



LIGHTHOUSE

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Welcome to Lighthouse Christian Academy!

We are delighted to welcome you and your family to our Lighthouse Christian Academy community. This Family Handbook is designed to guide you through our mission, values, and daily practices so you feel informed, supported, and connected. Inside, you will find important information about our policies, procedures, communication methods, and the ways we partner with families to help every child learn and grow.

At Lighthouse Christian Academy, our goal is to shine the light of Christ in all we do—creating a safe, nurturing, and faith-filled environment where children can thrive academically, socially, and spiritually. We believe that when families and educators work together, children experience their greatest success.

Please take time to read through this handbook and refer to it as needed throughout the year. Thank you for trusting us with your child. We look forward to a joyful year of learning, growth, and God's blessings for your family.



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Parent Handbook

Lighthouse Christian Academy Mission Statement

Lighthouse Christian Academy serves as a Christian outreach ministry of Lighthouse Fellowship Church by providing quality early childhood education in a safe and loving Christian environment. We aim to instill a love of learning and partner with parents to teach children about the joy of following Jesus. We strive to help each child grow spiritually, emotionally, physically, socially, and intellectually.

Core Values

- **Faith-Centered Education:** Children are spiritual beings created in God's image and have an innate need for moral and spiritual guidance. Therefore, we provide a Christ-centered learning environment where Biblical principles are integrated into everyday teaching, encouraging children to grow in their faith and relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **Holistic Child Development:** Children are unique individuals with diverse needs in the areas of spiritual, emotional, physical, social, and intellectual growth. Therefore, we provide a well-rounded curriculum that nurtures all aspects of a child's development, offering opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, emotional expression, physical activity, and spiritual formation.
- **Inclusive Community:** Children are valued members of a diverse community with individual needs, strengths, and backgrounds. Therefore, we provide an inclusive and welcoming environment where all children, regardless of ability, culture, or learning style, feel respected, supported, and encouraged to thrive.
- **Collaborative Family Partnership:** Children are most successful when there is a strong partnership between home and school. Therefore, we provide open communication and regular opportunities for families to be involved in their child's learning journey, partnering with them to support the child's spiritual, emotional, and academic development.
- **Developmentally Appropriate Practices:** Children are naturally curious and learn best through hands-on experiences, exploration, and active play. Therefore, we provide a play-based curriculum that aligns with the developmental needs of each child, fostering a love of learning through interactive, hands-on activities that encourage independent discovery and problem-solving.

These core values guide Lighthouse Christian Academy in its mission to provide a Christ-centered educational experience that nurtures children's growth in a holistic and inclusive environment. Each value emphasizes the importance of nurturing the whole child, empowering families, and fostering an engaging, developmentally appropriate learning environment. Most of this information is found in our parent handbook and LCA's employee handbook.



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Non-Discrimination Policy

Lighthouse Christian Academy does not discriminate based on gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in its admission, educational, or other administrative policies. It extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

We understand that each child is a unique individual, and we are committed to differentiating our teaching practices to meet the diverse learning styles of the children in our care. Some children may be visual learners, while others may excel through auditory or kinesthetic approaches. According to Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences, we recognize that children have a range of strengths, including logical-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, musical, and interpersonal intelligences. Our curriculum will incorporate various methods to reach all learners.

- Visual Learners: We will provide visual aids such as charts, picture books, and storyboards to reinforce concepts and lessons.

- Auditory Learners: We will use songs, rhymes, and storytelling to help children learn, and encourage discussion and verbal expression.

- Kinesthetic Learners: We will integrate movement-based activities like role-play, art projects, and hands-on learning stations to engage these children in learning.

By offering a wide range of activities, we will ensure that children's individual learning styles are respected, while also fostering a multi-sensory environment that promotes a holistic approach to learning.

Curriculum and Program Goals:

How Children Learn

Children learn best through social interaction, hands-on exploration, and play.

Learning is strengthened through meaningful relationships with peers and adults (Vygotsky).

Children are active learners who construct knowledge through exploration (Piaget).

Play is central to building cognitive, social, and emotional skills.



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Curriculum Approach

Play-based and relationship-centered

Hands-on learning in centers

Teacher support through observation, open-ended questions, and guided interaction

Age-Group Goals

Toddlers: Language, motor skills, independence, early social skills

Preschool: Cooperative play, early literacy/math, problem-solving, creativity

Pre-K: Kindergarten readiness, number sense, early reading/writing, independence

Program-Wide Goals

- Safe, nurturing, Christ-centered environment
- Whole-child learning
- Strong family partnerships
- Positive behavior guidance

Assessment

- Ongoing observation during play
- Open-ended questions to assess thinking
- Documentation used to plan instruction and share progress with families

Staff

Lighthouse Christian Academy makes every effort to create and maintain accurate job descriptions for all positions within the school. Each report includes a job information section, a job summary section (giving a general overview of the job's purpose), essential duties and responsibilities section, a supervisory responsibilities section, a qualifications section (including education or experience, language skills, mathematical skills, reasoning ability, and any certification required), a physical demands section, and a work environment section.



