Good Shepherd
Children's Center Old Bridge, NJ

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Good Shepherd Children's Center
Parent Handbook

Established in 1968
2026-2027

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Good Shepherd Children's Center (GSCC)

WELCOME:

Welcome to Good Shepherd Children's Center! We are pleased that you have chosen our program for your child. Selecting the best program for you and your child can be a challenging task. We hope that this handbook will answer your questions. We are also available to meet with you in person or by phone to address any questions you may have about our program.

SPONSOR:

Our early learning center is a part of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, a member of the N.J. District - Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. The director, teachers, aides, and program are under the direction of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd Administrative Board.

STATE LICENSED:

GSCC holds a Child Care Center license issued by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. We follow all state regulations. Teachers exceed state requirements, and the area of indoor and outdoor space allocated per child exceeds state requirements. Our building has been inspected by health, fire, and building authorities and meets all state and local requirements.

If, for any reason, the state determines to suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew our license, you will be notified in writing by us and by the state within 20 days of our notification to surrender our license, with the reasons why the state made the decision.

ELIGIBILITY:

GSCC admits children of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic group. All children in the community, regardless of religious affiliation, are welcome to enroll in our early learning center.

HISTORY, LOCATION, AND FACILITIES:

GSCC was started in 1968 as a service to bring Christian education to our surrounding communities. It has done this with great success for the last 50 years. It is an integral part of the ministry of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and the National Lutheran School system of over 2,415 schools. We are located in Old Bridge, NJ. The Preschool has 8 spacious classrooms, a large indoor play area, and a fenced-in outdoor play yard. We have a secure facility that is locked at all times, and cameras monitor the entire facility and classrooms.

MISSION STATEMENT:

As a ministry of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, our purpose is to share the love of Jesus with children and their families in a caring, Christian learning environment. GSCC's emphasis is on nurturing the whole child and seeks to foster growth in the following areas: **Social, Emotional, Intellectual, Physical, and Spiritual.**

In a Christian atmosphere, we encourage creativity and self-expression to foster a sense of security and self-worth, and to appreciate the daily presence of Christ. We strive to maintain the highest standards of early education, exceeding state requirements.

REGISTRATION FEE:

A $100.00 registration fee is due at the time of registration. Registration is **non-refundable for any reason.**

SCHOOL CALENDAR:

A school calendar, including beginning and ending dates, holidays, and other important dates, is enclosed with this handbook. Please read carefully and keep this document handy for reference throughout the school year. You will also receive reminders from your child's teacher about these dates.

TUITION:

Tuition is not a monthly fee, but rather a one-year tuition fee divided into 10 payments for your convenience

10 Scheduled Payments: one-tenth of the yearly fee is due by August 15th.
The **9 additional payments** are due on the 1st of each month, starting with September and ending with May. There is a 10-day grace period each month.

Students beginning school after 9/1, registration and the first monthly fee are due at the time of registration.

When two children in a family are registered in the same academic year, a 10% discount is applied to the tuition of the second child. A non-refundable registration fee is due for each child**.**

There will be no reduction in tuition for absences (child), Center holidays, weather closings, or extended personal travel time

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES:

If the school is closed due to a health or other emergency, a partial credit or refund will be issued.

- Partial months will not be credited or refunded
- Full months will be credited or refunded in full, less a 10% Administration fee.
- In the event the center is closed for an extended period, online interaction and work will be provided for a $175 per month fee per child. In the event one does not want to participate, teacher interactions and homework will not be provided.
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LATE FEES:

Tuition payments made after the **10th** of the month will be assessed a **$25.00 late fee** unless prior arrangements have been made by calling the school office. Students whose accounts are delinquent for more than 45 days will

be withdrawn from the school. **Please let us know if you are experiencing any difficulties with payment so that arrangements can be made and your child can continue attending school.**

PROBATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENT:

Children are accepted on a trial basis and are considered on probation for the first eight weeks of their time with us. The school reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a student at any time for reasons consistent with the best interest of the child, the school, and other students.

