



Within a nurturing Christian community, Good Shepherd Episcopal School builds in each child the foundation for good character and a lifelong love of learning.

We are privileged to be accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools and licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. In accordance with the standards of both organizations, this handbook is written to acquaint families with our policies and practices and to communicate our beliefs about our school.

I. PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Good Shepherd Episcopal School provides a warm, affirming, Christian environment for children in their early years of development. It is a school where parents and visitors are always welcome. We believe that a quality environment for children is one which invites consistent access and involvement for parents. For over sixty years, Good Shepherd Episcopal School has served hundreds of families as a school where the child's individual needs are always the primary concern.

- ★ Good Shepherd Episcopal School believes that a young child learns best with a daily balance of indoor and outdoor play. Also, we contend that all forms of play are critical to the proper social and emotional development that must precede academic development.
- ★ Good Shepherd Episcopal School believes that each child learns best in an environment that honors the child's developmental age, that each child has the right to grow at his or her own rate, and that a child's developmental age may not equal his or her chronological age. Academics are best introduced to the child after the child demonstrates the developmental readiness to focus on early academic tasks.
- ★ Good Shepherd Episcopal School believes that careful observation of the child and close communication with the parents, from the first day of entry, allows for the early identification of learning issues that might interfere with the child's success.
- ★ Good Shepherd Episcopal School's goal is to provide each child with the opportunity to be a socially and emotionally adjusted individual who is prepared for academic development and a lifelong love of learning.

II. RELIGIOUS GOALS AND CHAPEL SERVICE

Religious Goals

When children are baptized in the Episcopal Church, we pray that God will "give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works" (Book of Common Prayer). The religious goals and objectives for each child at Good Shepherd Episcopal School include (a) the careful exposure to appropriate stories from the Old and New Testaments and to the seasons of the church calendar,

(b) the experience of God's presence in the peaceful setting of the church during worship, and (c) the experience of God's love through daily interaction with caring and empathetic teachers in a secure and loving environment.

Chapel Service

- ★ The school schedules chapel services each Wednesday by semester. Parents are always welcome at chapel services, which last approximately twenty minutes.
- ★ Each chapel service is based appropriately on the Episcopal liturgy and is adapted for children. The children kneel, sit and stand in response to different parts of the service. Members of every faith are welcome to join in our celebration of a loving God.
- ★ Scheduled services of Holy Eucharist are celebrated during the school year.
- ★ Advent services are held in the Parish Hall each school day in December.

III. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Admissions

Applicants to Good Shepherd Episcopal School ("GSES" or the "School") will be admitted to the school subject to the achievement of a careful balance of gender and age within each class. In addition, a primary goal of the admission process at Good Shepherd Episcopal School is to strengthen the overall sense of family and community within GSES itself and between GSES and the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd (the "Church"). With this goal in mind, the following priorities have been established for admission at GSES:

1. Active GSES students (i.e. students who are already admitted and in attendance during a regular school year) will have first priority.
2. Siblings of active GSES students whose parent(s) are confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church (as defined below) will be given second priority.
3. Siblings of active GSES students whose parent(s) are not confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church will be given third priority.
4. Siblings of former GSES students will have fourth priority.
5. Children of parent(s) who are confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church, but who have not yet had children attend GSES, will be given the next priority.
6. Children of alumnae of GSES and grandchildren of confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church will be given the next priority.
7. Children of parents who are confirmed communicants in good standing with an Episcopal parish other than the Church will be given the next priority.
8. Finally, consideration will be given to other applicants from the community at large.

In the case of applicants having equal priorities, the chronological order in which the applications have been received will be taken into consideration, as well other factors as determined by the Admissions Committee. For kindergarten admission, academic and developmental readiness will also be considered. Notwithstanding the priorities above, the Head of School in his or her sole discretion may make a limited number of special admission decisions based on the best interests of the School and mission of the Church, which include opportunities for financial outreach.

The priorities stated above apply only to admission to the School and do not apply to particular classroom or request teacher placements. The Head of School has sole authority with respect to these placements. Admission decisions are made by the Admissions Committee, which will be made up of GSES staff and faculty and chaired by the Head of School. All admissions decisions will be made in the late winter/ early spring preceding the next academic year.