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Lighthouse Christian Academy maintains job descriptions to aid in orienting new employees to their jobs, identifying the requirements of each position, establishing hiring criteria, setting standards for employee performance evaluations, and establishing a basis for making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

The Administrator or Director prepares job descriptions when new positions are created. Existing job descriptions are also reviewed and revised to ensure they are up to date. Job descriptions may also be rewritten periodically to reflect changes in the position's duties and responsibilities. All employees will be expected to help ensure that their job descriptions are accurate and current, reflecting the work being done. All staff are cross trained for all age groups of children that LCA teaches.

Employees must remember that job descriptions do not necessarily cover every task or duty that might be assigned and that additional responsibilities may be assigned as necessary. Contact the Director if you have questions or concerns about your job description.

Required Policies from the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services

Lighthouse Christian Academy is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Child Care Licensing requires the following policies, as outlined in The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers, Section 746.501. These policies are reviewed annually, and parents will be aware of changes.

1. Hours of Operation

Throughout the school year, Lighthouse Christian Academy is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please see the Lighthouse Christian Academy school calendar for Holiday and Half-Day closures. Lighthouse Christian Academy's tuition is based on our operating calendar. Doors to the school open at 8:30 a.m. The school day begins promptly at 8:45. Please ensure that students arrive by this time each day so the child can participate in our entire educational program. All students must be at school before 10:00 a.m., unless there is a doctor's note.



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2. Release of Children

Per Texas state laws, parents can access their child at any time. If a parent cannot pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Children will not be released to minors under the age of 18. Authorized

Adults must be listed on the enrollment form to pick up, and they must bring a valid picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

3. Illness and Exclusion Policy

Children who are ill should not attend preschool. Lighthouse Christian Academy adheres to the standards established by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for children with illnesses. The most common standards for exclusion are:

1. Illness prevents the child from participating in childcare activities, ***including outdoor play***. If a child is too ill to go outside, they must stay home on this day.
Per childcare licensing, 746.3601(1).
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the other children's health, safety, and supervision.
3. Oral temperature of 101, tympanic (ear) temperature of 100, or axillary (armpit) temperature of 100, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
4. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness, such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrollable diarrhea, and two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child separately from the other children and provide extra attention to handwashing and sanitation practices under proper supervision.



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Parents are required to pick up their children within 30 minutes of notification. In the event of *severe* illness or injury, or if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, Lighthouse Christian Academy may call for an ambulance at the parent's expense.

If a child is sent home sick from our program, they may return it once they are symptom-free for 24 hours without medication.

If the child's health care professional provides a statement, the document must state that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition.

4. Medication

Please inform your physician that your child attends full-day or part-day preschool and that you prefer to

administer medications at home, both in the morning and evening. Knowing this, many doctors will order longer-acting medications, and limiting medications dispensed away from home prevents medication errors.

If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- **Prescription medication can only be accepted if it is in the original container and hasn't expired.**
- Nonprescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturer's recommendation on the label. A note from the child's health care professional must be provided if the manufacturer's recommendations are not listed.
- Before any prescription or non-prescription medication can be administered, including sunscreen, we must have permission in writing from the child's parent or guardian. Please fill out the medication forms which can be obtained in the school office. Please bring a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.
- **Medication will only be given if prescribed three or more times daily.** If your child is prescribed medication once or twice a day, parents must administer this before dropping off and after picking up at home



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Health forms must be completed at enrollment, including any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history. These must be updated and kept up to date.

Medication may be administered to children upon presentation of a signed medical information sheet. These are located in the school office.

5. Procedures for Handling Emergencies

The staff will administer basic first aid in case of a minor injury or accident. All damages or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day.

In the event of a medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (an emergency), the staff will call 911, providing the location and nature of the emergency. As appropriate, the staff member will administer CPR or first aid measures.

Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified. **All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency.**

If a child ingests or comes into contact with a poisonous substance, the staff will contact the Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

6. Parent Notifications

Open communication with parents is essential to a child's success. Lighthouse Christian Academy has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging receipt of communication. Listed below are ways that Lighthouse Christian Academy may communicate with parents:

Contact Information

It is very important that we always have your most up to date contact information on file. You can update your contact information at any time by emailing or calling our program. ProCare, email, flyers sent home or posted outside classroom door, and verbal communication.



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Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year, in the Spring and Fall. Parents are encouraged to attend. Your partnership and understanding of our curriculum and expectations are imperative for your child's success.

7. Discipline and Guidance Policy

Lighthouse Christian Academy staff members are trained to employ a positive approach to discipline and guidance that fosters self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. A few examples used in this situation include praising and encouraging good behavior instead of focusing solely on unacceptable behavior, reminding children of their behavior expectations daily through clear and positive statements, and redirecting their behavior when necessary. Lighthouse Christian Academy staff will never use Corporal Punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills that help them get along in their physical and social environment. The aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, rather than enforcing a set of inflexible rules. Providing children with clear guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them develop internal control over their actions, encouraging them to exhibit acceptable conduct. Positive cooperation is essential from the family when addressing disruptive behavior. Consistency from all parties involved is the best way to handle these issues. When disruptive behavior does occur, a “How was my Day” note will be completed by the teacher and then signed by the Director and Parent. Misbehavior will be discussed with the parents. Lighthouse Christian Academy may suspend students if aggressive behavior becomes a chronic problem in the classroom. The director will inform parents if this is a possibility. Aggressive behavior is biting, hitting, pushing, or other abusive conduct directed at other children or staff.