Tuition is non-refundable unless the child is not accepted into the program

When a parent withdraws a child from enrollment, a written notice must be provided to the Director at least 30 days in advance.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL:

For 9:00 a.m. classes, parents may begin bringing their children at 8:45 a.m. **If you are late picking up your child by 15 minutes or more, your child will be placed in aftercare, and you will be charged $15.00**. Only legal guardians will be allowed to pick up your child unless the preschool is notified in writing by the parent via the ***Child Release Form***. **If we do not know the person picking up your child, we will check their driver's license. Please let them know so they are prepared.**

If before-care or after-care is needed, additional hours outside your scheduled time may be purchased at a rate of $10.00 per hour. If breakfast is being provided to the child, the hourly rate (8-9) is $15 per hour.

For 1:00 dismissal, there is no aftercare. If the need arises, please contact the office first. If it can be accommodated, a charge of $25 an hour will apply.

A child will not be released to a legal guardian if that person is deemed unfit to care for them. Other arrangements will have to be made before the child is released, including contacting other person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to pick up. If unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

GSCC PARKING REQUIREMENTS:

All parents and guardians of our GSCC students are required to use the large parking lot located in front of our building. For the safety of all our children, do not park in front of the building by the driveway.

POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN:

Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access or granted limited access to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, the center shall ensure that: The child is supervised at all times;

1) Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s);
2) An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), have failed. The staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYED OPENINGS:

Emergency closings can be due to weather or any emergency in which the school needs to be closed for the safety of the children or staff. In the event of an extreme closure, we will make every effort to make up those days if possible.
Delayed openings and early dismissals due to weather will be at the discretion of the director.

School closings or delayed openings will be announced on Remind (www.remind.com), a text message system used by the teachers to communicate with the parents of our students, will be used for school announcements. We will also make a posting on our Facebook page.

CURRICULUM AND STAFF:

We endeavor to maintain the highest standard of early childhood education. Working in partnership with the parents, our school nurtures each child in Christian faith in an atmosphere of love and care. The sharing of God's love is Bible based and age-appropriate, building a foundation for living as a child of God and sharing His love. A planned curriculum is used both inside and outside with challenging age-appropriate learning activities. The activities planned are to encourage large and small muscle control, language development, and reading and number readiness through art, science, music, dramatic play, manipulatives, audio and visual aids, and other educational toys and supplies. The children are encouraged to actively participate and develop a positive attitude towards themselves and others. Trained teachers guide the children in many activities that aid and enrich their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual growth. Our loving, qualified, and experienced staff continues to receive training in early childhood education by attending workshops, conferences, and in-service training. Our staff-to-student ratio will not exceed the state recommendations.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

We encourage parents to become active in our program and to attend as many special events as possible. If you have a special gift or talent that you would like to share with the children, please speak to our director. We are here to help not only the child, but the whole family. Your feedback about our program is important to us and helps us to excel at what we do best, loving and educating your child and family.

PARENT COMMUNICATION:

We will communicate with families directly through Back to School Night, Handbook, Parent/Teacher conferences, emails, newsletters, phone calls, our website, calendars, letters, Facebook, surveys, bulletin boards, and the ***Remind*** notification system.

PARENT CONFERENCES, OBSERVATIONS, ASSESSMENTS:

Formal Parent Conferences will be held in January/February. During these conferences, we will discuss where your child is at in their Social & Emotional, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Cognitive & Language, and Spiritual growth. We will use a checklist based on the ages and stages of the preschool child, and a quick academic assessment developed by our staff. The staff will also maintain a portfolio for each child in their class, tracking growth from the beginning to the end of the year. You are welcome to request a conference with your child's teacher or with the director at any time during the year.

