



# **PRESCHOOL AT THE CROSS**

## **Preschool Handbook 2024-2025**

**Preschool at the Cross  
700 Good Homes Road  
Orlando, FL 32818**

**DCF Religious Exempt #: X09OR0144**

**ACSI Florida Approval Program #: 33694**

**A Ministry of Church at the Cross & Central Florida Christian Academy**

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## **WELCOME:**

Preschool at the Cross (PATC) is a ministry of Church at the Cross (CATC) and Central Florida Christian Academy. PATC opened its doors in August 2023 with four classes (PreK 2 - PreK 4). In October 2023, we were blessed to be able to add a Toddler Classroom. We're excited to begin our second year of ministry, and love the nurturing, Christian preschool that has been established.

## **SCHOOL VERSE:**

“Those who trust in the LORD will renew their strength; they will SOAR on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint.” ~ Isaiah 40:31

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

The purpose of Preschool at the Cross, as a ministry of Church at the Cross and a part of Central Florida Christian Academy, is to glorify God by partnering with families to educate, inspire and equip every student to know and serve Jesus.

## **MOTTO:**

Where Eagles Learn to SOAR

## **CORE VALUES:**

1. Every child is special.
2. Every decision should be a win/win.
3. Every day is for excellence.
4. Every experience has to combine integrity, love and truth.
5. Everything done with passion.

## **GOALS:**

1. To provide a safe environment where every child can develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.
2. To join with families as we equip children to learn and grow, and help each child to develop confidence so that each one can reach their full potential in Christ.
3. To provide a variety of stimulating, age-appropriate learning opportunities for each child along with character development.

## **YEARLY THEME:**

**“UNWAVERING”**... Unwavering faith.

Unwavering love for others.

Unwavering commitment to excellence.

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope *without wavering*, for He who promised is faithful. ~ Hebrews 10:23

## **STATEMENT of FAITH:**

### **ARTICLE I – THE SCRIPTURE**

We believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God; the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. It is our supreme and final authority for faith and practice (II Tim. 3:15-17).

### **ARTICLE II – GOD**

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:1; Deut. 6:4; John 4:24; Rom. 8:14-15).

### **ARTICLE III – JESUS CHRIST**

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His substitutionary and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and his future personal return in power and glory (Isa. 7:14; John 1:1-18).

### **ARTICLE IV – HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, one with the Father and the Son, the indweller of every believer, whereby each is sealed unto the day of redemption of the Body. His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. We believe that the “Fullness of the Holy Spirit” is evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22- 23) and by power in witnessing (Acts 1:8; John 15:1-8).

### **ARTICLE V – SATAN**

We believe in the existence and operating power of a real and personal being the evil one called Satan, or Devil, opposed to all righteousness and exalting himself against all that God is and desires (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

### **ARTICLE VI – HELL**

We believe in a literal Hell, the place of eternal punishment for those who have not trusted in the shed blood of Jesus Christ as atonement for their sin. (Luke 16:19-31; Matt. 25:46, II Thess. 1:9).

### **ARTICLE VII – HEAVEN**

We believe in the literal place called Heaven where God’s immediate presence is manifested, where the angels are, and where the redeemed shall ultimately be, from whence Christ descended and ascended again, where He makes intercession for the saints, and from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead (Heb. 12:22-23; John 3:5; II Pet. 1:10-11).

### **ARTICLE VIII – MAN**

We believe that God created man in His own image, and in a state of innocence, but that after temptation, man willfully sinned. All mankind is born dead in trespasses and sins and under condemnation, having inherited a corrupt nature (Ps. 51; Rom. 1; Eph. 2:1).

### **ARTICLE IX – SALVATION**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture, as a

representative and substitutionary Sacrifice; that He arose from the dead in His glorified body, ascended into heaven, and that, as our great High Priest and Advocate, He ever lives to make intercession for us. All who believe on His name are justified on the basis of grace through faith in Him. The believer is therefore eternally secure, kept by the power of God (Acts 16:30-31; Eph. 1:2-10, Rom. 5:8-10; John 3:16-18; 1 Peter 1:5).

#### ARTICLE X – REGENERATION

We believe that regeneration is a divine and instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit whereby God imparts life to one dead in trespasses and sin when he trusts Christ as personal Savior. (2 Cor. 5:17-20; John 3; Gal. 2:20; 5:22-25).

#### ARTICLE XI – SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is a divine and progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby God, upon the ground of the finished work of Christ on the cross, His present intercessory ministry and His Divine Word, sets the believer apart and works out, in and through him, by means of a submissive will that which is well-pleasing to Himself, through Jesus Christ. This work culminates in the redemption of the body (Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 5).

#### ARTICLE XII – THE CHURCH

We believe in the one true Church, the mystical Body and Bride of the Lord Jesus, composed of believers from Pentecost to the Rapture, into which believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit. We believe that the local church is an organization composed of professing believers instituted for the purpose of fellowship, worship, and service. In matters of administration and policy, it is self-governing (Matt. 16:15-19; Acts 2:41-42; Eph. 1:22- 23; 1 Tim. 3:1-15).

#### ARTICLE XIII – BAPTISM

We believe that Christian baptism by immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the Bible mode of baptism and testifies of the believer's faith in and identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior (Matt. 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Rom. 6:3-5).

#### ARTICLE XIV – THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance whereby believers "show forth the Lord's death until He comes" back for them (1 Cor. 11).

#### ARTICLE XV – THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST FOR HIS CHURCH

We believe in the glorious hope of the premillennial, visible, and bodily return of Christ (1 Thess. 4:13-18; John 14).

#### ARTICLE XVI – SEPARATION

We believe that every child of God should demonstrate his separation unto God and the world system. This separation involves a fruitful, spirit-filled life of obedience to the commands of scripture and the refusal to associate with, or become involved in anything that would bring reproach upon the character and work of Christ and His church (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 1; Rom. 12:1-2).

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:**

PATC will admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to student of the school. PATC does not discriminate on the basis or race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies and other school related programs.

## **HOURS of OPERATION:**

PATC is open weekdays, **Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** We offer both a part time program for PreK 2 through PreK 4 (8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.) and a full time program (8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.). Students may not proceed to their classrooms prior to 7:50 a.m. in the morning, and all students should be picked up by 4:00 p.m. to avoid late charges. Class begins promptly at 8:00 a.m., and this is especially important for PreK 4 students, as we are preparing them for Kindergarten. **No students should arrive after 8:30 a.m.,** unless it is necessary for an appointment (doctor or therapy), and the Administration has been notified. We will not allow drop off or pick up to occur during nap/rest times- even in the case of appointments, as it disrupts the classroom and those children sleeping.

## **CLOSURES:**

Preschool at the Cross (PATC) operates on a school year calendar, and will continue for most weeks during the Summer.

**Holidays-** Preschool at the Cross will close for the following holidays/times:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- Presidents' Day
- Spring Break (close one full week)
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday (Monday following Easter)
- Memorial Day
- Vacation Bible School (one whole week in June)
- Independence Day (one whole will in July)
- Pre-planning Week (the last full week before the start of the new school year)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day (the whole week of Thanksgiving)
- Christmas Break (two full weeks around Christmas)

Tuition will **NOT** be prorated for any of these holidays/closures, as staff payment and expenses still occur during these times. The exceptions would be when PATC Closes the whole program during the following weeks: Spring Break, Vacation Bible School, Independence Day (all week), Pre-planning Week, Thanksgiving Week, and Christmas Break (two weeks).