Occasionally, young children present dangerous behaviors in the education setting with the potential to injure themselves or others. In such circumstances, children may need more intensive interventions to help them learn appropriate behavior.



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Procedures:

-The teacher will have a designated safe place in the classroom where a child can calm and self-regulate. If necessary, the child may be taken outside the classroom to soothe and self-regulate in a quiet area away from peers.

-A teacher will remain with the child at all times

-When dangerous behavior occurs, the Director will contact the child's parent to debrief the incident. The child's teacher, Director, and Assistant Director will meet to discuss future incidents and potential referrals for additional services.

-Staff will implement positive behavioral interventions and supports to prevent challenging behavior and teach emotional literacy, friendship, self-calming, and problem-solving skills.

-Behavior support may include a Behavior Plan, an individualized, intensive intervention based on information collected by the family and teaching staff. A Behavior Plan will include

1. Description of targeted behavior
2. Functional Behavior Assessment Data
3. Replacement Behaviors
4. Proactive Strategies
5. Positive Strategies to Modify the Environment
6. Reactive Strategies
7. Progress Monitoring
8. Intervention Outcome Process

Continual communication with parents and guardians will be maintained during the intervention process.

8. Suspension and Expulsion of Children

The safety of all children and employees is crucial. While we aim to work with children and families, aggressive behavior may put others at risk. Lighthouse Christian Academy reserves the right to terminate care for aggressive behavior at any time. No reduction or refund of tuition fees will be given in these situations.



9. Safe Sleep Practices for Infants

Lighthouse Christian Academy begins enrolling students who are two years old by September 1st of the school year. We do not provide care for infants.

10. Food Service and Preparation

Lighthouse Christian Academy requires all students to bring lunch each day. We cannot refrigerate or heat your child's lunch, so please consider this when preparing your child's daily meal. If a child does not bring lunch, the parent will be contacted first. If the school is unable to reach the parent, lunch will be provided for a cost of \$6.00. The student's account will be billed for the lunch ordered.

Snacks are also an essential part of a child's day and are served at mid-morning and then again in our after-care program. Snacks include graham crackers, Ritz crackers, saltines, Cheez-its, and Goldfish.

Lighthouse Christian Academy must be notified of all known food allergies, and the child's health care provider must complete a Food Allergy Emergency Plan. Children with known food allergies will not be allowed to attend until the Food Allergy Emergency Plan is completed and on file with the school.

According to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Food Allergy Emergency Plan must be posted in areas where food is served and prepared.

The Food Allergy Emergency Plan must include:

- The child's name
- What food the child is allergic to
- Signs of an allergic reaction if given the food
- How to treat this reaction
- Alternative food to be given when substituting
- Signature from the child's health care professional



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11. Immunization Requirements

An immunization record must be current for all children enrolled at Lighthouse Christian Academy, and a copy must be on file for each child. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child's immunizations are up to date. Failure to keep children up to date on immunizations may result in dismissal.

From time to time, Lighthouse Christian Academy may have children enrolled who have not received immunizations due to personal beliefs. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children. Per federal law, childcare programs are prohibited from discriminating against families' personal views, including their immunization choices.

12. Hearing and Vision Screening

Hearing and Vision Screening for possible vision and hearing problems is required by the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 36, for children 4 years old. Lighthouse

Christian Academy will schedule screenings at our school if needed or parents may bring in proof of screenings from their local pediatrician.

13. Enrollment Procedures

Upon selecting Lighthouse Christian Academy to meet your child's educational needs, **all enrollment paperwork must be submitted at least three days prior to the child's start date in our program.** Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted. Paperwork required for enrollment includes:

- Enrollment Form
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- Physician's Statement
- Tuition Agreement
- Food Allergy Emergency Plan (if applicable)



Parents will be notified in writing within 30 days of the policy change. Parental Signatures may be required.

Parents must notify Lighthouse Christian Academy of any changes to enrollment information, such as telephone numbers and home addresses. If your contact information changes, please inform us via email at cmauerhan@lcafw.org, stop by the office, or put a note in your child's folder.

14. Transportation Information

Lighthouse Christian Academy does not provide transportation for children under the age of 5, except in emergencies. School-age children will be transported on field trips during the Summer Program.

Parents may view a copy of the Transportation Safety Operating Procedures in the school office.

State law requires:

- Vehicles transporting children shall be in safe operating condition, and drivers shall have a current Texas Driver's License
- Children shall be loaded and unloaded at the vehicle's curbside or in a protected parking area.
- A child shall not be taken on field trips unless a parent or guardian has signed permission forms.

