the child's file and given to the parent(s) or person who is authorized to pick up the child from school.

MEDICATION

Medications are not routinely administered at Morning Star Academy. Since the preschoolers are only at school for three hours most medications can be administered at home by the parent before or after preschool.

Any medications that are administered will be done through the school office staff and only by those staff members who have received training through the Scott County Health Department in Medication Administration as required by the State of Iowa.

No medications will be administered without prior written consent of the parent(s). Parents may give permission for their child to receive Tylenol or similar non-aspirin over-the-counter pain medication via their child's emergency card.

All prescription medication must be accompanied by written instructions for administration from the child's doctor or parent.

GENERAL (CONTINUED)

All medications will be stored in their original containers with label intact in the school office in a place that is inaccessible to students. The only exceptions to this policy are inhalers and epi-pens. Students may have their inhalers with them in the classroom, and epi-pens will be stored in the preschool room in a location that is inaccessible to students.

Office staff will keep a record of the time, date, and amount of all medications administered to students. Parents will be notified via e-mail or a written note if their child has received over-the-counter medication while at school.

CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS

Because Morning Star is a Christian school, our teachers will focus on the sacred meaning of Christian holidays rather than secular traditions. Morning Star does not celebrate or observe Halloween.

UNLIMITED ACCESS POLICY

It is Morning Star Academy's policy and practice that parents have unlimited access to their children while they are attending our preschool program unless parental access is prohibited by court order. Parents have the right to observe their child at any time. Please check in at the school office and sign in to receive a visitor's pass so that in case of an emergency we know who is in the building.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

Morning Star Academy will make reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, if requested, for students attending our school. Limitation of accommodations may exist for students whose needs require extreme facility modifications beyond the capability of our resources.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Morning Star Academy is operated as an educational institution for the benefit of the Christian families in our community. Students are admitted without regard to race, color, or national or ethnic origin. Morning Star Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies or programs.

BITING POLICY

Our Perspective: Biting in young children is not unusual in early childhood development (birth to 3 years of age). Children enrolled in Morning Star's preschool are at least 3 years old and therefore it has been our experience that biting incidences are not very common. However, to ensure the safety and well-being of all our preschoolers, we feel it is important to be proactive in having a plan in place to deal with biting should it occur.

GENERAL (CONTINUED)

Preventative Steps:

1. Provide a low student to adult ratio to ensure adequate caregiver involvement.
2. Follow a predictable daily schedule so the preschoolers feel secure and not overwhelmed by their environment.
3. Re-direct the preschooler if it appears that the child is on the verge of biting.
4. Teach the preschoolers alternative methods to express their emotions

If Biting Occurs:

1. Quickly and calmly intervene to stop the biting with a firm statement such as, "No, biting is not okay . . . it hurts."
2. Focus attention on the bitten child, comfort him/her and separate the biter from the victim.
3. Assess the bitten area, clean with antiseptic and bandage if the skin is broken. Apply an ice pack for 15 minutes; reassess the bite; repeat as needed for comfort.
4. Talk to the biter on a level that the child can understand, for example, "I can see you want that toy, but I can't let you hurt him." "When you want something, say: "Can I please have a turn?"
5. Redirect the biter to other play.

Notification Process:

If a biting incident occurs, the preschool teacher will provide a confidential report using the accident/incident form to the parents of the children involved. For purposes of confidentiality, the name of the other child (either the biter or the one who was bitten) cannot be shared. A confidential copy of the incident report should be placed in the files of all children involved.

If Biting Continues:

1. The teacher will keep a confidential observation chart to determine the occurrence of the biting which may include the circumstances, location, participants, time, and any other observable contributing factors.
2. We will use the observation chart to work with both the parents of biters and frequent victims to keep all informed and to develop a strategy for change.
3. We will meet with the parents of the biter to develop a written plan of action and schedule follow-up meetings or phone conversations as needed.
4. In the event that intervention fails, the biting child will be asked to leave our program.

October 1, 2019

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS POLICY

Morning Star Academy's preschool is operated out of the same facility as its K-12 program. All visitors, including parents of other students, are required to check in at the school office and receive a visitor's badge that helps all M.S.A. faculty and staff identify them as such. Only those preschool teachers, assistants, and volunteers who have been cleared through a formal record check process will be allowed to supervise the preschool students. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that no one else will have unauthorized access to a child who is attending our preschool.

Morning Star Academy is accredited by

Christian Schools International

&

holds membership in the

Association of Classical & Christian Schools

October 1, 2019