**Summer:** Following Spring Break each year, families will be polled to see who is interested in continuing through the summer. Those families that are not interested in attending for the summer will need to complete a Withdrawal Form for their child. The last day of school for children not attending during the summer would be the last day, as designated on the PATC school year calendar. Families that wish to continue throughout the Summer and commit to doing so will be responsible for one month of Summer tuition if they change their mind, as staffing is dependent upon anticipated enrollment. If a family chooses to withdraw for the summer and changes their mind, we will try to accommodate but cannot guarantee a spot.

**Severe Weather Closures:** If PATC needs to close for emergency situations not otherwise noted on the school calendar (weather, utilities etc...), we will communicate the closure via email, text message, social media, website and on ProCare all pertinent information regarding the situation. PATC will close for such instances in conjunction with all emergency CFCA closings. Since our operational needs are different than Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), do not assume that our closings will be the same as theirs. PATC and CFCA will always communicate via official means, as discussed above.

#### **STATE LICENSING/APPROVAL:**

Preschool at the Cross has obtained Religious Exemption with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF). PATC operates and is approved with Association of Christian Schools International's (ACSI) Florida Approval Program. We follow all guidelines set in place in the Child Care Facility Handbook, otherwise called the Florida Administrative Code (rule 65C-22.001). We also comply with ACSI's Florida Approval Standards, which are in some cases more intense than the other guidelines. Our Florida Approval Program is renewed each year by ACSI. Our facility is inspected randomly throughout the year to ensure our compliance with the standards that are set in place by ACSI.

**ACSI Florida Approval Program #: 33694**

**DCF Religious Exemption from Licensure ID #: X09OR0144**

#### **OTHER AGENCIES:**

Preschool at the Cross works with a variety of agencies to provide the very best care for the children in our care each day. The following is a list of some of the agencies that we work closely with. Please note that the list may not be all inclusive.

- **ELCOC (Early Learning Coalition of Orange County):** The ELCOC's Institute 4 Early Learning also provides our staff with professional development, and we are able to work with their Inclusion Services department to assist students who need extra help.
- **DOH (Florida Department of Health):** The DOH works with our school in conjunction with DCF to help provide instruction and feedback, as needed when a health situation or an outbreak occurs. They help us with contact tracing, and provide resources for the school and parents.
- **CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention):** The DOH works with our school in conjunction with DCF to help provide instruction and feedback, as needed when a health situation or an outbreak occurs. They provide resources for the school and parents.
- **OCPS (Orange County Public Schools):** Although we do not work directly with OCPS, we do use their school year calendar as a guide when constructing our calendar for the school year. Our calendar is not identical to that of OCPS, but is very similar in nature.
- **Orange County Government, Florida:** We work with various agencies within the Orange County Government, such as the Orange County Fire Rescue Department to complete Fire Inspections of our facility. We also work with any local law enforcement officials (Police/Sheriff).

## **ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS:**

Enrollment in our program is open to all families of our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. PATC will admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to student of the school. PATC does not discriminate on the basis or race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies and other school related programs.

Only the child(ren)'s parent or legal guardian may enroll a child into our program. (Proof of custody may be required). All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend PATC. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell, work numbers, and individuals authorized to pick up your child.

Prior to a child starting, the following list must be completed:

1. Complete and submit enrollment paperwork.
2. Provide a copy of the child's Birth Certificate.
3. Provide a copy of the Physical Health Form (DH 3040).
4. Provide a copy of the Immunization Form (DH 680) or Religious Exemption Form (DH 681).



5. Pay the Enrollment Fees (which include Registration, Curriculum and Security Fees).

A child's Physical Health Form and Immunization Form must be kept current. **(Failure to keep current health and immunization records could result in fees being passed on to the parents/guardians or the child may not be permitted to attend school.)**

Preschool at the Cross must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper legal paperwork be in the child(ren)'s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this Parent's Handbook.

### **AGE REQUIREMENTS:**

The following guidelines are used to place children in our classrooms:

- \***Toddler Class:** minimum of 12 months (and walking) - approximately 24 months
- \***PreK 2 Class:** must be 2 years old before September 1st of current school year
- \***PreK 3 Class:** must be 3 years old before September 1st of current school year
- \***PreK 4 Class:** must be 2 years old before September 1st of current school year

Although a child may meet the age requirements listed above, their developmental level will also be reviewed to determine the best classroom fit.

### **ADMISSION/REGISTRATION:**

Parents wishing to enroll their children in the center are encouraged to set up an appointment with the PATC office to come and tour the center, meet the director, and their children's Teacher(s). (Tours are typically scheduled on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. We can answer any questions that you may have and allow you to see our facility in person. If you decide that you would like to proceed with enrollment, our registration packet will be provided for families to review and complete. A child is not considered to be fully enrolled until the complete registration packet is received (including birth certificate and forms from the pediatrician) and the Enrollment Fees have been paid.

Registration packets must be completed each year for each child. Our school year follows a traditional school year calendar, begins in August of each year and officially ends at the end of July/August of the following year. **"In-House Registration"** for the upcoming school year will begin in January of each year, following the **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**. This is a priority enrollment time for our current families. **"Open Registration"** for the upcoming school year will open to the public starting in **February**.

Following Spring Break each year, a survey will be sent to families to inquire about the need for care during the Summer. The operation of Preschool over the Summer would consist of **three weeks** that we will be **CLOSED**, as follows:

1. One week in June for CATC's Vacation Bible School
2. The week of Independence Day (July 4th)
3. One week at the end of July/beginning of August for Teacher planning, training and preparation for the upcoming school year.

### **REQUIRED PAPER WORK:**

To officially enroll your child in our program, each family would need to pay the **non-refundable** enrollment fees, complete the annual registration packet, and be sure to include the following items for their child:

- Birth Certificate
- Health Form (**DH 3040**)
- Immunization Form (**DH 680**) or Religious Exemption Form (**DH 681**)

It is the responsibility of each parent or guardian to keep up with the expiration dates of the Health Form (DH3040) and Immunization Form (DH 680)/Religious Exemption Form (DH681) and providing updated copies to the school office. PATC will also do our best to send reminders to our families of upcoming expiration dates. Failure to update these forms, could lead to the school getting fined or penalized by ACSI/DCF, and any fees would be passed on to the parents. Expired forms will result in your child not being able to attend school until they have been updated.

### **OUR PROGRAM:** (Monday through Friday)

Our preschool operates on weekdays (Monday through Friday) from **8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Our calendar is similar in nature to the OCPS (Orange County Public Schools) calendar, and very closely follows CFCA's calendar. There are days that Preschool at the Cross will be open that OCPS and CFCA students have off. (Ex.: Some teacher training or work days.)

A special half day program is available for students enrolled in PreK 2 through PreK 4. This half day option is a Monday through Friday program with hours from **8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

At certain times, PATC will have Early Release Days. These are typically prior to a scheduled event or following a program/event. (Ex: following our PATC Christmas program or PreK 4 Graduation)

### **PRESCHOOL ACCESS CARDS:**

Each family that is enrolled at PATC will be provided one Parent Access Card. This card will allow families to enter the preschool hallway during designated times for drop off and pick up. In the morning, the PATC hallway will be accessible from **7:50 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.** for drop off. In the afternoon, the PATC hallway will be accessible from **2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.** each weekday. On *Wednesday* afternoons, the times will be earlier, from **1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.** The shift each Wednesday, is due to "Early Release" of CFCA students, and many families that have children attending CFCA.