15. Water Activities

Parents are asked to permit their child to participate in water activities, including water table play, spray bottle play, and occasionally sprinkler play (available during the summer only). This permission request is located on

the "enrollment form."

16. Field Trips

Lighthouse Christian Academy offers field trips exclusively for school-age students during its summer program.



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17. Animals

From time to time, Lighthouse Christian Academy may have classroom pets that meet the requirements of Texas Child Care Licensing. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a pet is present.

18. Sunscreen and Bug Repellent

Lighthouse Christian Academy will apply sunscreen and bug repellent as needed. The parents must provide sunscreen and bug repellent in their original containers and ensure they are not expired. A “Sunscreen/Bug Repellent Permission Slip” must be completed by the parent before these items can be applied.

19. Questions and Concerns

If parents have questions or concerns about our program, we encourage you to communicate openly with your child’s teacher and the School Director. We can ensure that all parties are well-informed and work as partners in your child’s education through open communication.

Family Communication:

Effective collaboration with parents is essential to support each child’s development and ensure a positive educational experience. Lighthouse Christian Academy employs multiple communication methods to engage families in decisions regarding their child’s experience.

Parent-Teacher Conferences. Held twice annually, in the spring and fall, these conferences provide formal opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss the child’s progress, address concerns, and set goals. Conferences can be conducted in person, over the phone, or virtually to accommodate family needs and preferences.

Daily Communication Tools. The academy utilizes ProCare software, emails, flyers, and verbal communication to keep parents informed about daily activities, upcoming events, and any immediate concerns. This ongoing communication helps parents stay connected and involved in their child’s learning.

Parent Communication Logs and Documentation. Teachers may provide written reports or notes, such as “How Was My Day” forms, to inform parents about their child’s behavior, achievements, or challenges. Parents may be asked to acknowledge receipt of important documents, reinforcing transparent and two-way communication.

By maintaining up-to-date contact information and fostering regular communication, Lighthouse Christian Academy supports families as active partners in their child’s educational journey.



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20. Parent Participation

All classroom visitors must check in at the school office. Classroom visits are always welcome, but we ask that visitors respect the class schedule. We have many opportunities for our parents as well; below is a list of ways in which parents can become involved in preschool:

- Sharing cultures and family traditions
- Being the room parent/working with the teacher on parties/events
- Assisting with classroom activities
- Sharing a craft, collection, or treasure
- Sharing career and work experiences
- Saving materials and “stuff” for school projects
- Preparing materials at home (cutting, stapling, sewing)
- Volunteering for church/school events

21. Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers

Lighthouse is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. We follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review a copy of these standards in our front office or view the standards online at www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default.asp.

Lighthouse Christian Academy encourages parents to view our compliance history with Child Care Licensing. Our most recent inspection is posted on our parent communication board, or you may consider this at

www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp.

Parents may also contact our local childcare licensing office at 817-321-8604.

22. State Contacts

Parents may contact the childcare licensing’s local office at 817-321-8604.

Parents may access the Texas Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

Parents may access the Department of Family and Protective Services and Health and Human Services website at www.dfpd.state.tx.us/child_care.

Texas Rising Star Program- <https://texasrisingstar.org>



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22. Emergency Preparedness Procedures

Below is the Emergency Preparedness Plan for Lighthouse Christian Academy. Parents are encouraged to read this information carefully. Lighthouse Christian Academy will ask parents to participate accordingly if they are in the building during an emergency.

During any emergency, the best action is to BREATHE AND STAY CALM, know how many children you have, and have your tablet and emergency binder.

If you have children of your own in the facility but in another classroom, trust that their teachers will take care of them just as you are caring for the children in your care.

During an emergency or crisis, the primary concern is the safety of all individuals in the facility, including employees, students, teachers, and others. If a problem requires action, the school will use the following procedures and guidelines:

In the event of a terrorist action in the areas:

- LCA will immediately consult with the Fort Worth Police Department and other authorities for their directions.
- The Director will contact DFPS and inform them of the emergency
- Teachers are to bring all students into their classrooms or the nearest safe location
- All church and school entry doors will be monitored.
- Students will be released to parents only when appropriate authorities approve. When this occurs, a designated exit door will be used. An LCA staff member will be posted at the exit to assist with student loading. Parents will not be allowed to leave their vehicles or enter the building. Students will be brought to them.

In the event of a chemical attack that affects or has the potential to affect the school:

- LCA will immediately consult with the Fort Worth Police Department and other authorities for their directions.
- The Director will contact DFPS and inform them of the emergency
- The entire church and school will be locked down, all air handlers will shut down, and all windows and doors will be closed and locked.



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- All employees, students, teachers, and other visitors will be moved to secure central locations
- Students will be released to parents only when approved by the appropriate authorities. No one will be allowed to enter or leave the building until an all-clear is used.

All must follow the following Emergency Preparedness Plan during a crisis or emergency.

