



Wildwood Christian Academy

2023-2024 Parent Handbook

Wildwood Christian Academy

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832-934-0200

www.wildwood-umc.org

Dear Wildwood Christian Academy Family,

Welcome to Wildwood Christian Academy's 19th year! We are so excited about beginning another year and we firmly believe that your decision to place your child in our care is one of the best decisions you could have made.

This handbook is designed to give you answers to any questions you may have about our school's philosophy and goals, as well as its educational and operational practices. Your child's safety and welfare is always a priority to us, and our policies are written with that in mind.

A lot of planning and research goes into preparing for each school year and that includes writing the policies and procedures included in this handbook. If at any time we need to make changes to the handbook, you will receive a written notification of the policy change.

It is in your best interest to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact the school office.

We are looking forward to a great year!

In Christ,

Lori Lauden
Director

Pam Treesh
Assistant Director

GOALS

Our goals for each child who attends Wildwood Christian Academy are:

Spiritual

- To develop a knowledge of God's Creation
- To begin to understand the love of God
- To know that God is always with them

Social/Emotional

- To develop a positive attitude about learning
- To experience a sense of self-worth
- To exhibit a positive attitude toward life
- To demonstrate cooperative social behavior
- To acquire self-help skills

Physical

- To enhance gross motor skills (large muscles)
- To develop and refine fine motor skills (wrist and hand muscles)
- To develop eye-hand coordination
- To use all senses in learning

Cognitive

- To acquire learning and problem solving skills
- To expand logical thinking skills
- To investigate concepts and information leading to a deeper understanding of the surrounding environment
- To develop creative and imaginative thinking through play, art, music and outdoor experiences
- To expand verbal communication skills

PHILOSOPHY

Understanding How Preschoolers Learn

Children develop and acquire skills through a predictable sequence of learning stages. At Wildwood Christian Academy we provide a learning environment that allows a child to build upon existing skills. Children gain new information by interacting with concrete materials and experiencing the environment through their senses.

Curiosity is an important method of learning for young children. They learn best when they are given the opportunity to ask questions and find different solutions to a problem.

Repetition and imitation are necessary for learning to occur. As a child repeats actions, songs, words and routines, he/she increases skills and understanding. He/she observes and imitates others who model attitudes and actions.

At Wildwood Christian Academy we want to provide an atmosphere where a child feels loved and accepted for who he or she is – a special person created by God. Parents and teachers working together can support each other in providing positive learning experiences for our children. When this is accomplished we can both look forward to the promise of Proverbs 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it”, being fulfilled. Children experience God’s love and a sense of self-worth through the love and acceptance of others.

Policy Changes

Parents will be notified in writing of any policy changes which may occur after this handbook is distributed. Notification of all policy changes must be signed, dated and returned to the school within 5 school days.

PROGRAMS

Wildwood Christian Academy operates within a traditional nine month school calendar and educates children 18 months through Pre-Kindergarten.

CLASS RATIOS (CHILDREN: TEACHERS)	
Toddlers	8:2
Twos	10:2
Threes	14:2
Fours	16:2

Toddlers

A Toddler class is offered on T/TH from 9:00a.m. – 1:00p.m. Children must be 18 months old on September 1st of the current school year.

Twos

Twos classes are offered on M/W/F or T/TH from 9:00a.m. – 1:00p.m. Children must be 2 years old on September 1st of the current school year.

Threes

Threes classes are offered on M/W/F or T/TH from 9:00a.m. – 1:00p.m. Children must be 3 years old on September 1st of the current school year.

Fours

Fours classes are offered on M/W/F, T/TH or M-F from 9:00a.m – 1:00p.m. Children must be 4 years old on September 1st of the current school year.

ADMISSION

Registration

Registration for Wildwood Christian Academy takes place in early spring. Families currently enrolled in the school may register first, and members of Wildwood United Methodist Church have the opportunity to register before the public. Wildwood Christian Academy alumni (defined as former students and their siblings) will be given the opportunity to register prior to church member registration.