Our PATC Access Cards, should **only** be utilized by the parent(s) or adults checking the preschool children in or out. These cards should not be utilized by the children. Families who would like to have another Access Card, may put in the request with the Director. A **\$10.00 fee** will be charged for any additional cards or replacement cards.

### **DAILY SIGNING IN & OUT:**

It is very important that each child is signed in and out on ProCare each day on the tablet located in your child's class when they are dropped off by the **adult or parent**. This is a legal requirement with DCF and through ACSI. Students (children) should **NOT** be allowed to touch the tablets or sign in or out. Older siblings may **not** sign in a child unless they are over 18 years of age, and are designated as an "Authorized Pick Up Person".

### **DROP-OFF:**

Parents must accompany their child(ren) into the facility every morning and sign their child(ren) in immediately as they are dropping their child(ren) at the classroom. Children will not be permitted in their classroom prior to **7:50 a.m.** All students must be accompanied by a parent or authorized individual, The children are not allowed to come into the school alone or with a sibling less than 18 years of age, or to sign themselves in. This is for their protection or in case of a fire or other emergency. We require that all children have direct contact with a person upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. If any of these things are determined, the child must go home immediately.

**PreK 4** students should be in class each day by **8:00 a.m.**, as this is when instruction will begin. Being to class on time prohibits them from missing instruction, and preparing them for Kindergarten.

**\*\*No drop off after 8:30 a.m. unless there is a doctor's note or special occasion (therapy).\*\***

### **PICK-UP:**

All children must be picked up and clocked out by an adult (**18 years or older**) and/or person approved by the parent and the center. All children must be clocked out before being picked up from their classroom. Anyone, including all parents, who are to be allowed to pick the child up, **must** be listed on the Pick-up Permission form or and be authorized in ProCare. In an emergency, parents may call the center and give verbal approval of an alternate individual. However, this is strongly discouraged. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto Preschool at the Cross property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem or appear to be under the influence of any substance that alters their ability to function. Anyone not recognized by sight will be asked for a picture ID. In the event anyone out of the ordinary is to pick-up the child, please alert the office prior to that time. This is in addition to them being on the Pick-up Permission form or approval as stated above. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office so that we can make changes on this form and in ProCare whenever necessary. This form is re-done annually.

## **PARKING POLICY:**

Preschool at the Cross has an area in the parking lot for parents to temporarily park for a short time so they can drop off and pick up their preschool children. Parents should not park under the portico near the front doors for drop-off/pick-up. Families should also place the PATC sticker on their windshield to indicate they are here for preschool drop-off or pick-up. We strongly urge you to ensure that your car is locked it when you come in to drop-off or pick-up your child(ren). PATC is not responsible for items lost or stolen from cars, from the parking lot or facility.

## **PICK-UP PERMISSION FORM:**

All persons authorized to pick a child up from the center must be at least 18 years old, and listed on the PICK- UP PERMISSION FORM. To avoid confusion, it is the responsibility of the parent signing the child into our center to properly fill out all forms. In a custody situation, the parent signing the child into our center takes full responsibility to ensure that this is in accordance with their specific court agreement, which must be attached to the enrollment forms if any limitation of rights is suggested by the PICK-UP PERMISSION FORM. If a parent who is not listed, or who believes the information given to us was inaccurate, contests the authorization details they must first offer proof that they are indeed the legal parent or guardian and have legal rights to pick the child up. We, then, will require lawyers for both sides to be contacted and both attorneys will be requested to give us documentation as to the individuals approved for pick-up. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto our property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem.

## **SAFETY:**

The safety of the children is of utmost concern to the staff and Administration of Preschool at the Cross. Safety checks of the facility (indoor/outdoor) are conducted daily. We conduct a variety of drills (Fire Drills, Emergency Weather Drills and Lockdown Drills) to ensure that we are all well trained on procedures should a situation arise. There is a minimum of one drill practiced each month. Routine inspections by ACSI, the Health Inspector, the Fire Marshall, and other agencies to ensure compliance in all areas.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONSENT FORM:**

This form will give us your consent to call an ambulance or your child's doctor or dentist if he/she needs emergency care. Please list your child's doctor, dentist and the hospital you would prefer. Also, please list phone numbers, addresses, and additional emergency numbers of contacts. It is strongly suggested that all emergency contacts be listed on your Pick-up Permission form. If your child has any allergies or is on any medications, please include this information on the form as well as filling out one of the food or non-food allergy forms. All of these forms will be re-done annually. Immunization cards need to be presented on or before the first day the child attends the center. A photocopy of these will be kept on file. When your child receives additional immunizations, you are required to bring your

immunization card back in for us to take a current photocopy of it so that we can up-date your file. Whenever any information on this card changes – it is your responsibility to notify us and up-date or re-do this form.

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS:**

All children enrolled must have their immunization records up-to-date or provide an exemption form. The child's immunization record must be provided by the parent and all information must be current. Parents are expected to schedule appointments on time to ensure that their child's Immunization Form has not expired. Preschool at the Cross could/ will be penalized or fined for non-compliance of immunization cards due to a parent's neglect, and that fine will be passed on to the parent. **Children with expired or out-of-date forms will not be permitted to attend school, until the issue has been resolved. Tuition will STILL be due to hold your child's place in the program.**

### **MEDICATION:**

All medication to be given to children must be in the original bottle with the instructions clearly printed on it, or as provided by the doctor. All medicine, including over the counter medications, must be currently in date or it will not be given to the child. All prescription medication must have the child's name on the script. All non-prescription medicine must have a permanent sticker or labeled with the child's name and the date the medication was left at the center. A **"Authorization for Medication"** form needs to be filled out prior to the administration of any medication. All medicines must be personally brought to the Director's Office along with the "Authorization to give Medication" form (filled out). Preschool at the Cross reserves the right not to give medicines if the dosage is questionable or not according to the label. PATC reserves the right to request a doctor's consent via hand written prescription for any non-prescription medications. A copy of the "Authorization to Give Medication" form along with the medication bottle and any remaining medication will be given returned to the parent upon completion of the course of medication. Please do **not** send medication in your child's bag or backpack!

### **EMERGENCY CARE PLANS:**

Emergency Care Plans are created for any students who may require additional care for either a medical, emotional or behavioral concern. Plans can include things like medication, using noise cancelling headphones during drills, and other various items. Any child that has a severe allergy that requires an Epi-Pen, would have a plan created for them. Each plan would specify procedures, protocol or steps to take in an emergency event or situation. These plans require parent, administrative and teacher signatures.

### **NUT FREE SCHOOL:**

Due to students with severe nut allergies, Preschool at the Cross is a **"NUT FREE"** school. Please refrain from peanut butter or any items that contain nut products.

## **SICK POLICY:**

As children go to class and are around each other, they might come down with an occasional cold or virus. Our staff has a routine of daily disinfecting and cleaning the toys and furniture in the classrooms to help prevent sickness from occurring. In reality, we know that children are still sometimes going to get sick as they go many places besides school and can be exposed to a variety of things. To keep in compliance with our licensing standards and to prevent further spread of any communicable disease or illnesses, we have created this policy which follows the Florida Administrative Code 65C-22.001.