According to the Church, a "confirmed communicant in good standing of the Church" is a communicant who has been confirmed by a Bishop of the Episcopal Church or the Bishop of a church in Communion with the Episcopal Church or has been received into the Episcopal Church by a Bishop of the Episcopal Church. A "communicant in good standing of the Church" is a communicant who for the

previous year has been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and has been faithful in working, praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God. The church has sole authority as to the determination of which applicants are considered to be confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church. The church will confirm the status of all applicants who claim such status and appropriately notify the School. Any applicants with questions concerning their status should contact and confirm with the Church prior to submitting an application.

Good Shepherd Episcopal School admits applicants without discrimination in favor of, or against, any child on the basis of race, national origin, religion (except to the extent the school favors confirmed communicants in good standing with the Church as described above) or challenging conditions, except when the school cannot appropriately or adequately meet a child's personal needs.

B. Children with Special Needs

If a child has been diagnosed with or is being treated for sensory, attention and/or motor needs that might interfere with adjustment in the classroom, we ask parents to furnish the child's teacher with records and reports containing a diagnosis or a plan of treatment. These reports are always kept confidential. This commitment begins at the time of contracting and continues until the child no longer attends the school. This information enables the teacher and parents to better serve the child. Good Shepherd School maintains that teamwork is essential to the child's current well-being and to his/her future success in the school setting.

C. Children with Safety Needs

- ★ If your child has a history of falling easily or requires special hand-holding and/or carrying for safety reasons, please provide the school office with a written statement from the child's pediatrician to this effect in advance of the beginning of the school year.
- ★ When circumstances, such as those listed above, require additional one-on-one attention from a teacher, the school reserves the right to advise the parents that the child can benefit from experiencing the normal challenges of growing up in a group. If the child requires an additional school employee to assure his/her safety, an extra expense may be implemented after discussion with the Head of School.

D. Developmental Observation

At each age-level of placement, the School may use an exercise with the children to determine developmental age and academic readiness. The current tool that is used to point to the learning readiness and behavioral levels of students is the Gesell Observation. The Gesell Observation is not a test but rather a series of seven tasks which help to indicate a child's developmental age and readiness.

E. Class Placement

The Lead Teachers and the Head of School make classroom and teacher assignments for the approaching school year after careful observation and thought. The goal is to provide a balanced environment for the varying behavioral or developmental levels that exist within one age group of children, and for each child to have playmates in the class who share similar play ideas and can influence each other's developmental growth. Behavioral age has a greater effect on early friendships than does a child's chronological, or birth age. Special requests regarding placement must be in writing to the Head of School and will be considered if the above goal can be achieved.

F. Kindergarten Placement

Kindergarten is not preschool, rather an area of structured learning and early academic discipline. The Kindergarten program is committed to early phonics and reading. Kindergarten readiness requires good work habits, listening, focus and problem solution and will be addressed in parent-teacher conferences in the Fours and in Pre-Kindergarten. The Head of School works closely with

teachers to ascertain the readiness of each child, while using classroom observations and the occasional developmental screening described in Paragraph D above. A child who is not ready for Kindergarten will reveal young disruptive and overflow behaviors, tantrums at home, avoidance, regressive behavior, interrupted toilet habits, separation issues, anxiety or underachievement. Good Shepherd Episcopal School is committed to meeting a Kindergartener's need for outdoor and indoor play, and academics are the ultimate central focus of the classroom.

G. Inappropriate Class Placement

If an inappropriate class placement occurs, the Head of School and the parents will consider the child's needs and look seriously at another placement possibility within the school.

H. Absences and Tardiness

- ★ Daily attendance is taken in each class and records are kept in the school office. Such records will become a part of the child's permanent file. For all programs, arrival time begins at 8:40 a.m. The official school day starts promptly at 9:00 a.m. A child is considered tardy after 9:00 a.m.
- ★ Daily attendance and a timely arrival at school each day are critical to a child's inclusion and entrance into the school routine, readiness to learn, and comfortable relationships with classmates and teachers. Please honor this important policy.
- ★ If a child has been absent for two days, parents should call the school office to notify the school of the reason for the child's continued absence.
- ★ Whenever possible, the parents should notify the teacher in advance if their child is scheduled for medical appointments, diagnostic or developmental testing, therapy sessions, or other scheduled events that result in a late arrival.
- ★ If a family must arrive late on a day when chapel is being held and chapel is already in progress, parents are asked to join the chapel service with their child(ren) in a pew closely behind the class pews. Please do not disrupt the participation of your child's class during the service.

I. Communication

Two formal conferences between the parents and the child's Lead Teacher will be scheduled during the school year. Additional conferences with the teacher or the Head of School are always possible and may be arranged by appointment. Parents are urged to be open and honest when discussing their child. A second staff member may be present to take notes during a conference.