Your child's teacher may request a conference with you at other times if they feel they have concerns about your child's development. At this meeting, the teacher will discuss a plan based on their observation and assessment of your child that will best help your child attain growth. When the staff feels there are red flags concerning your child's development, and the education plan for your child does not seem to be helping your child make significant growth, to best help your child, we may ask your permission to call the Child Study Team of your child's public School to come and observe your child in their classroom. This will help your child's teacher understand how to support your child better. You will be involved in each step of the process.

VOLUNTEERS:

Volunteers are always welcome at GSCC. God has blessed you with many talents that will help enrich our program. Consider sharing your time and talents by reading to the children, sharing your love of music or tech experience, or serving as a photographer or videographer for special events. This way, parents who can't be there can still see the events.

Volunteers are to report immediately to the teacher or administrator any observed inappropriate or abusive behavior. Volunteers are to maintain strict confidentiality when helping at school. Volunteers are expected to be free of any convictions of child abuse (sexual, physical, and/or emotional). Volunteers who are scheduled regularly are required to have background checks and be fingerprinted. Volunteers will be role models for children in behavior, speech, and dress, and exhibit a Christ-like manner at all times.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

Before a child attends school, their immunization record and universal health form must be submitted to our administration. <u>This is a state law and no exceptions will be made.</u> Additionally, the flu vaccine must be received by preschool attendees by December 10th. Please note that N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.19 stipulates that children six months through 59 months of age attending any licensed child care center or preschool facility on or after September 1, 2008, shall annually receive at least one dose of influenza vaccine between September 1 and December 31 of each year.

Children who do not have documentation of receiving the flu vaccine or don't have a valid medical or religious exemption by December 31 will need to be excluded from school until the end of flu season, which is up until March 31 in NJ. Such students may return to school sooner than March 31 if they;

• Submit documentation of receiving the flu vaccine or submit a religious/medical exemption

They can also "age out" of the requirement. This means that they become 60 months of age during the flu season. At that point, they do not require a flu vaccine.

Parents will be notified when a child becomes ill, has an accident, or has been exposed to a communicable disease. If the parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the staff deems it necessary. In that case, the child will be taken to **<u>Hackensack Meridian Old Bridge Campus, One Hospital Plaza, Old Bridge, NJ,</u>** or another area hospital, depending on the decision of the EMS personnel.

ILLNESS POLICY:

A child should NOT be sent to school unless they are well enough to participate in our total program. This policy protects everyone. In addition, please respect these specific rules:

1. Children must be free of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school ***without any fever-reducing medication.***
2. An undiagnosed sore throat, discharging eyes or ears, severe runny nose or severe cough are reasons to keep a child at home.
3. Children should be kept at home if they have an undiagnosed rash.
4. If a child contracts a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, impetigo, head lice, or scabies, the child cannot return until they are symptom free or a note is received from their physician that states they can return.
5. If a child contracts the following: German measles, measles, mumps, hemophilus influenza, whooping cough, hepatitis A. giardia lambilia, salmonella, shigella, meningococous, tuberculois, **COVID-19** or other such diseases….**PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY!** The child cannot return without a written note from their physician.
6. Children will be sent home following symptoms of:
   a. 101-degree fever or above
   b. Vomiting
   c. Discharge from eyes or ears
   d. Diarrhea
   e. Rashes

Adherence to these policies is vital to protect everyone's health.

MEDICATIONS:

We prefer not to administer medication, but we will make exceptions if the situation requires it. You should make all attempts to administer any prescribed medication yourself. If the school is asked to administer a medication, the following is required:

1. Parents need to **obtain a medical permission form from the office** to be completed by parent and doctor and returned, signed to the office before medication can be given.
2. **Doctor's script** with child's name, date of prescription, time to be administered, dosage, and any other pertinent information.
3. Medication must be in **ORIGINAL CONTAINER** with date, child's name, prescription, dosage, time to administer and duration of administering.

DO NOT PUT MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILD'S BOOKBAG. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE BROUGHT IN BY THE GUARDIAN AND KEPT IN THE OFFICE. All medications will be kept locked in the office.