Students who exhibit any of the following conditions must be picked up from school immediately:

- Severe coughing, causing them to become red or blue in the face or make a whooping sound.
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Stiff neck.
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within one school day).
- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher in conjunction with any other signs of illness. (Any infant, younger than 2 months, should get immediate medical attention!)
- Pink eye.
- Exposed, open skin lesions, or ring worm.
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Vomiting.
- Persistent or abdominal pain.
- Skin rashes.
- Head lice or scabies.
- Inability to participate in preschool activities due to not feeling well (Lethargy).

A child showing symptoms of a communicable disease such as: Chickenpox, Measles, Mumps, Fifth Disease, Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, Salmonella, Shigella, Flu, etc... will be sent home from school.

Depending upon the circumstances of your child's illness, you may be asked to have a doctor's note prior to returning to school. If your child has been given an antibiotic for treatment, your child must wait a full **24 hours** prior to returning to school. Children are not allowed to return until they have been symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours without the use of medication for any symptom (fever, vomiting or diarrhea). (Ex., your child was picked up at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday with a fever, they may not return until Thursday even if the fever disappeared and never returned at all on Wednesday). Children should be brought to school healthy and able to participate in their daily activities.

We understand that it is difficult for parents/guardians to leave or miss work. However, it is

hard on your precious little ones to not be home when they are sick and not feeling well. They cannot be at school where they are exposing other children to whatever they have. Each parent/family, must plan in advance and have an alternate pick-up person in case of such illnesses/emergencies for their child.

Preschool at the Cross will give notice to parents of children who have/may have been exposed to any contagious condition such as Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, Fifth Disease, and other diseases. Likewise, you must inform the school office or the Director when your child is sick with a Communicable Disease (Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever, or any of the other items listed on this form), when you suspect that other classmates may have been exposed before symptoms were present. We need to be able to communicate to the other parents to let them know what signs to look for. No names will ever be identified, but a fact sheet from the CDC (Center for Disease Control), or another medical source, will be sent out to the families. All of these notifications will simply state the exposure, and will not disclose any personal family/student information.

### **ACCIDENT REPORTS:**

Safety is a top priority of Preschool at the Cross. Yet, there are times when a child will have an accident/incident between your child and another child. If the accident/incident requires “more than a hug and a kiss”, our teachers will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. This accident/incident report will be sent to you in ProCare. A copy of this accident report, signed by the Director, teacher in charge at the time of the accident and the parent, will be filed in each child’s folder in the Administrative office. Parents may request a paper copy of any Incident Form. All Accident/Incident forms need to be signed by a parent/guardian to indicate receipt of information of an occurrence. This system is aimed at ensuring communication at all levels and can be a very good way to be certain little things are not forgotten in a hasty departure. If your child happens to be injured by another child, we ask you to please respect the child’s privacy by not asking us to reveal the name of the child. It not only puts our staff in an awkward situation, but could cause a confrontation between our families. We will handle any and all behavior problems in a professional and appropriate way.

### **BOTTLES & PACIFIERS:**

Children enrolled at Preschool at the Cross may not use bottles. Each child will need to provide a no spill sippy cup for all beverages.

Pacifiers can not be used during the day for our preschoolers. They will be permitted in our Toddler and PreK 2 classes only during nap time. This is for best practice for both dental development and language acquisition.

## **CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Preschool at the Cross complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable regulations pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. We desire to make special accommodations for children who require such accommodations, provided it is within our power and authority to do so. Accommodations can be a specific treatment prescribed by a professional or a parent, a modification of equipment, or removal of physical barriers. The accommodation shall be recorded in the child's file. Whenever we deem it appropriate to the needs of the child to have a child with special needs in our center, the entire staff must follow the reasonable accommodations we have made for that child. Families of children requiring special accommodations must meet with the Director to discuss needs. Although we may try to meet accommodations, we may find that our school may not be able to adequately meet these needs. Any questions about the accommodations of the child should be referred to the Director.

## **CHILDREN WITH IEPs:** (Individualized Education Plans)

Children who have an Individualized Education Plan, IEP, and apply for admission to Preschool at the Cross will have to provide copies of the child's IEP for review. Administration will need to review the documents to see if we would be able to accommodate and work with the current plan and goals for the child. There may be instances where we have a trial basis, to ensure that our school is the best fit for the child and their needs. Our school is not a speciality school we are just not able to meet all needs.

## **REFERRAL FOR ELCOC's INCLUSION SERVICES:**

In the event that a student is struggling within the classroom or that PATC staff/Administration have concerns about a child, PATC will partner with the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County's Early Intervention Department. The Early Learning Coalition of Orange County's Inclusion Department has inclusion specialists that are trained to help providers and parents who have concerns for a child's development (social emotional, behavioral, speech/language, hearing, vision, medical, dental, etc.). They offer resources in Orange County for **ANY** child age birth to 5 years of age.

When we have concerns about a child's current progress or a child progressing on in our program (moving on to the next class), we will complete a referral intake form and send it to the Inclusion Department to begin the process. The child would be observed in the natural setting (the classroom). A confirmation of child progress and/or concerns will be shared with the provider/guardian. If necessary, specific community resources for obtaining further evaluation/intervention, will also be given. A child will not directly be evaluated nor will therapeutic intervention be given. At this time, technical consultation regarding curriculum, teaching strategies, environmental adaptation and challenging behavioral solutions will be shared with staff, as necessary.

After a referral intake form is completed and sent to the Inclusion Department, parents will then be sent a link for completing the necessary forms to begin the process. Parents have to give permission to allow the Intervention Specialists to come to PATC and observe their child in the classroom setting. **In instances where PATC Staff or Administration have concerns**



**about a child, we may require a parent to allow the Intervention Department to come in order to continue the child's enrollment into our program. Refusal to allow the Intervention Department to come will null any continued enrollment in PATC's Program moving forward.**

It is our goal to help meet the best needs of all children, and working with the Early Learning Coalition of Orange County's Intervention Department is one of the ways in which we can best meet the needs of all of our children.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY:**

The most important thing that we do is to teach our students about Christ, and how to live (and act) like he did. This type of training comes from correction, shaping, and strengthening the child as they learn and grow. We want our students to grow and develop Spiritually, socially, emotionally physically, and intellectually. Our goal is to partner with our parents and families throughout the course of the year as we embark on this journey and work together for the benefit of your child.

When there is a behavior concern or disruptive behavior in the classroom, you will see:

- Praise and encouragement for appropriate behaviors.
- Modeling of appropriate behaviors.
- Conference with student/Listening to the student.
- Providing alternatives for inappropriate behavior.
- Safe Place Alternative: Time for child to calm down and regroup within the classroom.
- Calming Techniques. (Deep breaths, blow out the Candle, Counting, etc....)
- Redirection to another area or activity.

When there is a behavior concern or disruptive behavior in the classroom, you will NOT see:

- Physical punishment of any kind.
- Verbal or humiliating words to frighten the student.
- Denying any form of food, rest, or use of the restroom.

The Bible teaches respect for authority (Colossians 3:20, Romans 13:1 and Hebrews 13:17), and it requires discipline for children (Proverbs 13:24, Proverbs 23:13-14 and Proverbs 29" 15-17).