Crisis	Definition	Procedure
FIRE	<p>These will usually come in the form of fire, chemical leaks, or other environmental situations that cause an immediate evacuation of the building.</p> <p>Fire drills are conducted each month.</p>	<p>According to the emergency evacuation map, all students must line up to exit the building quickly. Teachers will be the last to leave the room, taking the tablets and emergency binder, turning off the light, and shutting the door behind them. Faculty will immediately call the roll after lining up in the designated area outside the building. When leaving the building, emergency contact information and authorization books should always be taken with the staff. In the event of relocation, we will load the children into vehicles (church vans first, then personal cars as necessary) and drive them to Dozier Elementary. When loaded in the vehicles, the children will be counted and again at the relocation center once unloaded.</p>



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EXTERNAL THREAT	<p>This will be any threat to students or school personnel, requiring them to stay within the building to ensure safety.</p> <p>Lockdown drills are conducted every three months.</p>	<p>Faculty will IMMEDIATELY lock all entrance and exit doors. Students will be directed to gather in a designated remote area and remain quiet, keeping a distance from all windows and doors. Students will stay in a seated position until given further instructions. The faculty will monitor students until further instructions are given.</p>
WEATHER	<p>This will be any threat to the school involving severe weather conditions.</p> <p>Severe weather drills are conducted every three months.</p>	<p>According to the emergency evacuation map, faculty members will direct students to gather quietly in their designated areas. Students will remain quiet, using the crouch position.</p>

NOTE: In all of the emergency evacuation procedures above, the classroom teacher and office staff, if needed, will assist children with limited mobility who require individualized assistance to evacuate the facility promptly to the designated safe area. The office staff will stay with the teacher to ensure the safety of all children.

In the event of relocation. Students will be transported to Dozier Elementary.

Transition sheets from all classrooms are to stay with the teacher responsible for the group. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the teacher and director will utilize the Procure app and the emergency binder to contact each parent and verify the authorized release of children once they are reunited.



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24. Breastfeeding

Lighthouse Christian Academy will provide a comfortable space with seating for mothers to breastfeed their children if they choose to do so. Parents may also provide breast milk for their child to be served while in our care. LCA will provide breastfeeding resources upon request.

25. Child Abuse Reporting Law Requirement

Lighthouse Christian Academy staff are **REQUIRED** by Texas State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to **suspect** the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Our staff receives annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. Lighthouse Christian Academy is committed to increasing awareness and promoting prevention techniques among employees and parents through training, memos, and monthly newsletters. Lighthouse Christian Academy will also coordinate with community organizations to develop strategies that prevent abuse and neglect.

The staff is prohibited under Texas law from notifying parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues.

If parents need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage them to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.helpandhope.org/find help.html

The statewide Abuse & Neglect phone number is 1-800-252-5400 if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

26. Well Checks

Lighthouse Christian Academy staff will visually check the children upon arrival each morning. If staff members notice anything unusual, they must notify the parents. If your child has an



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accident overnight, please notify staff members upon dropping off so that we can assist in monitoring the child for any side effects. A Lighthouse Christian Academy staff member may complete an “Incident Report” to document these situations.

27. Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

While the safety of our employees and the child in our care is paramount, we have elected to make immunizations for vaccine-preventable diseases optional for the employees. Lighthouse Christian Academy recommends that teachers consider receiving the Influenza vaccine.

28. Open Door Policy

Lighthouse Christian Academy has an open-door policy. Parents and legal guardians may visit the center at any time to discuss their child's care and education with the center director and staff, or to observe their child in the center's activities.

29. Gang-Free Zone

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a licensed childcare center is gang-free. Criminal offenses related to organized illegal activity are subject to more severe penalties.

30. Firearms

Firearms are prohibited in educational facilities serving minors. Individuals who hold an Open Carry or Concealed Handgun License are not permitted to bring these firearms into our facility. Firearms may be kept in the licensed individuals' vehicles while on our premises.

31. Tuition and Fees

All tuition fees must be set up through ProCare App. Returned drafts will incur a \$25 charge. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please contact our office for available options.



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Late payments must be arranged before the due date, or children cannot attend LCA. Tuition fees are the only refundable fees, but we will only refund payments in the event of prepaid annual tuition.

32. Extra Fees

A non-refundable annual registration fee is due at the time of enrollment. Lighthouse Christian Academy charges a separate registration, supply fee, and tuition amount during summer. Summer tuition and registration are available in mid-March of the current school year.

Late Fee: Our program is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm. Lighthouse Christian Academy is only licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to care for children during these specified times. If you are late picking up your child, an initial penalty of \$20.00 plus \$1 PER MINUTE will be charged to your account.

33. Arrival Times

Children need to be in attendance by 8:45 a.m. each day to benefit from our curriculum, routines, and rituals. Exceptions can occur when children have appointments with health care professionals or related services.

34. Attendance

We are concerned about your child's well-being, and we kindly request that you notify the front office by 8:30 a.m. each day if your child is absent.

35. Extended Care

Extended Care is an additional service that best accommodates working families. This is on a first-come, first-served basis with limited spaces. To register for this service, please indicate your preference on the enrollment paperwork, selecting from two-, three-, and five-day options. Tuition will be charged based on enrollment and not attendance. The hours for extended morning care are 7:00 to 8:10. All students must be checked in by 8:10 to use morning extended care. After-school extended care hours are 2:45 to 5:00 during the school year and summer program. Late fees will be charged for any pickups made after the scheduled time. Please email us with two weeks' notice to withdraw from this program.