Lead Teacher as Spokesperson

Any concerns or questions regarding a child's adjustment, behavior or progress should be addressed solely and immediately to the Lead Teacher in the child's classroom. Although the Assistant Teacher plays an important role in the classroom and is in continual communication with the lead teacher, the school designates the Lead Teacher as spokesperson for each classroom.

On-Going Communication

The Lead Teacher will regularly inform parents throughout the year of any observed changes in behavioral, emotional or learning patterns that a child exhibits. Daily issues and incidents (other than injuries, biting) will not be reported unless they are of significant concern to the teacher. We encourage the scheduling of conferences at any time as arrival and dismissal times permit only brief friendly exchanges between parent and teacher and are insufficient to adequately discuss any serious issues.

Private School Applications

Lead Teachers dedicate careful and timely consideration to completing assessment and recommendation forms (such as checklists, questionnaires, etc.) in connection with the application of a student to attend other private schools. The Lead Teacher will consult with other teachers and with the Head of School, as appropriate.

Parental Authorization to Obtain Former School Records

For the child's benefit in a new school setting, parents are encouraged to give written authorization to release all of the child's social/emotional records from their child's prior school(s) to Good Shepherd Episcopal School.

Grievance Process

When a parent has a concern about any aspect of their child's school experiences, open and honest communication with the Lead Teacher is the key to resolving all issues. Our teachers and the Head of School are in constant communication in order to respond to all needs of the students and families. If an issue is not able to be resolved with the Lead Teacher, the Head of School will be consulted.

Grievance Against Head of School or School Policy

If a parent has a grievance against the Head of School or against a school policy, please discuss the concern directly with the Head of School. If the matter remains unresolved after the Head has been informed, the parent may submit the grievance in writing to the President of the Board of Trustees and request a hearing with the Board President.

Confidentiality in All School Matters

Good Shepherd Episcopal School staff members are instructed to maintain confidentiality in all matters pertaining to students, their families and/or other staff members. Parents are urged to honor this policy about matters relating to other children, their families, and/or any staff members during daily exchanges and/or any formal Parent-Teacher conference.

DFPS Procedures

For parents who would like to review Minimum Standards rules and our most recent licensing inspection reports, a copy of the Minimum Standards is kept in the school office and in each classroom, and the school's current licensing inspection reports are posted in the entryway.

Contacting DFPS:

Phone Number: 834-3195

Street: 14000 Summit Drive, Suite 100 (MC 016-5B), Austin, TX 78728

Mail: POB 15995, Austin, TX 78761

PRS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

www.dfps.state.tx.us

J. Visitors

- ★ Parents are always welcome at the school. Each classroom is equipped with observation windows. The windows are an open invitation, and ideal way, to drop in at any time and observe your child in the classroom setting. This is always a valuable experience, and one of our greatest gifts.

- ★ We ask that visitors check in with the school office before observing in a classroom. Classroom observations may last ten (10) minutes per classroom and parents are urged not to interact with children or ask questions of the teachers.

K. Immunizations, Medical Form, Vision/Hearing Screening and Emergency Information

Immunizations and Medical Form

Each student must have a current, signed statement of good health and an updated record of immunizations validated by a physician or qualified health personnel on file in the office before the first day of school. This is a requirement of the Department of Family and Protective Services. In the case of severe or life-threatening allergies, a signed written statement to that effect is required from a medical doctor. Per the Austin / Travis County Health and Human Services Department, tuberculin (TB) testing is not required for children 2-7 years of age.

Vision and Hearing Screening

In compliance with state law, the school requires annual vision and hearing screenings for all children who are in the Threes and turning four during the current school year, Fours, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. The screening must be completed within ninety (90) days after their birthday. Parents may choose to have the screening done at the school for a fee, or may obtain the screening elsewhere from a qualified provider, and provide the school with the written results. The school schedules vision and hearing screenings annually in late January.

Emergency Information

A completed Emergency Release and Information Card is on file in the office for each child beginning on the first day of school. The card must be updated regularly through the year with any changes to phone numbers, addresses, etc.

L. Dismissal

Release of Children

- ★ Staff members will never release a child to anyone other than a parent or a person directly authorized by a parent, unless a signed note to the teacher or a call to the school office is received.
- ★ Instructions relayed through any other person will not be honored.