Church Membership

A parent or legal guardian must be a registered member of Wildwood United Methodist Church to participate in early registration. Membership must have been established by December 31st, prior to school registration. A \$100 discount will be applied to each child's registration fee, up to 3 children per family. *The membership discount cannot be combined with the sibling discount.*

Siblings

There is a \$50 sibling discount applied to each child's registration fee, up to 3 children per family. *The sibling discount cannot be combined with the membership discount. Siblings must be enrolled in the same school year.*

Waiting List

A waiting list will be established for those interested in enrollment when space is no longer available in a desired class. Each waiting list is for one school year only, ending April 1st. A registration fee is not required to be added to the waitlist.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Wildwood Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, financial assistance policies or other school administered programs.

Special Needs

Wildwood Christian Academy recognizes each child as a unique and special person with the ability to grow and learn. Our developmentally appropriate environment is designed to provide learning opportunities for a wide spectrum of abilities. Depending on facilities and resources, we make every effort to accommodate special needs. In certain instances, a child may require an aide to “shadow” them throughout the school day. This aide must be provided at the parent’s expense. Wildwood Christian Academy reserves the right to request a formal professional diagnosis in order to better serve our students with special needs. Because providing the best care possible for all of our students is a high priority, a copy of the results should be mailed directly from the specialist to the Director within seven working days of the diagnosis. Outside professional services may be consulted to make recommendations about programming and/or modifications for specific children. Children will not be observed, tested or informally questioned by an outside professional without notification and written permission by the parents of the student.

FEES

Non-Refundable Registration Fee

A non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of registration.

Non-Refundable Tuition Payment

A non-refundable tuition payment is due by August 15th via Brightwheel. This tuition payment is applied to September, 2023 tuition.

Tuition is drafted on the 1st of every month via Brightwheel EFT. Tuition payments will be due every month beginning October 1, 2023 through May 1, 2024. Payments are automatically deducted from the bank account or credit card you enter into Brightwheel. The account holder (parent/guardian) is responsible for all fees charged by Brightwheel.

Tuition Refunds

Any monies paid will not be refunded. A Brightwheel cancellation must occur 30 days prior to your next scheduled payment.

Refunds, credits or discounts will not be issued for absence due to illness, inclement weather, building closure or scheduled in-service days or holidays.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal is defined as permanent removal of a student from Wildwood Christian Academy. We require written notice 30 days prior to the next Brightwheel tuition EFT in order to withdraw your student and cancel your tuition payment.

Penalty Fees

Late or declined tuition payments will be charged a \$20.00 late fee via Brightwheel. This fee is in addition to the fee charged by Brightwheel. Returned checks will be charged a \$25.00 return fee via Brightwheel.

Financial Assistance

If you are in need of financial assistance, please contact the Director for more information.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Minimum Standard Requirements

Minimum Standards

Wildwood Christian Academy is licensed to care for children by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and must be in compliance with their Minimum Standards. A copy of Minimum Standards is available for parents to review in the school's office. A copy of the most recent licensing inspection report is posted in the school office, as well.

Authorization to Pick Up a Child

Written authorization and photo identification is required to release a child to someone other than the parent or designated guardian. Please provide a written statement if you wish to add to or delete a person or persons from your release list. Changes in transportation will only be accepted by phone call or note from parent/guardian. **Emails will not be accepted**. A student will not be dismissed to a minor without prior parent/guardian permission.

Medical and Emergency Procedures

In order for your child to attend Wildwood Christian Academy, we must have a current medical form signed by a Physician, along with a signed or stamped up to date immunization record. You will be notified of any minor incidents verbally or in writing. If medical attention is required on your child, you will be notified immediately.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

In the unlikely event that we would need to evacuate the campus in a catastrophic situation, it is our duty to protect our students in the safest way possible. All church and school staff will evacuate the building according to our Fire Drill exit map and secure children in their cars. Children under 24 months of age, who have limited mobility or who otherwise may need assistance because of hearing, visual or mental impairment will be evacuated with assistance of teachers, as well as any adaptive devices needed. Church and school staff will transport all students to The Woodlands Methodist Church at 2200 Lake Woodlands Drive (phone number 281-297-5959), with the assistance of first responders.