DRESS CODE AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

Children should wear **PLAY CLOTHING** that they can manage themselves and rubber-soled shoes, such as sneakers. Dress clothes and inappropriate shoes may cause difficulty and unsafe conditions on the playground equipment. Flip Flops, sandals, shoes with no backs, Crocs, and dress-up shoes will not be allowed. Children should not wear clothing that has drawstrings. These present a choking hazard. For the same reason, necklaces should not be worn. If a child is not properly dressed, because your child's safety is important to us, they will not be allowed on the equipment for that day. Children should be dressed in layers. Their clothing should be appropriate for the weather, since we take the children outdoors daily.

ALL OUTDOOR CLOTHING, BOOKBAGS, SHOW AND TELL ITEMS, OR ANY ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL SHOULD BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH CHILD'S FIRST AND LAST NAME.

SNACK TIME:

The school will provide healthy snacks. Parents wishing to bring in snacks should notify their child's teacher in advance. You may supply your own child's snacks at any time. Note: We are not a peanut-free facility, but we do have children with allergies. If your child has an allergy, they will be seated away from a potential health hazard.

LUNCH AND PIZZA DAYS:

The parent provides lunches. We can't warm up food, so please give food to be served warm in a thermos or a cold lunch.

Tuesdays and Fridays are Pizza Days. Pizza is available at $3 a slice.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

GSCC bases discipline on Christian Principles. Each child is a special child of God, loved and forgiven by Him. We model this love, forgiveness, and reconciliation with each other, child and staff, in daily living. We also adhere to the state guidelines found in The Manual of Requirements for Childcare Centers. Manual can be found in the school office.

The methods of guidance and discipline used shall be positive and consistent with the developmental needs of the child. First, the child will be shown the proper behavior, which is expected of them and an explanation given about why their behavior is inappropriate. When necessary a "time out" may be used. This means to temporarily separate the child from their present behavior. A minute for every year of their age is the norm and will take place in the classroom. For example, if a child is 3, then 3 minutes of time out is the maximum used.

In extreme cases, a child will be removed to the office with the director until their behavior is no longer disruptive to the other children. The parent will be notified of this action. Director, teachers, and school staff **WILL NOT** hit, use abusive language, ridicule, humiliate, frighten, withhold food, isolate a child without supervision, or withhold emotional response or stimulation.

1. We try to be AWARE of the capabilities of children at this age so that our expectations for their behavior match their ability to perform.
2. We try to be REALISTIC about individual differences. One child may need to sit near a teacher at story time in order to listen. Another may safely sit within reach of the blocks and not be distracted by them when asked to listen. We use a preventative approach – we feel it is better to engineer situations so that acceptable behavior is most likely to occur, and confrontations can be kept to a minimum.
3. We try to be REASONABLE in our demands. When we ask the children to put away materials, we provide sufficient time and clearly marked spaces for everything and work with the children until they have caught on to our system.
4. We try to be CONSISTENT. This is probably rule number one for teachers and parents alike. What is acceptable behavior one day is acceptable another day; what is unacceptable one day is unacceptable another. Children are much more comfortable in predictable situations. If they can predict an adult's reaction, they do not feel the need to test the limits constantly.
5. We try to be PATIENT. It takes longer for children to do things unassisted – putting on coats, for example – but children learn more if allowed to struggle a little with hard tasks.
6. We try to be FIRM. Children need to know that we mean what we say.

7. We try to be STERN when children are engaged in behavior that is harmful to themselves or to others, so that they have a very clear understanding as to what behavior that will not be accepted.
8. We try to be QUICK TO PRAISE a child for improved behavior or for instances of behavior which we wish to encourage, such as helpfulness to another child, generosity, compassion, cooperation, etc.
9. We try to be FORGIVING. Each day is a new day, and yesterday's mistakes should not cloud today's atmosphere.
10. We try to be FAIR. We strive to avoid favoritism and meet the needs of each child in the most equal manner possible.
11. We try to be JUDICIOUS in our use of words. The way a request is worded can significantly affect a child's response. We say, "It's your turn to…" "I need your help over here to do…", when we want all children to participate in an activity, and we avoid saying, "Do you want to….? Unless we mean to offer the child a genuine choice.
12. We try to ENCOURAGE the children to eat. We do not discipline children for soiling themselves or for not eating.