Safety

Once a child has been delivered to the parents or other person authorized to pick up the child, the parent or authorized person has the responsibility to supervise that child. Each child is required to use an age-approved child restraint seat, and is never to sit in the front passenger seat of a vehicle. If the vehicle is a pick-up truck, the child must be properly secured in the front seat.

Late Pick-Up

- ★ If a child has not been picked up within ten (10) minutes of any class dismissal time (including Afternoon Enrichment Activities), a teacher will keep the child and attempt to contact the parent.
- ★ If a parent cannot be reached, the teacher will inform the after school care staff, who will continue to attempt to contact the parent. Parents must inform school personnel in a timely manner if there will be late pick-up. Parents will be responsible for applicable after school care charges.

M. Parties

- ★ Each class has a room parent who oversees the volunteers who help with parties in the classroom. The room parent serves to understand and support the Lead Teacher's preferences and ideas about parties. Each class will have parties for Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day. Easter parties and end-of-the year parties are held at the discretion of the Lead Teacher. Lead Teachers of each teaching team will decide together on the nature of the parties so that their classes have comparable experiences.
- ★ The school strongly discourages providing elaborate parties or expensive party favors. Parties should be held on the school grounds. Swim parties (other than playground water parties using wading pools) are not allowed during school hours.
- ★ Parents are encouraged to celebrate their child's birthday with a cookie, cupcake or snack for each member of the child's class. Parents should plan the birthday observance in advance with the child's Lead Teacher. The school does not permit including gifts or party favors in a school day birthday celebration. If a child has a birthday party outside of school, parents are urged to use wisdom and sensitivity if all of the classmates are not invited.

N. Animals

Animals present in a classroom are fish and/or hermit crabs. If a child will be bringing his/her pet for "Show and Share", the Lead Teacher will notify the parents of the date and time to visit. In addition, all parents in the class will be notified of the pet visit. The Lead Teacher will also insure that the pet's vaccinations are up to date prior to the scheduled visit.

Animals must be leashed if they are brought on campus during drop-off and pick-up. This includes animals riding in the car during those times. Please restrain properly to protect the staff member reaching into the car for assistance with carseats.

O. Photography and Video-Taping of Children

In order to protect the privacy of our students, no one may videotape or film any child in the school without prior written permission by the Head of School. An exception is made for videotaping during the opening day service held in the church, the Christmas service, and the closing day service. Photographing and videoing of individual or small groups of children is permitted on the playground and in the classrooms only with prior permission of the Lead Teacher. Flash photography is never permitted in the church.

P. Nutrition

Daily Snacks and Food Allergies

- ★ A light snack is provided to the children each day that includes two food groups. Snacks are also provided in after school care in the middle of the afternoon.
- ★ The daily snack menu is posted on the bulletin board just inside the main entrance to the school. A copy is also on file in the school office.
- ★ Please provide the Lead Teacher a list of any food allergies your child may have prior to the beginning of the school year. A master list of food allergies is posted in the school office, the school kitchen and in each classroom.
- ★ If a child is known to have a life-threatening allergy that requires immediate treatment, please provide the school office and the teachers with adequate written instructions for the administration of medication or other treatment.

Lunches

- ★ All children are offered a lunch program provided by Lee's Meat Market.
- ★ Carbonated soft drinks are not permitted.
- ★ If a child forgets to bring a lunch to school, the parent will be contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, the school will provide the child with something to eat. The school is not, however, regularly equipped to provide lunch for a child.

Fruity Friday (or Fruity Thursday)

- ★ Each Lead Teacher will post a sign-up list of opportunities for parents to provide their child's class with a healthy fruit snack on Friday. Parents are encouraged to bring washed and prepared fruit and crackers. In classes that meet on T/TH, parents will bring a fruit snack on Thursday. The snacks may be brought at the beginning of the school day or at snack time.

Q. Field Trips

- ★ Off-campus school sponsored activities are best undertaken when the class, as a whole, is ready for such an outing. Younger classes are generally not ready until the second half of the school year.
- ★ All vehicles used to transport children on a field trip must have current inspections and be in safe, working condition. Two adults must ride in each car and children are not permitted to sit in the front seat. Each person must have a safety belt and each vehicle must contain a fire extinguisher (provided by the school). Each child will wear an identification tag bearing the school's name, address and telephone number. Teachers are responsible for carrying the children's emergency information cards and a first aid kit on the field trip.
- ★ Parents are needed to accompany these important outings that mean so much to the children. Field Trips are cancelled if there is inadequate parental support.