### **SUSPENSION POLICY:**

The center's policy in dealing with children who have exhibited behavior harmful to themselves, other students or teachers will be handled as follows:

1. The classroom techniques will be applied as stated above. (Praise, Modeling, Alternatives, Safe Place, and Calming Techniques)
2. If the behavior continues an incident report will be issued and require a parent signature.
3. A conference will be scheduled and a behavior modification plan will be constructed with the parents and teacher as a team in hopes to help the child with the area of concern.

4. Upon the fourth occurrence the parent will be called and the student must be picked up from the center immediately and a one-day **suspension** will be issued. An incident report which will require the director's and the parent's signature will be sent home as well.
5. Fifth infraction will result in a three-day **suspension** from school. A behavior modification plan must be revisited again, and a meeting with the Director/Assistant Director must occur again, even if one has already taken place. Additional specialists or screenings may be utilized or required for continued enrollment.
6. If the action plan and all other methods above have been applied and the behavior continues then the child will be **expelled** from the center.

All efforts will be made to refer students and parents to different resources which will assist with issues that arise with inappropriate behavior; our main concern is for the safety of all individuals within the center. It is with this thought in mind we must take a firm stand against any behavior that threatens the safety of the individual, other students, and staff members.

### **DISMISSAL POLICY:**

Preschool at the Cross reserves the right, at its discretion, to dismiss (terminate the enrollment of) a student for reasons outside of student behavioral issues. We will strive to provide 48-hour-notice concerning the dismissal of a student; however, this notice is not guaranteed.

Reasons for dismissal/termination include, but are not limited to:

- Failure of the family to pay fees as due and outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- Failure of the family to provide the required documents for the student's file including a copy of the child's Birth Certificate, a current Florida Certificate Immunization (HRS Form 680), or Student Health Examination (HRS-H Form 3040).
- Failure of a student or parent to abide by the guidelines of PATC, as outlined in the enrollment paperwork and in the Preschool Handbook.
- In a social media venue, stating negative comments about the staff or the school.
- Starting or continuing gossip about the school, staff, or a situation.
- Requiring special education services which PATC is just unable to provide. Falsification of enrollment paperwork or information or failing to disclose pertinent information about a child's needs/care.

### **POTTY TRAINING:**

Potty training is best accomplished with the cooperation of teachers, parents, and children.

Children learn toileting skills through consistent positive encouragement from adults at home and at the center. Potty Training usually begins around 2 years of age, and is something that we work on very diligently in our PreK 2 classroom. Successful potty training requires active involvement and support both at home and at school.

Each child will begin at a different time and progress at a different rate. The staff will provide documentation of your child's progress. The director and staff are available as a resource to answer any questions about your child's potty training progress at Preschool at the Cross. Several complete changes of clothes should be kept at the center during this process.

Children should be fully potty trained to be admitted into our PreK 3 classroom. Beginning the 2024 - 2025 school year, students who are not fully trained and have been enrolled in the PreK 3 Classroom will be charged an additional **"Potty Training Fee"** of **\$15.00 per week** until the child is fully potty trained. Potty trained is when children independently able to feel the urge to go to the bathroom on their own, complete the process on their own (including wiping) and be free from accidents. Once they have consistently made this transition for **two weeks**, then the "Potty Training Fee" will be removed.

Children **MUST** be completely potty trained to enroll in our PreK 4 Classes, as these classrooms are focused on academics and getting the children ready for Kindergarten.

**\*Parents are responsible for providing diapers, pull ups or wipes needed for their child during the Potty Training ages/times.**

## **TOYS:**

Preschool at the Cross has a wide variety of toys, games, and other resources to offer children during center time. Preschool classes may opt to have "shown and tell" related to the week's lesson. Personal toys are not permitted in the center, as they can cause disputes and can be broken or lost. The exception to this is show and tell or sleep toys which should be labeled with the child's full name. PATC is not responsible for stolen, lost, or broken toys or items.

PATC will accept donations of toys and books to enhance the materials that we have in the classrooms. Such donations should be brought to the Administration offices, so that we can preview and accept them.

**\*\*Do not bring toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction, for any reason.**

## **CLOTHING:**

Students enrolled in our PreK 2, PreK 3 and PreK 4 classes are **required** to wear school uniforms. Although uniforms are not required for children enrolled in our Toddler Class, parents who wish to order shirt may do so.

For our preschoolers, children are permitted to wear our Preschool at the Cross special t-shirts on most days. Each child enrolled in our preschool will also be required to purchase one green polo to wear on Chapel day (on Wednesdays) and for special designated dates.

Uniform polos and t-shirts can be ordered or purchased by visiting the following link: <https://cfca-uniforms.myshopify.com/collections/preschool-items>

Children will have opportunities for outdoor play twice a day, weather permitting. Students need to be in closed-toed shoes for playground activities. Sandals and crocs are not permitted for preschool children. Tennis shoes and sneakers are strongly encouraged. It is also required that you bring one full set of extra clothes for your child in case of a spill or accident. We *may* have some extra clothes available, but we may not have the item your child needs in his/her size. If your child comes home in center clothes, please wash the clothes and return them as soon as possible. It is strongly suggested that all extra clothing brought to the center have the child's full name on it. This includes jackets and sweaters.

**GREEN** Polo Uniform shirts are required each **Wednesday** for **Chapel**.

Students enrolled in our PreK 2 Class and up are subject to an "Out of Uniform" fee if they arrive to school not wearing their uniform. (Please see FINANCIAL INFORMATION & FEES section.)

### **PATC COLOR DAYS:**

The last Thursday of each month, PATC will have a special COLOR DAY! On this day, students and staff may come to school dressed out of uniform, as long as they are wearing the designated color for the month. Please see the list below for our special days during 2024 - 2025:

- Thursday, August 29, 2024: **YELLOW** Day
- Thursday, September 26, 2024: **BLUE** Day
- Thursday, October 31, 2024: **ORANGE** Day
- Thursday, November 21, 2024: **BROWN** Day
- Thursday, December 19, 2024: **GREEN** Day
- Thursday, January 30, 2025: **WHITE** Day
- Thursday, February 27, 2025: **RED** Day
- Thursday, March 27, 2025: **PURPLE** Day
- Thursday, April 24, 2025: **BLACK** Day
- Thursday, May 29, 2025: **PINK & GRAY** Day

### **FOR THOSE IN DIAPERS (OR PULL-UPS):**

For our precious little ones that are still in diapers (or pull-ups), it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide diapers, wipes, and diaper rash cream/ointment, if needed. ACSI and DCF both require that an "Authorization for Medication Form" must be completed for diaper cream/ointment, as this is considered a medication. You can bring a package of

diapers to leave at the center. You will be notified when your child is running low on diapers, wipes, or diaper ointment/cream. If you have any questions please check with the office.

***\*All of these items MUST be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.***

## **BITING POLICY:**

Children biting other children is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in group childcare. It can occur without warning, it is difficult to defend against, and it provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers involved. For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem. Toddlers try it out as a way to get what they want from another toddler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. They discover that biting is a sure-fire way to cause the other child to drop what they are holding so the biter can pick it up. However, they experience the disapproval of the adults nearby and eventually learn other ways of gaining possession of objects or expressing difficult feelings.

For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress, change in the environment, feeling threatened, or to feel a sense of power. Sometimes an older child who was a biter will resort back to biting when frustrated.

### **When Biting Does Occur:**

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children such as biting back or washing a child's mouth out with soap.