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36. Confidentiality

While your child is enrolled in our program, parents may receive confidential information about our program, staff, and other children. All information received from Lighthouse Christian Academy must remain confidential at all times. This includes but is not limited to posting confidential information about Lighthouse Christian Academy, our children, staff, personnel, and families on social media. Breaching confidentiality may lead to dismissal.

37. Parent Code of Conduct

Please note that our building is home to young children. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. Lighthouse Christian Academy prohibits swearing or cursing on our property.

Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Lighthouse Christian Academy reserves the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian.

Lighthouse Christian Academy must follow particular rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, are required to follow these rules while on our property. Failure to follow discipline and guidance rules will result in the immediate termination of care.

If a parent is dissatisfied with any situation at Lighthouse Christian Academy, parents must maintain composure and handle issues professionally with the Director. Conversations in the classroom must be developmentally appropriate for the children observing and not be aggressive in tone. Any behavior that places a child at risk of harm will result in immediate dismissal from the program.



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38. Parent Responsibilities

Children must be signed in and out daily by their teacher via the Procare App. Please note that, due to liability concerns, the staff of Lighthouse Christian Academy is not permitted to take children home from our center. Lighthouse Christian Academy employees may not be added as authorized pick-up or emergency contact for any child enrolled but their own.

To avoid confusing school toys with a child's personal property, we kindly request that children refrain from bringing playthings from home. Lighthouse Christian Academy staff cannot be responsible for lost or broken unique toys. Two exceptions are a stuffed animal for use during naptime by full-day preschool children and for Show & Tell purposes. You will be notified by your child's teacher if and when the class will have Show & Tell.

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible teaching atmosphere for your child:

- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to our school Director.
- Pick up and read the notices and information left in your child's folder and posted outside your child's classroom, at the school office, or in the email.
- Pick up your child's papers/projects daily. Their work is vital to them, provides another means of communication between parent and child, and helps the parent share in the child's day.
- Please be aware of the scheduled snack and lunchtimes and ensure your child arrives in time to be included in those activities.
- Periodically check on your child's supply of extra clothing. Please take-home soiled clothing promptly and replace clean clothing in your child's backpack.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services does not allow smoking, vaping, or any tobacco product on the premises indoors or outdoors.

39. Withdraw from Preschool

A **TWO-WEEK written notice** must be given for withdrawing a child from Lighthouse Christian Academy. If a family fails to provide two weeks' notice; Lighthouse Christian Academy reserves the right to deduct the monthly tuition from the family's bank account. Lighthouse Christian Academy has the right to refuse service to any family.



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40. Custody Situations

Lighthouse Christian Academy will NOT get involved with custody disputes. Lighthouse Christian Academy will comply precisely with a court order as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. *PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.* All enrollment forms must be completed with the information of both parents. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. If a custody dispute occurs on our property, the local police will be notified and asked to intervene and resolve the conflict. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. Lighthouse Christian Academy reserves the right to terminate care if a custody issue poses a risk to our facility or staff. This includes but is not limited to decisions about the child's care, health, and education. Parents must have these conversations at home and notify the center of any mutual decisions made by both parties involved.

41. Inclement Weather Policy

If the school closes due to inclement weather or other operational issues that affect its operation, such as a loss of electricity or water, the closure will be posted on local broadcast stations (FOX4, NBC5, ABC8, and CBS11) as well as our school's Facebook page.

In the event of serious emergencies, such as earthquakes, fires, storms, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified, if possible, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive. Please refer to our Emergency Preparedness Plan for more information on evacuations and relocation of children.

42. Curriculum

Lighthouse Christian Academy utilizes a curriculum and materials to provide the highest quality education and Christian guidance for each child attending the academy. We seek an age-appropriate curriculum that introduces preschoolers to academics, including letter and number recognition, colors, shapes, and Bible principles such as being kind to one another, loving your neighbor, and serving one another.



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Lighthouse Christian Academy also practices Conscious Discipline in all classrooms. Conscious Discipline techniques emphasize building assertiveness and fostering healthy self-esteem. Children are taught active calming methods to help regulate themselves while learning about empathy and problem-solving skills. For more information on Conscious Discipline, visit www.consciousdiscipline.com

Child Assessments:

We use assessments that occur in natural contexts, such as play or daily routines, where children can demonstrate authentic skills. These require staff to be consistent in observing, and for staff to allow sufficient time to document children's learning. This approach allows teachers to capture a more accurate and complete picture of a child's development.

- Assessments occur in natural contexts (play, daily routines) so children can show authentic skills.
- Staff must be consistent observers and allow time for accurate documentation.
- Collecting reliable data can be challenging because behavior varies by time, environment, and emotional state.
- This approach provides a more complete picture of each child's development.
- Effective assessment requires collaboration with families to:
 - Explain assessment purposes
 - Interpret results together
 - Use data to support each child's learning and growth

After the assessments are completed, usually fall and spring, the teacher will schedule a parent-teacher conference to discuss with the family.