Once children arrive at the designated location, teachers will account for all students on their sign in logs and begin calling parent and emergency contact phone numbers with the location of where they need to pick up their child. Children will be united with their parents at The Woodlands Methodist Church.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Education. You can access the requirements on-line via www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize.com, or you may obtain a copy of the regulations from your local or state health department. If you are interested in your child being exempt from immunizations, please contact the Texas Department of Health for the provisions and notify the school office. In accordance with Minimum Standard 746.3611, Wildwood Christian Academy advises all employees to receive the recommended immunizations for vaccine preventable diseases.

Gang Free Zone

Texas law requires WCA to notify parents that we are a gang-free zone. A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include child care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of the child care center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

Firearms

Firearms are prohibited (concealed or open carry) on campus unless the individual is a law enforcement official. Law enforcement officials who are trained and certified to carry a firearm on duty may have firearms or ammunition on the premises. Department of Family and Protective Services: Minimum Standard 746.3707, 746.2607, 748.3931

Preventing and Responding to Abuse and Neglect of Children

The safety and security of our students is a priority at Wildwood Christian Academy. Our staff participates in annual training where methods are reviewed to increase awareness of issues regarding abuse and neglect, identify warning signs that a child might be a victim of abuse and neglect, and for prevention techniques of child abuse and neglect. If a parent or staff member of Wildwood Christian Academy suspects or is a witness of abuse and/or neglect of a child, they should contact the Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline at (800) 252-5400.

Incident Report Forms

Minor accidents sometimes occur. Parents will be notified of minor scrapes, bumps and/or bites on a "Boo Boo Report". If an incident requires medical attention, a parent/guardian will be notified immediately and a detailed "Incident/Illness Report" will be completed. The Incident/Illness report will require a parent signature.

Breastfeeding

Wildwood Christian Academy will provide mothers a comfortable room with a seat and closed door to breastfeed their child if they choose to do so.

Pets

Although some classrooms may have pets, other animals may be brought to school only when the visit has been prearranged and approved by the Director. Parents will be notified in advance and leashed and cages will be required when appropriate. When approved animals are on the school premises, we must have documentation that the animals have been vaccinated according to state and local regulations. Please do not bring kittens and puppies in arms into the facility during drop off and pick up times. No animals should be in the school without prior approval of the Director.

Vision and Hearing Screening

The special Senses and Disorders Act has been passed into Texas state law and requires each child who is age 4 and older as of September 1, 2023, to be tested for hearing and vision impairments. These tests are to be repeated each year. Wildwood Christian Academy contracts with a private screening company to have these tests done on the required children. The cost of this service is included in the registration fee. Wildwood Christian Academy is required to keep a copy of the results on file. In addition, a report on the screening results will be sent to the Texas Department of Health and a copy will be sent home to the parent of the child tested.

It is mandatory for four year olds to be screened at our academy. If you have any questions, please contact the director.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

In order to protect your child from harmful rays and/or insect bites, we recommend applying sunscreen and/or insect repellent to exposed skin before school each morning. If you would like the teacher to re-apply either product, please send in the product with a letter of instruction for application.

Health and Safety

Fire/Weather/Intruder Drills

All children will participate in monthly fire drills, and quarterly weather and intruder drills. If a parent/guardian is in the building during drill, they are required to participate and follow requirements of the drill.

Security

Security protocols and procedures have been established to provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students. School and church visitors are required to follow security procedures at all times.

Facility Safety

All children must be supervised by an adult at all times. It is prohibited to leave a child unattended anywhere on church property, including the classroom, hallways, playground, the parking lot or your vehicle.

Illness

Children with vomiting, fever, diarrhea or other contagious illnesses will not be admitted to school. **Vomiting, fever and diarrhea must be absent for 24 hours without medication before a child may return to school.** If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent (or other authorized adult) will be called to pick up the child immediately. For this reason it is imperative that emergency numbers are up to date. By school policy, we **do not** administer any medications, except in emergency situations with Director approval. If you have any questions about our Illness Policy, please call the school office.

Allergies

Please notify us in writing if your child has a specific allergy. If your child is in a classroom with a child that has a life-threatening allergy, we reserve the right to prohibit certain food items from being included in your child's lunch. You will be notified in writing if your child's class has a special circumstance.

Toilet Training

The goal of Wildwood Christian Academy is to meet the needs of each child. Teachers will work with each child on an individual basis to assist efforts at home toward toileting success. A child must be fully toilet trained to enter our Fours program, unless a doctor's note states a medical condition preventing the child from being toilet trained.

