STEPPING STONES

Parent Handbook

2025-2026

STEPPING STONES
PREPARING CHILDREN ONE STEP AT A TIME

Preschool
Lee's Summit Christian Church
525-4769

You may pay the full year tuition for this school year and receive a 2% discount. All tuition paid monthly must be paid by the 10th of each month. We now have an online payment option (contact Jillian, jburke@lschristian.org, to set it up), but we will still accept check and cash in the correct amount (no change). This is a financial obligation for both the school and the families; therefore, we will not give tuition refunds for a classroom closure for any reason.

I have read all the policies and procedures in this handbook. I understand tuition is due by the 10th of each month September through May, and there is a $25 late fee unless other arrangements have been made with the director.

Parents Name _____

Parent Signature_____

Child's Name_____

*Please print, sign, scan & email this last page to the school office or print, sign & hand to administration at drop-off.

STEPPING STONES
STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Lee's Summit Christian Church supports the Stepping Stones preschool program because we believe each child is a special gift from God and that it is important for children to experience the love and nurture of caring adults outside their home environment. Our program provides an environment that is conducive to the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child in our care.

Privacy of Information Policy

It is the policy of Stepping Stones Preschool that all personal and/or private information of our families and students remain confidential. The information is the property of Stepping Stones Preschool and Lee's Summit Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It will be used only for the business of Stepping Stones and/or to comply with regulatory agencies that govern Stepping Stones.

Parents of Stepping Stones students are given the opportunity on enrollment forms to release their address and phone number to other parents. Individual requests for information will be at the discretion of the Director provided it follows the stated policy.

Policy approved by Department of Children's Outreach and endorsed by Church Board 05/16/2004

Tuition

Tuition is due the first class day of the month and is past due after the 10th of the month; a $25 fee will be incurred if tuition is not received by the 10th. Fees are paid on a monthly basis and are figured based on an average number of school days per month. Therefore, even if your child is not in attendance due to illness, vacation, or school cancellation due to emergency conditions, our expenses remain the same and your monthly fees are still required. **A 2% discount is offered if the full year's tuition is paid at the beginning of the school year.** We do not routinely send out receipts for payment, but will be glad to do so if requested.

Payments can be made online by request (contact Jillian, jburke@lschristian.org, before creating an account), mailed to the school or handed in as cash or check. **Please do not put checks in your child's backpack.**

Delinquent Payment Policy

If payment is not paid in full by the last day of the month, your child's preschool attendance will be discontinued/ interrupted. Families will be notified that the account is delinquent and given an opportunity to bring it current. The child may return to the program when the account is paid in full.

Once a child's attendance is discontinued due to nonpayment, Stepping Stones will send a letter to the home address of the family member responsible. Payment must be paid in full within 90 days of receipt of the letter. **Failure to pay an account in full will result in the inability to enroll your child or future children for the next school year.**

Insufficient funds must be rectified with the Stepping Stones office within 5 days of notification. Replacement must be in cash. A $30 fee will be assessed. Failure to rectify will result in discontinued/interrupted preschool attendance.

Pick Up Policy

Children should be picked up promptly at the end of their class time. In the interest of our children's safety, written documentation will be required for anyone other than the legal parent/guardian to pick him/her up. Anyone not familiar to the school staff will have their ID checked before a child is released into their possession. *Anyone picking up a child should be holding their Stepping Stones distributed sign*. Persons authorized to pick up must be 16 years of age or older. Parents are automatically allowed to pick up children unless the office is notified otherwise. A fee of $5.00 per child for every 15 minutes after the end of class time may be assessed for late pick-ups.

SCHOOL HOURS

PS2
Yellow Room - MW or TTh 9:00 - 1:00

PS3
Red Room - TWTH 9:00 - 1:00
Purple Room - TWTH 9:00 - 1:00
Orange Room - MW or TThu 9:00 - 1:00

Pre-K
Green Room - TWTh 9:00 - 1:00
Gold Room - TWTh 9:00 - 1:00
Blue Room - M-Th 9:00 - 1:00
Silver Room - M-Th 9:00 - 1:00

Children will bring their own water bottle, snack and lunch.

Aftercare

Invoicing: Aftercare is billed based on the number of days signed up for and invoiced the beginning of each month. Payment is due by the 10th of each month.

Signing Up: A calendar of available dates will be posted monthly for the following month. (ex: sign up for September dates in August, payment for September due by the 10th.)

Long Term Evacuation

In the event that the students and staff at Stepping Stones are in need of a location for long-term evacuation, the daycare center (located across the field behind the church) will serve as a safe-haven until parents and/or guardians can be notified to pick up their children. Arrangements have been made with the Director of Child Prodigy for the use of their facility in case of emergency. The LSCC will also serve as a safe-haven for Child Prodigy in case they are in need of evacuation facilities.