43. Physical Activity

Lighthouse Christian Academy encourages indoor and outdoor physical activity. There are ample structured and unstructured playtimes, including recess and P.E., daily. In inclement weather, classes will participate in indoor recess to allow ample vigorous activities. All classes include 60 to 90 minutes of daily physical activity.



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44. Screen Time

Lighthouse Christian Academy does not care for students under two and supports the licensing standard that no child under two should be allowed any screen time. All students over two will have less than one hour of screen time daily. Screen time will not be during mealtime, snack times, naptimes, or rest times.

45. Naptime

Supervised rest periods are provided for all children at Lighthouse Christian Academy. Please provide a nap mat and a blanket for naptime and take them home at the end of the week to wash. You may also bring in a special blanket, pillow, or stuffed animal if desired, but they must fit in your child's cubby. Childcare licensing requires that all children be offered a nap or rest period.

46. Clothing

Preschool children must bring a complete change of clothing, **clearly marked with their name**, to school daily. Preschool children need to be dressed for the weather. Hats, mittens, and warm clothing are essential for wearing during the cooler seasons to ensure a comfortable experience during daily outdoor playtime. Accidents or other situations may arise, prompting a need to change clothes, even for older preschoolers. **Boots, Crocs, sandals, high heels/costume shoes and flip-flops are prohibited** at Lighthouse Christian Academy for safety reasons, and the school does not keep an extra set of clothes or shoes on hand for students.

47. Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine, and children should be prepared to play outside at some point every day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. According to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children who are too sick to go outside should not attend school. Children may not wear flip-flops or Crocs due to the danger these shoes may pose on the playground.

48. Birthdays and Celebrations

Most children enjoy celebrating special events with their preschool friends (birthdays, new babies, and holidays).



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Parents may send a “store-bought” treat to share with the class for these occasions. Please make arrangements with the teacher several days in advance. If parents wish to invite children to private parties’ teachers will only distribute invitations if one is provided for each child in the class.

49. School Safety Policy

- Check-in/out procedures

All children must be signed in and out daily by their teacher via the ProCare app.

Building Access Cards – Building access cards are required for extended care only. This card will allow you entrance into the secured building from 2:45 to 5:00 pm. Cards are available in the school office. The card must be returned by the last day of school.

All parents must check in at the office upon entering the building after the school day has started (8:45). This is for the safety of our children. Families must follow this procedure to know precisely who is in the building.

Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals – The person dropping off or picking up a child after school has started (8:45 a.m.) or before school is released (2:30 p.m.) will be greeted by office staff. The child will then be taken to the appropriate location with their classmates.

However, if you would like to stay and spend time with your child during activities, please visit the office so we can conduct a proper criminal history check, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Our facility has a fire sprinkler system, and fire drills are practiced monthly. Parents are asked to assist the center in emergency preparedness if they are in the building when the alarm system is activated.

A phone call will notify you of incidents other than minor scrapes or bumps. We will also provide you with a written report at pickup time. A signature from the parent or responsible individual will be required to acknowledge that this information was shared. First aid will be applied to minor incidents. In the event medical attention is needed, we will notify you immediately. Parents are responsible for all medical fees.



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50. Cameras

Lighthouse Christian Academy has closed-circuit cameras in all classrooms and school offices. These cameras are designed to protect both your child and the staff. The review and use of these surveillance cameras are at the sole discretion of the Lighthouse Christian Academy Administration. The privacy of the children is critical to us. For this reason, the cameras are unavailable over the Internet, as they record both visual and audio footage.

51. Photographs

Lighthouse Christian Academy believes in using real-life pictures in our educational program. Photos of the children will be taken with a school-owned camera and will be used exclusively within our program. If parents choose to take pictures of events held at our program, they may only photograph their child, unless the other parent provides written permission. Please note: during certain parent events, such as Pre-K graduation, Christmas programs, and Field Day, photographs may be taken. If you wish for your child not to be photographed, you may want to remove them from these events.

52. Outside Employment

Employees of Lighthouse Christian Academy are prohibited from outside employment with the organization's parents. This includes but is not limited to babysitting or nanny-type jobs.

53. Social Networking Site Policy

Cyber identity and social networking are fascinating these days. However, please understand that Lighthouse Christian Academy employees are not encouraged to post to social networks with parents and children. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

54. Biting

Biting is a common issue in early childhood development. The best way to deal with biting is consistency between providers and parents. Biting could occur for multiple reasons. Proper communication will help determine why a child is biting. Lighthouse Christian Academy will work with parents when biting becomes a problem. We will make every effort to solve the issue as soon as possible.



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55. Cell Phones

Proper parent communication is imperative when working with young children. It is challenging to communicate when cell phones are in use. Effective December 1, 2010, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services passed new regulations prohibiting the personal use of cell phones in classrooms. Once entering the building, cell phone use is not permitted. End all calls before entering the building so our Lighthouse Christian Academy staff can communicate with you effectively.