Physical Activity Play

Physical activity is very important to support large and small motor development in young children. Students at Wildwood Christian Academy participate in outdoor recess/recreation daily for 30 minutes with their age level peers on our school playground. Climbing structures and tricycles are available for large motor development. In case of inclement weather, recess will be held in the classroom or a designated indoor space.

Movement activities will be provided during the designated indoor recess time period. Students also have an opportunity for outdoor learning and play in our school garden and outdoor classroom. Children visit the garden or outdoor classroom 1-2 times a week for 30 minutes. In case of inclement weather, garden or outdoor classroom class time will be held in a designated indoor space. If the temperature/heat index is above 97 or the temperature/wind chill is below 35, children will participate in indoor recess, Garden and/or Outdoor Classroom activities. Physical activity is incorporated into daily classroom learning through movement and music, yoga and games.

General Policies

Inclement Weather Days

Wildwood Christian Academy follows the Magnolia Independent School District for school closings. When Wildwood Christian Academy closes for inclement weather, etc., you will be notified of the school closing by email. If MISD has a delayed start, WCA will still be closed. WCA will not make up inclement weather days. Parents will be contacted to pick up their child if an unsafe condition arises while children are at school.

Drop- In/Make Up Days

Wildwood Christian Academy is unable to accommodate drop-ins or make up days.

Photographing and Videotaping Students

In order to protect the privacy of our students and their families, we ask that you do not take pictures or video of anyone but your own child unless you have permission from the supervising teacher and/or parent/guardian of the student.

Birthdays

Each teacher will provide a special birthday celebration for their students, including summer birthdays. If you would like to pass out invitations and/or send in birthday treats, please contact your child's teacher for their classroom policy.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The purpose of all discipline at Wildwood Christian Academy is to help children become increasingly self-managing and socially responsible. Teacher's help children express their feelings, cooperate with other children and negotiate conflicts. Only positive, non-punitive methods are used to achieve our goal. We recognize that young children have limited and highly variable abilities to manage their emotions and control their reactions. When a child needs restrictions they will be clearly defined and consistently maintained. At no time will a child be physically punished, threatened or intimidated. Techniques used are:

1. diverting attention to a constructive pursuit
2. compromising and negotiating differences
3. encouraging children to seek alternatives within the boundaries of their individual capabilities

If a distressed child needs help regaining self-control, he/she will be allowed a supervised private time away from the situation to quiet him/herself before a reassuring adult seeks to help him/her re-enter the classroom activity. If disruptive behavior is persistent, parents will be contacted so that we can work together to find a solution.

Although every effort will be made to avoid termination, Wildwood Christian Academy reserves the right to dismiss any child who is frequently:

1. disruptive to the learning process
2. destructive
3. causing deliberate bodily injury
4. using abusive language
5. referred to the Director repeatedly without obvious positive results
6. in need of individual assistance or care which cannot be provided in our school setting

Parents also have a responsibility to Wildwood Christian Academy. Any parent who behaves in an immoral or unethical way will be asked to leave our academy. We uphold the highest standards and expect our parents to abide by them. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with the Director.

NUTRITION

Food

Parents/Guardians will be notified if special snacks or meals will be served during the school day. If your child cannot eat the provided food, you must let your child's teacher know by responding to the notice in a timely manner.

Lunches

Each child should bring a complete lunch to eat during their lunch period at 11:00am. Although Wildwood Christian Academy is not responsible for the nutritional value of lunches provided by parents, we strongly recommend including only wholesome, nutritious foods. Students must bring unwrapped food in a divided container or baggies. Food to be eaten as finger food must be pre-cut into bite size pieces. To reduce the danger of choking, please avoid hot dogs, nuts, whole grapes and peanut butter for children younger than three years of age. Please do not send any soft drinks, food that requires refrigeration/heating or candy. **A reusable lunch-kit or disposable bag/sack should be used for lunches.**

DRESS CODE

Students at Wildwood Christian Academy will be busy, active young people. To keep them safe and to prevent damage to special clothing, a dress code has been developed for our students. All clothing should be marked with your child's name.