To many parents, the words "discipline" and "punishment" are synonymous. We try to avoid this approach and to think of discipline in positive terms, to help children develop self-control. When a child breaks the rules, he or she may be asked to sit on a chair for a short time "to think about the rules of the school." Instead of trying to force a child to apologize, we give the child an example to follow by expressing "how very sorry we are that (whatever it was) happened," and encourage children to settle their disputes and handle their problems through words instead of physical acts.

It is useless to ask a child, "Why did you do it?" because he is too young and inexperienced to understand his own reasons, but an understanding of how the child sees the incident may be gained by asking, "Tell me what happened". It is also pointless to try to play detective and spend a lot of time ferreting out the details of what happened. If we don't have all the facts, we find it better to counsel all parties involved about following the school rules, rather than trying to establish blame. "He did it first" is not accepted as an excuse – it is up to each individual to follow the rules. We are careful, however, to stress that these are school rules. We avoid general statements that might conflict with a parent's rules.

If a negative behavior, such as biting, hitting, etc., occurs egregiously, the following process will take place:

1. Warning – the teacher will explain to the child about the consequences of unacceptable actions
2. A second occurrence would require the teacher to inform the Director and the parents of their child's actions.
3. A third incident mandates a parent meeting with the teacher(s) and administration, and a plan for positive behavior will be developed by the student and parent.
4. A fourth episode would mandate a suspension from class for 1-3 days, and a behavioral contract between home and school would be developed.
5. When every effort to correct the inappropriate behavior has been exhausted, and after consultation with the parents, teachers, and the Administration Board, the student may face expulsion.
6.

AT ALL TIMES, WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO EXHIBIT THE LOVE OF OUR SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST.

EXPULSION POLICY:

GSCC will make every effort to work with the parents before expelling a child. The following are reasons we would consider expelling a child.

1. When a child is disruptive to the learning environment of the other children. If our disciplinary actions are ineffective and working with the parents proves fruitless, we will give written notice to the parents that their child is on a probationary period to be determined by staff and the reason for probation. The second notice will tell the parents that their child has been expelled and they will have one week to make other arrangements.

2. Immediate expulsion will be due to potentially dangerous behavior by a child or parent. The parent will be called in and given in writing the reason for expulsion (i.e., physically harming other children, staff, or self).

We will not expel a child based solely on a complaint filed against the center by the child's parents or guardians

HIB POLICY:

It is mandated that all schools, including preschools, have a policy on **H**arassment, **I**ntimidation and **B**ullying.

BULLYING:

GSCC supports a secure environment conducive to teaching and learning, free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behavior. Students may not engage in any act of bullying while at school or at any school function. Bullying is the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including ethnically based or gender based verbal put-downs and extortion of money or possessions. Succinctly stated: A person is being bullied or victimized when he/she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. Students who are caught in the act of bullying will be subject to the following discipline process as summarized below:

7. Warning – When an incident occurs, the teacher will take the opportunity to help students define bullying and to express the inappropriateness of bullying, referencing Jesus example of reaching out in love and kindness and practicing the blessings of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). The student will issue a verbal apology.
8. A second occurrence would require the teacher to inform the Director and the parents of their child's actions.
9. A third incident mandates a parent meeting with the teacher(s) and administration, and a plan for positive behavior will be developed by the student and parent.
10. A fourth episode would mandate a suspension from class from 1-3 days and a behavioral contract between home and school be developed.
11. When every effort to correct the inappropriate behavior has been exhausted, and after consultation with the parents, teachers, and the Administration Board, the student may face expulsion.