R. Illness

When a Child Should Stay at Home

- ★ A child who is feverish and uncomfortable, or who has a sore throat, inflamed eyes, or persistent nasal discharge, should not be at school.
- ★ Parents should keep their child at home unless he/she is able to participate in all activities, including the playground.
- ★ A child who has had fever, active diarrhea or vomiting within the past twenty-four (24) hours is not permitted at school.
- ★ A child who has untreated head lice or pink eye is not permitted at school.

Notice of Communicable Disease

If your child has exposed his/her classmates to a communicable disease, immediately alert the Lead Teacher and the school office so that other families may be advised of any exposure. The name of the infected child will be kept confidential.

Injury or Illness of a Child

If a child is injured or becomes ill at school, a staff member will provide appropriate first aid. Staff members are not permitted to remove splinters or to give medication except as provided below.

Illness or Injury that is Non-Life Threatening

If the injury or illness is (a) non life-threatening, (b) does not require immediate medical attention or (c) is not debilitating or contagious, but the child would benefit by leaving school, the parents will be contacted to come for the child at the parents' discretion.

Illness or Injury Requiring Medical Attention

If the illness or injury is non life-threatening but requires immediate medical attention, the parents will be called to pick up the child so that the parent may seek medical attention for the child. If the parent cannot be reached or is reached but does not come for the child within a reasonable amount of time, staff members may follow the procedure outlined below for a life-threatening injury or illness.

Illness or Injury that is Life Threatening

If the injury or illness is life-threatening, the following steps will be taken:

- ★ One staff member will provide appropriate first aid measures or perform CPR, and will designate another adult to call EMS (dial 911). Parents will be responsible for EMS fees.
- ★ A staff member will notify a parent.
- ★ If a parent cannot be contacted, a staff member will attempt to notify the child's physician and indicate to the physician's office that the school has a signed medical release for treatment. If the physician cannot be reached, the child will be taken to Dell Children's Hospital unless otherwise indicated on the emergency card.
- ★ A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital if a parent is not present, bringing the child's health form and medical release to the hospital.
- ★ If there is a life threatening allergic reaction, parental instructions (EpiPen, antihistamine) will be administered with discretion and/or call 911.

S. Medication

- ★ Medication is administered in the school office to children only when written instructions have been given to the school office by the parent.
- ★ Except for emergency allergy medication, all medication will be kept in the office in its original container and will be administered by staff.
- ★ If a child is on regular medication for attentional (ADD, ADHD) reasons, parents are required to advise the child's Lead Teacher.
- ★ Attentional medications can be administered in the school office but teachers will never administer behavioral medication at any time.

T. Clothing and Shoes

- ★ Children should dress appropriately for active play, messy art, water and sand experiences, and for the weather.
- ★ Children who are prone to bathroom accidents should keep a complete change of season appropriate clothing at school at all times.
- ★ Children are encouraged not to wear boots, open-toed shoes or flip flops to school. Boots inhibit movement and climbing, and open-toed shoes and slides are discouraged because they restrict the child's ability to play actively on the playground and increase the risk of tripping and injury.

U. Discipline

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services provide us with a Discipline and Guidance Policy. This policy is reviewed and signed by all staff and parents and kept on file in the school office.

General

- ★ When the behavior of a child is detrimental to the rights of others, the well-being of the group, or the safety of him/herself, the child's Lead Teacher will discuss the problem with the parents and advise the Head of School.
- ★ If the problem continues, the Lead Teacher will again speak to the parents and advise the Head of School of the discussion.
- ★ If the problem persists after two visits, the parents will meet with the Lead Teacher and the Head of School. The Head of School may recommend that an outside consultant be involved.
- ★ If the problem persists after the third visit, and it is having an impact on the child's progress, the Head of School will meet with the parents to address the question of the child's continued attendance at the school.
- ★ First and foremost, the focus will remain on the school's and the parents' commitment to help the child.

Biting

- ★ All incidents of biting are reported to the parents of the biter and to the parents of the bitten child. The identity of both children is confidential.
- ★ If the bite breaks the skin, we recommend taking the child to the pediatrician.
- ★ If the biting persists, discussion with the Head of School will take place and a consultation with an outside specialist (often a speech, language or occupational therapist) may be required to help determine the reason for the child's behavior, and his/her continued attendance at GSES.

Name-Calling and Labeling

Students are taught to treat each other with respect and tolerance. Name-calling or labeling are never permitted. Parents are encouraged to expect their children to observe this rule by enforcing it at home, as well.