Shirts

All students will wear their WCA polo to school. WCA polos are only available from www.frenchtoast.com. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery.

Dresses

Preschool girls have the option to wear a WCA polo dress or khaki jumper dress with a WCA polo. If your child wears a dress, please wear bike shorts or bloomers under the dress.

Bottoms

Children should wear khaki shorts, skirts, pants or skorts. Unless the child is able to zip, button or snap clothing themselves, please do your best to dress them in elastic waist bottoms.

Socks/Tights

Students should wear solid navy or white socks/ tights with their uniform. Leggings should be solid navy or white.

Shoes

Shoes must be closed toe, closed heel, rubber sole and fit properly for safety reasons.

Outerwear

Children will play outside everyday unless there is inclement weather. Please remember to send a sweater or jacket marked with your child's name in the cooler seasons.

Special Dress Days

Occasionally you will receive notice of a special dress or theme dress day. If you choose to opt out of the special dress day, your child should wear their WCA uniform.

WHAT TO BRING EACH DAY

Students should come to school with a lunch and sippy cup/water bottle daily. Backpacks are not necessary at this age.

An extra change of clothing will be stored in the classroom all year. The change of clothing must follow our uniform dress code. The extra change of clothes should be sent in a gallon Ziploc baggie labeled with the student's name. The change of clothes will be collected prior to the first day of school.

For children not yet potty trained, diapers/wipes should be sent in from home.

The following items should be sent each day, **labeled with the child's name:**

Toddlers and Twos:

Comfort items (blanket, pacifiers), if needed

Lunch kit or lunch sack

"Sippy cup" or sports bottle with water

Threes/Fours:

Lunch kit or lunch sack

"Sippy cup" or sports bottle with water

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Children must be in the care of an adult at all times. Upon arrival your child must be left with a staff member. It is the parent's responsibility to inform alternate caregivers, such as grandparents or babysitters, of these essential security procedures. Our students will not be dismissed to minors without prior parent/guardian approval. Wildwood Christian Academy begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m.

Walk in arrival begins at 8:50a.m and ends at 9:10a.m. Please use the designated entrances to enter the building and drop your child off at their classroom door.

If your child arrives to school after 9:10 a.m., please call the school office and a staff member will escort them to their classroom.

A child will not be dismissed to the office after 12:45pm, unless it is a family emergency. If you come to pick up your child after 12:45, you must wait until 1:00pm for your child to be dismissed. The end of day routine is very important and this will help our teachers and children maintain an organized and safe end to their day.

Walk in dismissal will begin each afternoon at 1:00 p.m. After 1:10p.m., you will be charged a \$20.00 late fee, per child on your Brightwheel account.

COMMUNICATION

School Office (832-934-0200)

For information about school or church activities please contact the school office. We welcome your calls. If you are calling to get a message to a teacher we will pass it along. We do not interrupt class time with phone calls. Please allow the teacher 24 hours to return your phone call or email. The school office also monitors visitors to our area. Your cooperation is appreciated. We are here to assist you and your children. We welcome your phone calls, emails and written messages. The key to the success of our program is open communications between parents and staff.

Parent to Teacher

Your relationship with your child's teacher is very important. The teacher wants to communicate with you. A note or quick word about any changes at home (new baby, parents away, illness or even the death of a pet) will allow your child's teacher to help your child deal with their feelings. Conferences with your child's teacher can be scheduled throughout the year. We are happy to schedule specific conferences with the teacher and/or Director upon request. You can contact your child's teacher through email, a note or phone call to the WCA office. Emails and/or phone calls will be returned within 24 hours or the first weekday after a weekend or holiday. If you wish to speak to your child's teacher during the school day, you must contact the school office as they do not have access to email or phone during the school day.

Teacher to Parent

Teachers may send home correspondence via email to provide you with additional insight into your child's school day. **Please make sure your email address on file is current.**

Parent to Director

The Director is always happy to visit with parents about their joys and concerns about the school's policies and procedures and/or their child's performance in school. Please call the school office to schedule an appointment.

Outside Authorities

If a parent has concerns about childcare they may contact the local licensing office at Texas Health and Human Services, 608 N. Loop 336 East, Conroe, Texas 77301. They may also contact the PRS Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or their web site at: hhs.texas.gov