Conflict vs. Bullying/Teasing vs. Taunting principles continued on the next page.

Conflict is normal. Bullying is not normal conflict.

NORMAL CONFLICT	BULLYING
Equal power between friends	Display of power, not in friendship
Occasional	Frequent
Accidental	Purposeful
Demonstrates concern	Demonstrates pleasure
Takes responsibility	Blames others

Tries to solve problem	No effort to resolve issue
Occurs anywhere	Occurs where bully is safe

Teasing compared to Taunting by a bully

TEASING	TAUNTING
Swaps roles with ease	Based on an imbalance of power
Not intended to hurt	Intent to harm
Maintains dignity	Meant to humiliate, demean
Pokes fun in lighthearted, clever ways	Comments or acts that are bigoted or cruel
Innocent in motive	Sinister in motive
Only part of friendship interaction	Continuous action against others
Discontinued when person being teased becomes upset or objects	Continues, increasing when target becomes distressed or objects

Bullying, as prohibited by this policy and NJ State Law, will not be tolerated.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

GSCC is a Christian organization that expects anyone who registers a child to accept the precepts of Christian living. This includes one's own behavior in the school and during all school-related functions, whether or not held on GSCC premises. Behavior such as being disruptive, disrespectful, uncooperative or other conduct that contradicts Christian living by the parent/guardian may be viewed as contrary to these expectations and the parent/guardian will be held accountable for their behavior. Following the example set forth in Matthew 18, the Director will first set a conference time with the offending parent/guardian to discuss the situation and possible consequences. Our prayer is that contrition, forgiveness, and reconciliation will resolve the matter. GSCC retains the right to dismiss the student(s) and family from the school, based on the behavior of the parent/guardian or to not accept re-enrollment of family for the next school year.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARE OF THEIR CHILD:

Please make sure that you hold your child's hand when coming to or leaving the building. A staff member will greet you at the door and welcome your child into the school. At this point, we take over care and responsibility for your child. At pick up, the teacher will dismiss the child from the classroom into your care. Please be vigilant in your supervision. We do not want any child harmed because of lack of supervision.

VISITING:

We encourage all parents to visit the school or participate in the program with their various talents at any time during the year. Parents are also invited to Back to School Night and any events that are scheduled throughout the year. We have an open-door policy for all parents and we welcome you to visit.

CLASSROOM PARTIES:

Class parents or the Teachers will invite you to participate through the year for various school events and parties. You are welcome to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom during snack time. Please check with your child's teacher to be sure that nobody else is celebrating on the day you would like. Please check with your child's teacher for allergies in the classroom.

TECHNOLOGY AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA FOR YOUNG CHILDREN:

Children between the ages of 2.5 and 6 years are developing a sense of initiative and creativity. They have a natural curiosity for learning and their world that surrounds them. At this age they are exploring a variety of ways to express this curiosity and use a variety of media to accomplish their task. Since Technology and Media is a part of all our lives and increasing in usage, we are seeing the benefits in the early child classroom for extending children's learning and creativity using technology and interactive media. Our staff will use developmentally appropriate practices to guide their decisions on when to use technology and interactive media in their classrooms. As a school staff we are following the recommendations made by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media as a guide for our use of Technology in our classroom.

Screen time includes television, videos, digital media, video games, mobile media, cell phones, tablets, computers and the internet. There is also a difference between interactive media and non-interactive media. Non-interactive media does not promote active engagement and interactions and can lead to passive viewing and overexposure to screen time for preschoolers. Passive viewing can contribute to health concerns and overall lack of development of a child.

For children under the age of 2 all the above sources discourage any amount of type of screen media and screen time for children. They feel social interaction between parents or caregiver with the child is vital in developing a well-rounded child.

For children ages 2-5 years in a half day program, screen time should be less than 30 minutes per week per child and we encourage parents to limit total screen time for their preschooler to less than 2 hours per day. 2 hours of screen time should be interactive media designed to be active and creative, as well as to encourage social engagement with other children and adults.