Lock Down (Phase 1)

In the event it is deemed necessary by local law officials, the preschool administration, or members of the church staff, Stepping Stones will implement an immediate lock down procedure.

a. All children will be brought inside from the playground and garden areas.

b. Preschool staff will check and lock all doors in the education wing: front doors, playground door, and the two back doors.

c. Church staff will check and lock all doors in the original building: front doors, and two back doors.

d. All blinds in the preschool classrooms will be closed.

e. Any parent or guardian entering the building will be identified at the door to the building by preschool personnel.

Lock Down (Phase 2)

Once Lock Down-Phase 1 is implemented, Phase 2 will be put into effect if necessary. Children and staff may be moved as seen fit to ensure their further safety in certain situations.

Lock Down (Phase 3)

The outdoor doors will be locked. Classroom doors will be locked. Children and teachers will be completely silent and out of site.

Curriculum

Stepping Stones follows a "hands on" approach to learning. We use a Creative Curriculum, including centers. We believe children learn through their play. Our classroom learning environments are set up to encourage development in each child's motor, language, cognitive, social, and spiritual development.

Each teacher creates her own lesson plans specialized to the children in the classroom. Every teacher and assistant receives continuing education hours on a yearly basis. There will be a PreK curriculum night in September to further introduce the classroom curriculum.

Conscious Discipline (A Better Way)

Conscious Discipline is a social emotional curriculum used here at Stepping Stones. Children are taught to use the classroom "Safe Place" to feel and work through their emotions with the help of breathing techniques. The children also learn ways to problem solve and work out disagreements that may occur. Everyone will learn to be a STAR—Smile, Take A deep breath and Relax. Conscious Discipline teaches us all how to connect with each other. All our exercises in Conscious Discipline are brain-based.

"Handwriting Without Tears"

Handwriting Without Tears is the curriculum used to teach the children a "hands on" approach to writing. The use of curves and lines to form letters help the children to visualize and recreate them using wooden pieces, playdough and chalk with boards. Each teacher is trained to use this curriculum in the classroom.

Disciplinary Plan

At Stepping Stones, our disciplinary plan for children who are choosing to consistently behave inappropriately includes:

Prevention, Intervention and Evaluation.

- Prevention includes staff training, classroom management, building relationships, and instruction.
- Intervention includes a plan, safe spot, physical exercise, documentation, and an action plan.
- Evaluation is ongoing and includes analysis of documentation logs, parent meetings, and (if needed) referrals to Early Childhood teams for support.
- Continued inappropriate behaviors may result in dismissal of the program.

Teacher Communication

The best avenues for communication with your child's teacher are to engage with them through the REMIND app or to touch base with them at pick-up. All teachers will be distributing REMIND codes to their parents that are classroom specific; there will also be an all-school REMIND group to join for important all-school communications such as inclement weather days. Each teacher will send out a weekly newsletter via REMIND. This newsletter will either preview what is coming up for the week or recap class activities and learning from the week.

Our all-school monthly newsletter comes out via email. This email contains important information, communications and dates.

Please let your child's teacher or the school office know if your child will be absent. If you have not called us about your child being absent, the Director will call you.

Policy Concerning Emergency Procedures

Should any member of the church staff, or preschool staff, be made aware of a dangerous situation, the Director or her substitute in the Preschool Office, should be notified immediately so that emergency procedures can be implemented. During an emergency situation each child may be required to be signed out, in writing, by a person authorized for pick up. Written sign out procedures will go into effect at the Director's discretion. The front doors will be locked at all times other than drop-off and pick-up There is a doorbell located outside the first set of doors on the brick wall, to gain entrance when the door is locked.

Tornado

In the event of a tornado warning, students and staff will move to the restrooms located in the center of the building (between the Narthex and the education wing). Students will take cover in the proper position on the floor. Dangerous weather will be monitored in the preschool office through a weather alert radio. Practices will be every three months.

Fire

In the event the fire alarm is sounded, students and staff will move to the nearest door and leave the building. Students and staff will meet on the patio in back of the garage. Teachers will bring a class list with them in order to take roll upon arriving at the meeting place. Assistants will check all restrooms before leaving the building and an assistant will help with each preschool class. Students and staff will evacuate the building EVERY time the fire alarm is sounded. Practices will be every three months. If there is a fire in our building, we will be at the garage in the parking lot.