Rewards

Good Shepherd Episcopal School does not support the use of reward (star charts, toys, treats) or bribery methods that are intended to modify a child's behavior in the home or in the school. We believe this method postpones important learning skills and discourages the child from internalizing important values.

School-Home Discipline/Reward Issues

- ★ A Lead Teacher's report to a parent of an incident or concern is intended to facilitate communication between the teacher and the parent. This is always in the child's best interest. The objective is that the parent and teacher will deal consistently with the matter, whether it occurs at school or at home.
- ★ A report of an incident or concern will never be given in the presence of the child.

Letters of Apology from Children

Good Shepherd Episcopal School discourages parents from asking their children to write letters of apology to teachers, the Head of School, or other students. As stated in the preceding paragraph, when a Lead Teacher reports an incident that happened at school, the school does not intend to trigger a discipline response from the home. Although genuine remorse for misbehavior is an important step in the moral development of students, Good Shepherd's students are pre-literate. We have found that a letter of apology often reflects the parents' expression, and not that of the children.

Bringing Toys from Home

- ★ Children are asked not to bring toys from home, unless invited by his/her teacher for "show and share."
- ★ Because bringing a toy from home often promotes conflict over possession and invites disappointment if the toy is broken or lost, we ask parents to resolve this issue with their child before arriving at school.
- ★ Please keep in mind that toy weapons of any kind are not allowed at school under any circumstances.

V. Toilet Training and Toilet Habits

Twos

- ★ Toilet training is an essential part of the educational curriculum in the Twos program that involves parents and teachers working together to accomplish toilet training when the child is ready.
- ★ If a child is making satisfactory progress at home with toilet training but not at school, the parents and teacher will work together to follow a unified approach to enable school toileting issues.

Threes

- ★ A child in a 5-day Threes class is expected to be independent in taking care of his/her toilet needs.
- ★ We understand that each child develops at his/her own rate, and children attending school part-time may require more time for toilet training. The school and parents will work together to facilitate the child's progress as classrooms are not equipped for diaper changes or toilet training.
- ★ If a child is prone to the occasional accident, please provide a clean change of season appropriate clothes for the child at all times.

Fours and Older

- ★ A child in the Fours, Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten is expected to be completely independent in taking care of his/her toilet needs at school, regardless of whether or not a parent assists him/her at home.
- ★ If a child is still prone to occasional toilet accidents, the parent must provide a seasonal clean change of clothes for the child at all times.
- ★ If a child in the Fours or older has regular toilet accidents, a medical specialist may be recommended.

W. Safety and Welfare

- ★ The current teacher-child ratio of no more than 1:9 permits a high degree of supervision and awareness of each child in the school's care.

- ★ All efforts are made to provide a safe and healthy environment for the children at the school, although even with consistent supervision, accidents and spontaneous incidents (biting, sand in the eyes, falls, etc) can and do happen.
- ★ While we all must be ever-vigilant about each child's welfare, we must bear in mind each child's need to grow normally as he/she experiences varying conflicts and confrontations in the school setting.

Water Activities

The only water activities provided at Good Shepherd School are splashing or wading pools, sprinkler play and water table play. Parents are required to give, or deny, their consent for their child to participate in one or all of the water activities listed above.

X. School Closing in Inclement Weather

The school is closed on any day that AISD schools are closed because of ice, snow, or other severe weather. On a day where AISD schools have a delayed opening due to inclement weather, Good Shepherd Episcopal School will remain closed for the entire day.

Y. Child Neglect and Abuse

Texas law requires school staff to report immediately any suspected neglect, sexual, physical or emotional abuse. A confidential report will be made directly to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services without hesitation within twenty-four (24) hours. No notice will be given to the family of the child before the call is made to DFPS.

IV. ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIPS

Good Shepherd Episcopal School is accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES). The Head of School and several teachers are current members of the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children).

V. A PARISH SCHOOL

What is a parish school?

Good Shepherd Episcopal School is a parish day school sponsored by The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd and under the jurisdiction of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. The school is incorporated under the Texas Non-Profit Incorporation Act and has as its sole member the Church of the Good Shepherd. Under the school's articles of incorporation and bylaws, the parish Rector serves on the school's Board of Trustees, as does a member of the parish vestry appointed by the Rector. All other trustees are elected to the board by the parish vestry. At all times at least sixty percent (60%) of the approved trustees must be communicants in good standing of the parish.

How do the school and the parish interact?