### **For The Child That Was Bitten:**

1. The victim is separated from the biter, and the child is comforted.
2. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage. Sometimes, a bandage is applied anyway, as Band-Aids often help a preschooler feel better.
3. Parents will be notified through the completion of an "Accident/Incident Form" which will be filled out documenting the incident. A form will be completed for the "biter" and one for the student who was bitten. If the bite breaks the skin, the parents will be notified immediately.

### **For The Child That Bit:**

1. The child is separated from the child who bit them, and the teacher will firmly tell the child "Biting is NOT okay! It hurts!"
2. The caring attention is then focused on the victim. The biter is talked to on a level that the child can understand. ex: "I can see that you want that truck, but I can't let you hurt him. We don't put our teeth on people." or "That hurts your friend when you bite her. She is sad."
3. The parents are notified about the biting incident with as many details as possible, as documented on the "Accident/Incident Form".

### **When Biting Continues:**

1. The child will be shadowed by a staff member (to the best of our ability) to help prevent any biting incidents.
2. The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
3. The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior. (Ex: Using words and not teeth.)

### **When biting becomes excessive or serious:**

1. If a child inflicts 3 bites in a one-week period (5 consecutive weekdays), in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or severely bruised, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. If a child once again inflicts 3 bites in a one-week period (5 consecutive weekdays), in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or severely bruised, the child will be suspended for 1 school day.
3. If a child once again inflicts 3 bites in a one-week period (5 consecutive weekdays), in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or severely bruised, the parents will be asked to make other child care arrangements.
4. If a child bites twice in a 4-hour period (regardless of whether the skin is broken), the child will be required to be picked up from child care/preschool for the remainder of the day.

### **NAP/REST TIME ITEMS:**

To meet the standards for DCF and ACSI, each classroom must provide a time each day for children to rest or take a nap. Naps/Rest Times will be provided in each class after they have finished lunch and bathroom procedures. Preschool at the Cross will provide a rest mat for the children to lie on during this time. Children are not forced to sleep, but they do **need to be quiet** during this time for those children that do need the time to sleep. The following materials are needed for rest time:

A crib sheet to cover the cot and a small blanket for rest time **OR** a nap mat. (Cushion, pillow and blanket combo, all in one.)

***\*All of these items MUST be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.***

### **CURRICULUM:**

Preschool at the Cross has adopted the WEE Learn curriculum and is utilizing this in all classrooms from the Toddler Class through the Four-Year-Old. This comprehensive curriculum is approved for VPK, should we decide at a later time to add this option to our school.

Weekday Early Education (WEE) Learn, a division of Child Development Education Alliance, is dedicated to educating and protecting children. WEE Learn Curriculum is a

developmentally appropriate weekday curricula designed for young children ages birth through Pre-K.

WEE Learn is grounded in evidenced-based practices. Programs using the WEE Learn philosophy and curriculum work to support children and families. Children's individual differences and learning styles are considered, as they learn through play and interactions with supportive early childhood teachers to maximize each child's learning potential.

WEE Learn is a curriculum that supports best practice and has been cross-referenced with Florida's Performance standards. It addresses instruction to meet early childhood learning standards in all seven of the learning domains:

- Physical Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional
- Language and Communication
- Emergent Literacy
- Cognitive Development and General Knowledge, and
- Motor Development

The WEE Learn curriculum not only offers cognitive challenges to the young children exposed to their framework, but also incorporates individual and age-appropriate practices. The WEE Learn curriculum is solidified on its base of concrete experience and focus on relationships, communication, and exploration of the environment. It is clearly evidenced that the curriculum is thoughtfully planned, comprehensive, cohesive, and integrated across each domain.

The WEE Learn curriculum provides systematic learning opportunities in language and early literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, physical development and personal and social development. The curriculum is relevant to children's everyday experiences and highlights the importance of the family's role in linking a child's early experiences to the world around them.

## **NUMBERS PLUS CURRICULUM:**

Beginning the 2024 - 2025 school year, PATC has added the Numbers Plus Curriculum to our program. This is currently being utilized in our PreK 4 classes, to prepare the our students for Kindergarten. Drawing upon the latest research and practice in early mathematics learning and teaching, Numbers Plus actively engages young children's mathematical aptitude with appealing materials and ideas. Numbers Plus is aligned with the standards of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the Florida Early Learning Standards.

The Numbers Plus activities are divided into the following five content areas:

1. Number Sense
2. Geometry
3. Measurement
4. Algebra
5. Data Analysis

### **DAILY SCHEDULE:**

Each classroom has developed their own classroom schedule that may include the following activities/experiences:

**Circle Time:** Circle time is a whole group time of instruction that engages the children in a variety of learning. This time may include review of focus concepts, calendar, weather, story time, songs and more.

**Whole Class Instruction:** A variety of learning activities and instruction will take place with the whole class. Examples of this type of learning may include: science experiments, math activities, music, etc...

**Learning Centers:** Activities specific to the weekly theme are presented along with basic activities such as puzzles, table manipulatives, dramatic play, blocks, etc...

**Small Group Instruction:** Small group instruction can occur when individual or a few students may meet with the teacher to reinforce learning skills. Student assessments are also done during this time to determine child strengths and areas needing further reinforcement.

**Outdoor Play:** The playground is an extension of the classroom. Children can participate in an activity of their own choosing and work on improving large motor skills. Inclement weather, special events, or celebrations will occasionally affect the scheduling of outdoor time. In these instances, an indoor space is provided to allow for movement.

**Snacks and Mealtime:** Staff sits with children while they are eating, encouraging and participating in quiet conversation.

**Rest Time/Nap:** As required through ACSI and DCF, all children who attend full time are provided a time each day to rest or take a nap.

### **CLASS SIZE:**

The two greatest factors that determine the number of children that are in a classroom are Student/Teacher ratios, and the square footage of the classroom. Both of these factors have very specific requirements in the Florida Administrative Code, and are monitored by ACSI and DCF. As children develop and grow, especially in the younger classrooms, they **may** have the opportunity to move up into an older classroom during the course of an academic



school year *if* space is available. The opportunity for a child to move classrooms is only for students enrolled in our Infant Class. We **do not** move a child's classroom if they are in the Two's Class and up, as their birthday must be prior September 1 of that year to enroll. These procedures align with Elementary standards for Enrollment. In some instances, a child may be placed (or remain) in a younger class based upon their readiness skills being for the requested age/class.

### **Student To Teacher Ratios:**

Student to teacher ratios is based upon guidelines set by STATE law and Approval Standards through ACSI. The following chart shows the maximum ratios that we observe:

### **Classes & Ages of Children**

<b>Classroom &amp; Age Requirements</b>	<b>Adult to Child Ratio</b>	<b>Maximum Class Size</b>
Toddler Class (must be 12 months to begin)	1:6	12 children
PreK 2 (must be 2 before September 1st)	1:11	11 children
PreK 3 (must be 3 before September 1st)	1:15	13 children
PreK 4 (must be 4 before September 1st)	1:20	14 children

### **CLASSROOM REQUIREMENTS:**

To enroll in one of our classrooms, students must meet the criteria listed below:

- To begin the Toddler Class, a child must have turned one year, and be walking.
- To begin PreK-2, a child must be two-years-old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of that year.
- To begin PreK-3, a child must be three-years-old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of that year.
- To begin PreK-4, a child must be four-years-old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of that year.