We will be using technology and interactive media tools in a variety of developmentally appropriate ways. These tools will be hands-on, engaging, and empowering for the child. It will connect with what they are learning in the classroom and enhance their feeling of success. We will use it to capture photos or to celebrate your child's accomplishments, record their stories about their drawings and their play, and used by the teacher to document your child's progress throughout the year. (This documentation will be shared with you at Parent/Teacher conferences.) Children will use the technology for experiences they may not otherwise encounter in their environment (such as animals, weather/science experiences, places or environments, video chats with children in schools outside of our immediate location are to compare similarities and differences). The use of all types of technology and the use by your child will be closely monitored, but the use will allow your child to become comfortable with the tool, so they can explore and create.

As a staff, we will not post pictures of a child's face on our website, Facebook page, or written media without permission of the parent/guardian. Staff will not post about your child in any form unless they have your

permission. All such postings will only be school related and on official school communication media. Staff will not be using technology or media tools for their personal use while in care of your children. (Such as making personal calls, texting, Facebooking, emailing or be on the internet) If they are, it is considered neglect and they will be removed from the classroom and care of your child. All staff will conduct themselves in a responsible and professional manner when using technology, keeping your child's welfare at the forefront of all they do.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN:

GSCC will be using the Standard Response Protocol to respond to emergency events that may occur at the school. We are locked from the outside at all times when children are in attendance. Every classroom can be locked from the inside and this protocol will be used during emergency drills throughout the year. There are cameras at the entrances to the building. Entrance is obtained through a buzzer system. Intercom system and video screens are located in the Director's and Secretary's offices. If the person is unknown or looks questionable, we will ask through the intercom to state their reason for entry before opening door. We ask all parents not to open doors to allow entrance into the building. We want to keep the children in our care safe. In an emergency evacuation or lockdown when parents come to pick children up they must sign their child out with their child's teacher. Children will only be released to a parent or designated person on their release form. No exceptions will be made. The Director and/or staff will stay with all children until they are picked up.

STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL PROCEDURES:

Staff will be notified by the Director or designated staff member in charge. They will announce one of the four codes to all staff.

1. **LOCKOUT**
    a. Is called when there is a threat or hazard outside of the school building.
    b. Staff will recover students and staff from outside the building, return inside, take attendance and account for all students in their care, be on alert and continue doing business as usual.

2. **LOCKDOWN**
    Is called when there is a threat or hazard inside the school building.
    - Students move away from all sight lines and maintain silence.
    - Staff will lock classroom doors, turn off lights, move out of sight lines, take attendance and account for all students in their care, maintain silence, and wait for first responders only to open their door.

3. **EVACUATE**
    If called to move students and staff from one location to another, Director or person in charge will announce location.
    - Students will leave all items behind, form a single line, take the hand of person in front and behind them and be silent and ready for alternative instructions.
    - Staff will grab evacuation/emergency bag, lead students to evacuation location, take attendance and account for all students in their care. Listen for further announcements.
    - Teachers will lead students out through the nearest fire exits to their designated area. Teachers will have evacuation bags and attendance books with them.

4. **SHELTER**
   Is called for when need for personal protection is necessary for a severe storm, tornado, bomb or hazmat conditions.
   - Students and staff will move to designated safe areas, drop, cover and hold, and seal, in silence while waiting for the “all clear” call.

The appropriate method will be used per the situation, and the Staff are trained in the appropriate responses for each individual situation. The procedures are:

1. Staff will inform students of method to use, will account for all students and occupants in their care, and use appropriate method.
2. During a situation, no one will be able to enter premises except for police. This includes parents/guardians.
3. Teachers will have evacuation bags ready at all times.
4. If emergency is to go beyond the end time of session:
   a. Parents will be notified by the director and office staff not to come to school until they are notified.
   b. We will combine classes if necessary to help staff.