The school uses the church building for chapel services and special school services, which are led by the clergy of the parish. The parish hall is used on a weekly basis for music classes and use of the church kitchen for snack preparation. The school and parish share the use of the parish education building, with the school having priority of use during regular school hours and during special events placed on the church calendar. When the church calendar permits, the school uses Baxter Hall on an as-needed basis. The parish uses the school building on Sunday and other occasions for Christian education classes and parish events. The school and church share the use of two playgrounds and the outdoor bathroom.

What is the financial arrangement between the school and the church?

- ★ The school pays rent to the church for the use of church facilities and utilities in the church buildings.
- ★ The school pays for maintenance and repair of the education building, with the exception of maintenance on the heating and cooling system.
- ★ The school employs a custodian to care for the school grounds and play areas.
- ★ Cleaning expenses for the education building are the responsibility of the school.
- ★ All other maintenance and cleaning expenses for the church buildings are the responsibility of the church.
- ★ Both of the playgrounds are maintained at the school's expense, as is the outdoor bathroom on the playground.
- ★ The school pays for water used on the upper playground and in the outdoor bathroom.
- ★ The school maintains the flowerbeds, the birdbath, and stepping stones on the patio near the lower playground and the fenced outdoor classroom on Exposition Boulevard.
- ★ The school and the church keep entirely separate financial records and, since 2001, the school has been audited separately.
- ★ The salary and benefits paid to school employees are the sole responsibility of the school.
- ★ The church makes no cash contributions to the school.

VI. PROGRAMS AND FEES

When in session, the school operates Monday through Friday according to the school calendar.

REGULAR PROGRAMS

TWOS	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	MWF	2 CLASSES	\$470.00 per month (Aug--May)
	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	T/TH	2 CLASSES	\$380.00 per month (Aug--May)
THREES	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	MWF	1 CLASS	\$480.00 per month (Aug--May)
	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	T/TH	1 CLASS	\$390.00 per month (Aug--May)
	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	M-F	2 CLASSES	\$650.00 per month (Aug--May)
FOURS	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	M-F	3 CLASSES	\$660.00 per month (Aug--May)
PRE-KINDERGARTEN	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	M-F	1 CLASS	\$715.00 per month (Aug--May)
KINDERGARTEN	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	M-F	1 CLASS	\$730.00 per month (Aug--May)

***Enrichment programs are held each afternoon according to a semester schedule. Spanish, Cooking, Discovery Club, Drama, Art, P.E., Piano and Lunch Bunch are examples of offerings.**

Lunch Bunch

- ★ Children may join the program from their regular classes or after an Afternoon Enrichment Class.
- ★ The unstructured curriculum includes free play and art activities. A rest period and a light snack are included during the late afternoon.

- ★ Permanent (includes children enrolled in After School Enrichments). \$10.00 per hour (billed to the closest half hour)
- ★ Reservation (made 24 hours in advance and space available) \$15.00 per hour (billed to the closest half hour)

Summer Playgroup

- ★ Ages 3-7, Monday-Friday for 3 weeks in June
- ★ Recent graduates and alums are encouraged to attend.
- ★ Two year olds with birthdays in June, July and August are invited to attend if they have completed the Twos program at GSES.
- ★ The morning begins with a brief time in the classroom before moving outdoors for free play, arts and crafts, summertime snacks and special entertainment activities such as bubble machines and storyteller.
- ★ Children bring their lunches and eat in the classrooms.
- ★ Enrollment will begin in the spring prior to playgroup.

VII. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members of the Board of Trustees are elected for three year terms and approved by the vestry of The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, with the exception of the rector (the ex. officio chairman of the board) and a member of the vestry appointed by the rector as an ex officio trustee. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of current board members are found in the school directory.

VIII. FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- ★ To reserve your child's place in the class, you must complete and return the Registration and Tuition Contract with a non-refundable tuition deposit on or before the designated due date. This tuition deposit is equal to one month's tuition, applicable supply fees, and will be applied to tuition for the first month of the school year (August).
- ★ All students enrolled in Good Shepherd Episcopal School for the first time are required to pay a one-time-per-student nonrefundable entry fee of \$350 by the date designated on the Registration and Tuition Contract.
- ★ Good Shepherd Episcopal School depends on the contractual tuition obligations of its families when setting the operating budget each year. If a family withdraws a child from the school after signing the contract, the contractual obligation to pay the full ten months of tuition continues. Any release from this obligation is at the discretion of the Finance Committee. The deposit paid with the contract and any entry fee will not be refunded for any reason.
- ★ Tuition and other billed fees (which may include After School Activities, or other fees associated with the school program) will be included on a statement of account which will be sent during the first week of every month. Payment is due no later than the 15th of each month.
- ★ Checks should be made payable to Good Shepherd Episcopal School and mailed to:

Good Shepherd Episcopal School
P.O. Box 5250
Austin, TX 78763

- ★ You may also bring your check into the school office.
- ★ There is a \$25.00 charge on any checks returned for insufficient funds.
- ★ Accounts that are more than two months in arrears will be referred to the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees for appropriate action. A student's account must be current in order for the student to begin class in the fall.
- ★ The school reserves the right to take a family's payment history with the school into account when it considers, in its discretion, whether to offer re-enrollment to a student.