Snacks and Lunches

Each child should bring food for lunch that is ready to eat in a sack or lunch box with the child's name on the outside. We ask that you NOT send carbonated drinks, gum or glass containers to school. Each child will also bring a labeled snack to enjoy daily. Teachers may occasionally make suggestions for snacks which would enhance their day's activities. The Missouri Dept. of Health restricts us from serving any homemade treats, and all snacks must arrive at Stepping Stones in their original, unopened containers. Allergy lists will be provided to teachers on what food allergies we have here at Stepping Stones.

We are a Peanut Free School

We cannot serve snacks that have been opened. We need to see all ingredients on any snack brought to school. Please check with your teacher to see if she also has an allergy to certain foods.

Also: Please have your child finish their breakfast and not bring it into the classroom at the beginning of the day.

Clothing & Grooming

Spills are to be expected. Children are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing that can be easily managed for bathroom needs. Jeans, slacks or shorts are perfectly acceptable for girls and boys. Keep extra clothing in backpack—accidents happen. The children play outdoors every day (weather permitting) and warm outer clothing is a must. Please label all their outerwear, especially hats, boots, mittens, and gloves. Please have your child wear shoes comfortable for gross motor play.

Photos and Social Media

Because of safety issues please only share your own child's picture (group pictures should not be used). Teachers may not post any photos of the children on social media.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences for Pre-K children will be scheduled toward the end of the school year. We are always happy to discuss your child or our program with you at any time you wish to make an appointment.

Because we are always concerned about your child's self-image, any discussions occurring in his/her presence should be of a positive nature. Progress reports will be sent home at the end of the school year for all other classes.

Lee's Summit School District Schedule

We follow the Lee's Summit School District's calendar between Labor Day and Memorial Day. When the Lee's Summit schools close for holidays, teachers' meetings or bad weather, we will also close. We are also closed for religious holidays and if our building is used as a voting site. Should any other circumstances cause Lee's Summit schools to close, an all-school REMIND will be sent out. "Snow Days" and other days cancelled due to emergency situations are not made up at Stepping Stones and no financial reimbursements are allowed. You will receive a copy of this year's schedule.

Inclement Weather

We follow the LSR7 school district for snow closings. If LSR7 is out, Stepping Stones is also out.

Sick Policy

Please call if your child is sick. Sick children should not be brought to school. Students will be excluded from school if one or more of the following exists: Diarrhea, fever over 100 degrees, undiagnosed rash, or unvaccinated children in time of disease breakouts. It is very important that we prevent the spread of communicable disease. Students should be fever free without the use of fever reducing medicine for 24 hours before returning to school. Students should be free of continuous cough. Students should remain home for 24 hours after last vomiting or diarrhea. Students should remain home for 24 hours after taking the first dose of antibiotic for an infection. **Please report communicable illness.**

Immunizations

All children requesting admittance to Stepping Stones will be required to present proof of current immunizations. Proof of up-to-date immunizations, an exemption or an in-progress form (signed by physician) must be on file in our office before the child will be allowed to attend school. When an outbreak of a disease occurs for which a student is classified exempt from immunization, that student will be excused from school either for the duration of incubation for that disease or until immunization is given. The
Missouri Department of Health require that each child enrolled at Stepping Stones have a Physical Assessment signed by a physician before attending.

Medication Policy

Stepping Stones staff will **not** administer medication such as antibiotics, cough syrups, or other over-the-counter or prescription medicines the child is taking due to an illness. Emergency and maintenance medication may be administered at the Director's discretion. Any medication brought into the building must be checked into the Stepping Stones office by the Director. All emergency medications must be accompanied by a physician-signed action plan and Medication Authorization form.

Injury Procedures

Teachers will follow emergency procedures in case of injury to a child. Parents will be notified immediately of any illness or injury occurring to the child's head. Staff members are CPR certified. It is each parent's responsibility to keep a current emergency name and number on file in the office. In the case of an emergency, parents will be immediately notified. Emergency personnel may be contacted at the Director's discretion.

Christian Example

All our staff show love, respect and concern for the children as we try to be examples of Jesus' Teaching. Holidays provide an opportunity for children to learn the spiritual meaning in celebrating Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. We worship in the sanctuary at the children's level of understanding. We will also have a Bible Story learning time during the month called Worship & Wonder. The children will learn short prayers to be said before snack time. Prayers will also be included in our holiday worship services and whenever a need arises.

Holidays and other Celebrations

Our celebrations are included as a special part of our daily routine. Please **keep Halloween costumes appropriate for a 2-year-old .** Since we keep our parties low key, we do not invite parents join us. For parties, teachers may send out a list of requested items from families. **Please remember all shared snack elements must be prepared in a certified kitchen and sealed. They must also be free of peanuts.**