56. Courtesy Curbside

Lighthouse Christian Academy offers a curbside courtesy service for special circumstances, such as illness or physical disability. Please call the school office if you need assistance dropping off or picking up your child. This service is only offered during our school operating hours from 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

57. Family Accommodations

Lighthouse Christian Academy strives to provide the best foundation for each child, which may sometimes require special accommodations. This can include

- specific therapies in which we will provide a quiet space for their session.
- Complete supporting documentation from medical professionals related to the child's physical or developmental needs.
- Participate in all comprehensive care meetings if needed
- Provide materials or resources in the parents'/children's primary language.
- Provide opportunities for cultural inclusivity.

Family Involvement:

Families are encouraged to actively participate in program-related activities to strengthen the partnership between home and school and support children's development. All classroom visitors are required to check in at the school office, and visitors should respect the class schedule. The program offers various opportunities for family involvement, including but not limited to:



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- Cultural Sharing Day: Families are invited to share their cultures and family traditions with the classroom. This event allows children to explore diversity through stories, foods, music, and artifacts brought by parents.
- Classroom Volunteer Opportunities: Parents may volunteer to assist with classroom activities, support teachers during special events and parties, or serve as room parents to help coordinate class celebrations.
- Career and Life Experience Sharing: Families are encouraged to present their careers or life experiences to the children, fostering real-world connections and expanding children's understanding of different professions.

Additional ways families can contribute include preparing materials at home, saving recyclables for projects, and volunteering for school or church events. These varied opportunities promote meaningful family engagement within the program.

58. Developmental Milestones

Developmental milestone checklists are communication tools intended to encourage ongoing conversations between families and professionals. The checklists also help identify the need for additional screening (between universal screening ages, as needed) when there is a potential developmental concern. Milestones are just one part of these communication tools.

Developmental milestones included on the checklists are **not** developmental guidelines or standards for children's development. They should **not** be used as screening or diagnostic tools to detect developmental delays. If developmental concerns are noted, the next steps are screening and evaluation with formal tools or referral for services. We use developmental milestone checklists, at minimum annually, to track children's growth and development for ages 0 - 5 years, make referrals when necessary, and share those completed checklists with families.

At Lighthouse Christian Academy, we understand that you entrust us with your most valuable treasure: your child. We strive to provide our families with the best possible experience for their preschool education. Excellent early childhood development is the foundation for a bright future for our children at Lighthouse Christian Academy.



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LCA TRS accreditation:

We are excited to share that our program is proudly rated as a Texas Rising Star Four-Star center! This is the highest quality rating awarded by the Texas Rising Star program and reflects our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional early learning experiences.

Four-Star programs go above and beyond state licensing standards in areas like teacher–child interactions, staff training, family engagement, and safe, enriching learning environments.

What is Texas Rising Star

The Texas Rising Star program is a quality-rating and improvement system (QRIS) for early childhood and child-care programs in Texas that participate in Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)'s Child Care Services (CCS) program. Texas Rising Star+1

It is more than just basic licensing: TRS-certified programs meet quality standards that go beyond the state's minimum child-care licensing standards set by Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) / Child Care Regulation (CCR).

Thank you for partnering with us as we continue to offer the very best for our children and families!



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Orientation Checklist

The following information will be reviewed with families on or before the first day of enrollment:

Program Overview

- ☐ Program mission, philosophy, and goals
- ☐ Days and hours of operation
- ☐ Holidays, closures, and inclement weather procedures
- ☐ Tuition, fees, payment schedules, and late payment policies

Enrollment & Administrative Information

- ☐ Completion of all required enrollment forms
- ☐ Immunization and health records
- ☐ Emergency contacts and authorized pickup list
- ☐ Parent communication procedures (email, app, phone, newsletters)

Policies & Procedures

- ☐ Attendance, tardiness, and late pick-up policies
- ☐ Health, illness, and medication administration
- ☐ Accident/incident reporting
- ☐ Emergency and evacuation procedures
- ☐ Discipline and guidance policy
- ☐ Inclusion, accommodations, and special needs support

Child's Daily Experience

- ☐ Daily classroom schedule
- ☐ Curriculum overview and learning goals
- ☐ Meals/snacks, allergies, and nutritional guidelines
- ☐ Nap/rest time procedures
- ☐ Personal belongings and labeling expectations
- ☐ Outdoor play and weather guidelines

Additional Program Information

- ☐ Technology and screen-use policy
- ☐ Photo/media consent
- ☐ Transportation and field trip procedures (if applicable)
- ☐ Opportunities for parent involvement and volunteer guidelines



Family Handbook Acknowledgment of Receipt

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the **Family Handbook** for the program. I understand that the handbook includes important information regarding program policies, procedures, expectations, and responsibilities.

I understand it is my responsibility to read the handbook in full and to follow the policies it contains. I agree to contact the program administration if I have questions or need clarification about any part of the handbook.

By signing below, I confirm that:

- I have received a copy of the Family Handbook.
- The orientation checklist has been completed with a program representative.
- I understand and agree to follow the program's policies and procedures.

Signatures

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Program Representative Name: _____

Program Representative Signature: _____

Date: _____