- ★ All charges must be cleared annually by June 15th for fiscal year closure and auditing purposes.

Tuition Assistance

Good Shepherd Episcopal School is committed to offering an education to all children regardless of financial limitations. The Good Shepherd Board of Trustees oversees a tuition assistance program that is available to families who have need for support. This program is currently a part of the annual budget. Application forms for tuition assistance are available in the school office. A family may apply for tuition assistance at any time, but application is encouraged at contract time each year. The major allocation of tuition assistance funds is awarded in June for the approaching school year.

Credit Card Payments

The school accepts MasterCard, Visa, and Discover cards for payment of any account. A transaction fee of 5% will be charged to the account each time a credit card is used.

Vision and Hearing Screening

The cost for having a child's Vision & Hearing Screening performed at the school is \$40.00. The cost for a single screening (Vision or Hearing) is \$20.00.

Payment to Replace Lost Library Book

Older students are permitted each week to check out a library book to enjoy at home. No fine is incurred for the late return of a library book, but the child is prevented from checking out a new book until the previous book has been returned. If a book is lost, a replacement cost will be charged to the family. Once replaced, the child may check out another book from the library.

IX. SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Good Shepherd Episcopal School *Good Times* is written and produced monthly as a communication and information tool. It features school events and announcements, alumni information, and articles on matters relating to the daily life, curriculum, and activities of Good Shepherd and its students. The newsletter is available for viewing on our website at www.goodshepherdschoolaustin.com

X. FUND-RAISING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Good Shepherd Episcopal School relies on Our Night at Good Shepherd fundraiser and the Annual Fund to meet its annual budget. The support of these fundraisers by the school and church community is deeply appreciated and enables the school to enrich the curriculum of the students, to make building improvements, to provide competitive salaries and benefits to our faculty, and to provide tuition assistance to our families. All fundraising ideas and opportunities must be approved by the Institutional Advancement Committee of the Board before literature or leaflet information can be distributed.

A Night at Good Shepherd

The fund-raising aspect of this fall event is extremely important. Parents gather for wonderful food and beverages, an exciting live auction, and a silent auction of items that includes services, get-away trips donated by the community, and much more!

Annual Fund

Our principal fund-raising effort is the Annual Fund Drive. Present and past families as well as supporters from the church community are contacted and asked to contribute. Donors of gifts of \$500.00 or more are honored with commemorative engraved tiles in the Gratitude Garden on the patio and lower playground.

XI. PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parent Volunteer Coordinators

The Head of School, with input from the Development Director, names two parents to serve as Parent Volunteer Coordinators, who will serve as the lead coordinators of parent involvement. They work on behalf of the Development office to oversee volunteer sign-up, maintain continuity of the event notebooks, coordinate kick-off and wrap-up meetings, and support the Development Director for each event and activity.

Classroom

The school encourages parent involvement in the classroom. The Lead Teacher in each classroom will ask one parent to serve as room parent to oversee parties and help to coordinate fundraising projects that involve the class. Other opportunities for parent involvement include Fruity Friday (or Fruity Thursday in the T/TH program), field trips, special presentations (such as cooking or science demonstrations), reading to students, resources for information or materials and special class-presented programs). Parent involvement in these class activities strengthens the school program. Sign-up lists will be available to parents during the Back to School Open House.

Family Events

Good Shepherd Episcopal School schedules and sponsors events throughout the year to encourage community among our families and the sharing of time with each other. A Parent Volunteer sign-up form is sent home in the late spring to announce the events for the following school year, and determine each family's interest level to serve in a volunteer position for the events.

Welcome Wagon
Literacy for Life
Mom's Night Out
Dad's Barbecue
A Night at Good Shepherd
Christmas Program and Reception
Grandparents and Special Friends Day
Staff Appreciation Week
Family Day
Kindergarten Graduation and Luncheon