Once enrolled in a classroom, students will not be able to transition to the next classroom until the following school year. These guidelines are in alignment with Kindergarten registration guidelines.

### **OUR STAFF:**

At Preschool at the Cross, we strive to provide nurturing, quality care in a highly interactive learning environment. Our friendly qualified staff are an integral part of providing this environment. Our current staff has had:

- A detailed interview and screening process.
- A Level 2 background check which involves a national fingerprint-based FBI and a comprehensive Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) check.
- Completed or will complete First Aid, CPR, AED, Bloodborne Pathogens Training and Fire Safety training.
- Completed or will complete the 45 hours of DCF mandated training within the first year of employment.

Every year, each staff member will complete an a minimum of 10 hours of In-Service training hours, and they will also complete two hours Biblical training.

We believe firmly in training and in continued education for all our employees and staff. Each has qualified themselves to work with your children by attending specific training classes and often college level courses to learn about early education and the needs of children. We emphasize training and encourage all of our employees to exceed the state minimum number of clock hours of training required to be qualified to continue to work in an early education setting.

#### **STAFF AND CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS:**

Preschool at the Cross considers it inappropriate for parents and clients to solicit our staff to work for them either in their business or homes (this includes babysitting). We are not legally or financially liable for our employees or any of their actions when they are off the clock. All employees have signed a statement stating that they will not work with/for any PATC families while they are currently employed. An employee who violates this policy has violated their employment agreement and is subject to possible termination. It is inappropriate for a client or parent to solicit any employee for any type of work. Clients who violate this policy may be subject to termination of services.

#### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:**

The success of our program is based on establishing a partnership between our parents and our staff. Open and frequent communication will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We will endeavor to keep you informed concerning your child's day and overall development through several written means.

- ProCare is our primary source of communication with our families. Communication is conducted through newsletters, messages, daily updates, notes and reports all on the app.
- Parent/Teacher meetings, as needed or requested.

- Copies of assessments will be provided to our families to show student strengths, areas of concern and growth throughout the year.

## **VERBAL COMMUNICATION:**

We will endeavor to be communicative during drop-off and pick-up times. However, this is not a good time for extended conversations since the staff members/teachers have responsibilities for all of the children in their classroom. You may also use **Procare** to send messages to your child's teacher or to Administration. You are also welcome to e-mail the Administration as follows:

Karen Abell, Director: [KarenAbell@cfcaeagles.org](mailto:KarenAbell@cfcaeagles.org)

Marlene Alcius, Assistant Director: [MarleneAlcius@cfcaeagles.org](mailto:MarleneAlcius@cfcaeagles.org)

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:**

We encourage all parents and or guardians to be involved in the activities. We believe that parental participation is key to any successful child care program. Children should be raised by parents. At Preschool at the Cross, we strive to fill the gap created during early separation and educational opportunities and when parents are not available. We welcome parental visits. We have an open-door policy that allows parents access to the center during operating hours. We have enclosed a sample list of some of the opportunities for involvement in our center. Parents are in no way limited to the involvement listed below. Any parent wishing to be involved in another area is strongly encouraged to contact the PATC office with their suggestion.

Parent Meetings

Programs and Special activities, such as the special Chapel and Graduation.

Sending in special treats or items, as requested.

We also expect parental involvement in discipline and behavior intervention as outlined in these policies.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are special days for children. If you would like to have your child celebrate their birthday at PATC, you may do so by bringing in cupcakes or a special treat. Families that want to bring in a treat must notify Administration in advance, so that we can ensure that it is appropriate and posted, according to regulations. Any food that is brought in to share with the class must be store bought, and it **cannot** be hand made. (Most times, parents opt to bring in mini cupcakes from Publix or Whole Foods, as these are a great size for a quick

treat.). If you would like to hand out “goody bags” for the students in class, one must be brought for every child enrolled in the class. These would be handed out to the students at the end of the school day, as they are getting picked up. Hard or chewy candy and balloons are not permitted because they pose a choking risk.

Although we will allow a special treat to be brought in for a child’s birthday, we can not decorate the classroom or allow for families to come in to celebrate at school. If you choose to bring in cupcakes or a special treat, we will make every effort to post photos on ProCare for our families.

If a student is having a birthday party outside of school, invitations **will not** be handed out at school **unless** every individual in that child’s class is invited.

### **VISITING THE CENTER:**

You are welcome to visit your child at the center at any time. We do ask that you check in with the school office and obtain a Visitor Badge before going to your child’s room. It is the responsibility of each employee to make sure any visitor for a child or employee has checked in with the office. Persons not listed on the “Pick-Up Permission” form, will not be allowed to visit your child. In a custody situation, please note that the same procedure will be followed as listed in the Pick-Up section. Parents are encouraged to pre-arrange opportunities to share lunch with their child or visit the class. Extended family members such as grandparents and aunts are also welcome to visit in certain pre-arranged situations. The custody challenges of our current society demand that we follow strict guidelines in this regard. It is imperative that we have legal documentation for any custody issues that may prohibit a parent (or other individual) from picking up their child.

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

Any parent wishing to help volunteer or to assist in the classroom must go through our screening process. Anyone visiting or volunteering for more than 10 hours per month must go through a Level II screening process, at their own expense. Our screening process includes, but is not limited to:

6. A signed statement indicating whether or not they have had a conviction of any law in any state, or any record of founded child or dependent abuse in any state
7. Undergoing a fingerprinting and background check
8. A signed statement regarding child abuse.

Any “visitor” who spends extended periods of time in the center will be considered a volunteer and will be required to go through the screening listed above.

### **BRINGING FOOD FROM HOME:**

Preschool at the Cross **does not** provide food for students who attend our school. Depending on the times that your child is enrolled, parents will need to provide a water

bottle, lunch and both a morning and afternoon snack. Parents need to keep in mind the following guidelines that are in the Florida Administrative Code:

**3.9.3 C. Foods that are associated with young children's choking incidents must not be served to preschool children, such as, but not limited to, whole/round hot dogs, popcorn, chips, pretzel nuggets, whole grapes, nuts, cheese cubes/sticks and any food that is of similar shape and size of the trachea/windpipe. Food for infants must be cut into 1/4 inch or smaller, food for toddlers must be cut into pieces 1/2 inch or smaller to prevent choking. This applies to all food, even food provided by parents/guardians.**

**3.9.3 F. If parents of legal guardians provide meals and snacks, they must provide nutritional food for the child.**

**3.9.3. G. If a special diet is required for a child by a physician, a copy of the physician's order a copy of the diet, and a sample meal plan for the special diet must be maintained in the child's file and followed. If the custodial parent or legal guardian notifies the program of any known food allergies written documentation must be maintained in the child's file for as long as the child is in care.**

\*Perishable foods that are brought from home should be stored in an insulated lunchbox with icepacks to keep them cold. We are unable to store them in a refrigerator. Likewise, foods that need to be served warm should be brought in a thermos to keep them warm. We are unable to warm lunches from home.

Items brought from home for either lunch or snack time should be nutritious in nature and follow the guidelines listed above. We will not serve candy, junk food or sodas to the children.

Please remember to include fork or spoon, as needed, for your child's lunch.