Only the Director, or Acting Director, after being notified by authorities, may deactivate the emergency procedure.

VACATING THE PREMISES:

If the premises become unsafe due to building conditions or other emergencies in our area, we may need to vacate the premises. The procedures for vacating our premises use the following guidelines:

Evacuation procedures are used
1. 911 is called to notify the police and Emergency Management of our situation
2. A Remind Notice message will be activated to all parents/guardians by a staff member stating where to pick up the children
3. After all the children are accounted for, they will be escorted to the new location using Teacher and Police escorts

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PLAN:

Emergencies are handled by dialing **911.** All staff are trained in adult/child First Aid and CPR. If a child appears to be ill or has a fever, your child will be isolated from the other children by waiting in the Director’s or Secretary’s office accompanied by a staff member. The parents will be called immediately to pick up the child. Medication is only administered to children in life threatening situations. A medical plan of action for each child will be on record in secretary’s office in a locked drawer.

- If a child requires emergency medical attention the following will be done:
  - Teacher will stay with student.
  - Assistant will inform the office of the problem. Assistant will keep other children distracted and calm.
  - The office will immediately call 911 and the parents. If parents cannot be reached, we will then reach out to emergency contact person listed on the CLASSROOM INFORMATION FORM. Director or staff member in charge will help teacher and assistant after obtaining the child’s file.
  - If none of the above can be reached, the Director or Head Teacher will accompany the child for treatment. Medical forms and permission for emergency

medical treatment, found in the child's permanent file in the school office, will be taken to the Doctor or hospital.

SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

If a parent, Teacher, Aide, or volunteer sees behavior they deem inappropriate, they should:

- Immediately bring it to the attention of the Director/Person in Charge who will help the staff member determine if abuse or neglect has happened.
- Document and maintain a file with Child's records of all incidences and behaviors that make them suspect a child is being abused or neglected.
- Advise parents of any unusual incidents that occurred during the day that might indicate possible abuse or neglect:
    - Unusual sexual activity
    - Violent or destructive behavior
    - Withdrawal or passivity
    - Significant changes in personality, behavior, or habits

In addition to the above;

- If there is a reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected by law, this information must be reported immediately to the **Abuse Hotline at 1-877-652-2873.** It may be done anonymously. Please inform the director that you have reposted an incident.
- The Director will inform the Good Shepherd Administration Board of all suspected abuse and neglect cases.
- Failure by staff to repost and document suspected abuse or neglect may subject them, by law, to a $1000.00 fine or up to 6 months imprisonment or both, as well a loss of their teaching license. *
- When a staff member is suspected of abusing or neglecting a child, they are to be immediately reported to **1-800-652-2873.** They will be removed from the children; the Good Shepherd Administration Board will be called in and is reason for immediate dismissal of staff member from their job.

Thank you in advance and we look forward to a wonderful year of learning and fun with your child at GSCC.

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Department of Children and Families
Office of Licensing

INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

* * * * *

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may secure a copy of the Manual of Requirements by sending a check or money order for $5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJ Department of Children and Families, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll-free 1-(877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parent(s) to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the Office of Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the Office's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the Office for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required to periodically review the Department of Law and Public Safety (DLPS), Division of Consumer Affairs (DCA), unsafe children's products list, make the list accessible to staff and parents, and ensure that items on the list are not at the center. The list is available at www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/recall/recalls.htm. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the DLPS, DCA, toll-free at 1 (800) 242-5846.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Child Abuse Hotline, toll-free at: 1-877-NJ ABUSE. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to www.nj.gov/dcf and select Publications.

OOL4/17/08

INFORMATION TO PARENTS & STAFF FROM THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC) regarding unsafe products.

PLEASE review the list of unsafe
Products on the following website:

www.cpsc.pscpup/prerel/prerel.html

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILDRENS'
TOYS/FURNITURE/ETC.
ARE SAFE!