**\*\*All lunchboxes and water bottles that are brought from home need to be labeled with the child's first and last name\*\***

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION & FEES**

### **REGISTRATION FEES:**

The Registration Fee, once paid secures your spot in our program for each school calendar year (August - July). **These fees are due upon initial enrollment annually at the time of enrollment and are Non-Refundable.** Children who pull out of the program for a specified or un-specified length of time will be required to pay a re-registration fee of **\$50.00** upon returning. The exception to this will be children who physically pull out of the program but whose parents continue to pay their full weekly fees in order to retain the spot in our program.

### **WEEKLY TUITION FEES:**

It is our philosophy that clients are paying for the spot their child will take in our center. This is not based upon attendance but rather on a set weekly fee that is due regardless of the attendance of the child who has the spot. Our fee structure is based upon a weekly fee that

is set by the Financial Agreement which is signed by the parent's upon enrolling the child(ren) in the program. These agreements may be adjusted from time to time as needed with a two-week notice of intent to change services. This to be allowed at the discretion of the Administration based on space availability. Financial Agreements are re-done annually. Weekly invoices are sent on Wednesday via ProCare through. Add on fees may occur such as in the case of potty-training fee, graduation fee, late payment fee, late pick-up fee, out of uniform fees, etc.

### **WEEKLY TUITION PAYMENT AND PROCEDURES:**

Weekly tuition fees are billed each Wednesday for the upcoming week. Payments are due in advance for the upcoming week on Sunday. **Any accounts that are not paid (or shown as pending) on Monday by morning will have a \$15.00 late fee applied to their account.** This fee is per student enrolled in our program. All payments are to be made through the ProCare app. Parents are able to set up credit card or ACH payments through ProCare.

### **DISCOUNTS:**

PATC is pleased to offer the following discounts:

1. Sibling Discount: For students with a sibling attending either PATC or CFCA.
2. HERO Discount: For Active Military (or Reserves) and for First Responders. (A form is required to implement this discount.)
3. CATC Church Member: For families that are active members of CATC (membership will be verified through the church).

\*Only **one** discount may be applied per child, and discounts do not stack upon each other.

### **PARTIAL PAYMENT FEE:**

As stated above, weekly tuition fees are due on Sunday evening for the upcoming week of school. If a family completes a partial payment, but does not pay the whole amount due, a **Partial Payment Fee** of **\$10.00** will be applied to the child's account.

### **GRADUATION FEE:**

Our PreK 4 students will be participate in a graduation ceremony at the end of the school year. A **Graduation Fee** of **\$40.00** will be applied to each PreK 4 student's account in early 2025 (January or February). This fee will include the purchase of a cap & gown set and additional expenses related to the graduation. This fee is NON-REFUNDABLE, as items will be ordered for your specific child.

### **OUT OF UNIFORM FEE:**

Preschool at the Cross is a uniform school for all students enrolled in PreK 2 and up. Students are required to be in a uniform top, unless it is a PATC Color Day or other special day. Fees for being dressed out of uniform will be as follows:

**\$1.00 per day (per child) for up to 5 offenses**

**\$2.00 per day (per child) for any offenses over 5 times**

### **POTTY TRAINING FEE:**

Students enrolled in our PreK 3 Class and up should be potty trained. This is a skill that we work hard on in our PreK 2 Class. Students who are not fully potty trained in our PreK 3 class are subject to a **weekly Potty Training Fee of \$10.00**. This fee will be removed once the child has successfully mastered this skill for at least one week. Students may not be enrolled in our PreK 4 Class unless they are completely potty trained.

### **LATE PICK-UP FEE:**

There will be **\$1.00 per minute late fee added for any child picked up after 4:00 p.m.** This fee is non-negotiable and is the responsibility of all clients. Parents, or those picking the children up, are required to call ahead if they feel they are going to be more than 5 minutes late. Parents notified that a child is ill and needs to leave the center for the day a “reasonable period of time” to pick-up the child or the above “Late Pick-up Fee” will also apply. If no parent or emergency contact can be located within 30 minutes of trying to contact the parent, the “Late Pick-up Fee” will also apply. An attempt will be made to contact individuals on the emergency contact list after children have been left 10 minutes past PATC’s closing time. Children left at the center later than 60 minutes past closing will be considered abandoned and Child Protective Services will be informed.

### **REFUNDS:**

All enrollment fees (registration, curriculum and security) are due at the time of enrollment, and are **NON- REFUNDABLE**. In the event you have over-paid the credit will be applied to your next week’s tuition. In the event you have a balance after your child’s last day, all applicable fees including the two-week-notice required will be subtracted from any balance prior to a final refund being issued. Checks for this are cut monthly and will be issue according to our monthly bill payment schedule.

### **OUTSTANDING BALANCES:**

Any student scheduled to graduate from preschool (PreK 4 students) that has an outstanding balance due on the account will not be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

Students who have a **balance for two weeks of care will be automatically withdrawn** from our program.

Any student that is withdrawn or terminated with an outstanding balance that wishes to re-enroll must pay the outstanding balance in full prior to re-enrolling.

Outstanding balances may be reported to one or more credit agencies such Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion.

### **RECIEPTS AND STATEMENTS:**

Receipts are available on ProCare. Annual statements for tax and accounting purposes are also available on ProCare.

### **SUMMER ENROLLMENT:**

Preschool at the Cross will be open for selected weeks during the summer. Families wishing for their children to continue at PATC for the summer will **not** be required to complete any additional forms or pay additional registration fees for this time. Families will be polled following Spring Break each year to see which families would like for their children to attend during the Summer so that adequate staffing can be planned. Families who do not choose this care/option will simply notify the PATC Administrative Staff (providing at least two weeks notice), and school will end when the CFCA school year ends (the last Friday in May before Memorial Day).

Students with a balance on their account may not participate in our Summer program until their financial balance has been paid in full.

Families that enroll in our Summer program are committing to attend all weeks, and will be charged for each week of the program. Tuition will still be due for any vacation weeks. This requirement is due to securing and paying our staff.

### **PARTNERING WITH PATC:**

Working together as a school and with families will produce the best possible outcome for the children in our care. If there are any concerns that parents have, we ask that you talk to the staff or administration of the school to attempt to work things out. Each child is unique, and we will strive to work with each one. However, our school may not be the right fit for each and every child. If you become dissatisfied with our school, The Preschool at the Cross, and you feel that you cannot work things out, or if your child does not favorably respond, we ask that you withdraw your child. We also reserve the right to dismiss anyone from our school if we feel that we cannot meet the needs of their child or if a family is spreading gossip, rumors, or negativity. These statements are in our **Statement of Support** document that parents are required to sign.

### **WITHDRAWAL FORM:**

Any family that needs to withdraw from our school for any reason (i.e., moving) is asked to complete a Withdrawal Form. A minimum of **two-weeks notice** is required for withdrawal. This will allow us time to contact families to fill the spot. The forms are located in the PATC Administrative Office.

### **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY:**

The State of Florida requires that PATC teachers and all members of child care institutions be on the lookout for and report, to the State and appropriate authorities, any and all suspected cases of abuse to a child.

At PATC, our center and staff are mandatory reporters of Child Abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to the Child Protective Services for



investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. It is advised that clients make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or other visible injury to minimize suspicion of possible child abuse or endangerment.

**INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

PATC complies with the minimum insurance coverage as suggested by our independent agent

**ADDITIONS AND CHANGES:**

Preschool at the Cross reserves the right to edit or adapt the policies in this handbook as the needs arise. The school will make all changes and additions available at the time these changes are made. Clients and customers will be notified of these changes through the normal written communication system of the center at the time they are made effective.