

Champion's Choice for Early Learning Family Handbook



Champion's Choice for Early Learning
A Christian Preschool for ages 3-5

208 Central Avenue
Eureka, Montana 59917

406-249-4150

Introduction:

Champion's Choice for Early Learning, (CCEL) is a community resource. We serve the needs of families in the Tobacco Valley who desire a Christian atmosphere for their preschool age children. We believe students learn and grow best in an age appropriate environment with a variety of materials for exploration and discovery that incorporates lessons based on the inerrant Word of God.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to build lasting meaningful relationships that support the child, family and community. To do this we incorporate Christian values into age appropriate curriculum within our enriched learning environment. Here children will gain skills to prepare them for higher education. We following Montana State Early Learning Standards, to provide a warm, nurturing, and safe place to meet children's emotional, social and developmental needs.

Goals:

Our goal is to give every child a love for God and learning. It is our hope that through developmentally appropriate care we give them the best start in their whole development to gain skills that will prepare them for more formal education. Although our overall goal is not to "prepare them for kindergarten" with drills and harsh teaching methods, our play-based learning does give them the skills they need to succeed, when they attend on a regular basis. We are guided by Biblical principles of love, acceptance, and forgiveness to help them develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

We value family's involvement as first educators, which is vital to a child's ongoing development and learning. We are guided by Christian values of the New Testament, and believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

We believe:

- children learn best during active play.
- children need relationships with caring adults.
- children need an environment with age appropriate toys and materials in each academic area.
- children need adults to understand their age and stage of development to meet their individual needs.
- children need their teachers to understand their family and culture and build cooperative, positive relationships.

Family Involvement/ Parent Communications:

The empowerment of parents as the primary educators of their children agrees with the Biblical principle that parents are responsible for the education of their children and should continue to be the primary educators in their everyday development. The Biblical reference speaks to the whole child, not just formal training, and states that Godly principles should be taught all the time. Although the Bible does not state directly that academics should be a part of a child's training, the implication is that teaching these things is being a good steward of the gift of knowledge we receive from the Lord, and he certainly encourages people to gain knowledge and understanding.

Building on that idea, relationships are the key to development. A trusting relationship between the child and adult, allows the child to be open to instruction, and can enhance a child's ability to learn and develop cognitive connections. In like manner, God values a personal relationship with each of us. He does not force his will on us, nor does he beat us into submis-



sion. In similar ways, we need to build a trusting relationship with each child, and that begins with building a relationship with the child's primary caregivers. To understand this concept fully, "From Parents to Partners, Reflections", by Kate Longacre is suggested reading, and is available in the school's library.

With this concept in mind, it is our desire to develop a bond between the school and the family. To do this we strongly encourage that a student's primary care giver stay and participate in the morning activities, join us for outdoor time, story time, or lunch. In addition, arriving 15 minutes early for a discussion of the student's learning experience for the day, and having them proudly share what they have learned prior to the child leaving will help in this regard.

Enrollment:

We are accepting children ages 3 - 5 at this time.

To Enroll a new student, a Student Enrollment Form and Medical Release Form/Photo Consent Form must be completed and returned to the school. You can Enroll on line, or pick up Enrollment forms at the preschool. The director and teacher will review the application. If there are any concerns, the director will meet with the Champion's Choice board, who makes all final decisions regarding the admission of students. The director will then meet with you and your child. If there are any concerns, the board may ask to meet with the family and the child. After this meeting the director will notify you concerning your child's admission.

A 15 minute online orientation is available on our website. This will answer most of your questions about what to bring, how to handle tuition payments, lunches, drop off and pick up, illness, etc. You can find it at: <http://www.championschoice.org/enrollment-forms/>

Withdrawing a Student:

You may withdraw a student at any time, however, tuition is non-refundable. In extenuating circumstances, you may request a refund in writing to the Board within 90 days of your child's last day of attendance. Once your student has missed more than two weeks, a reserve fee must be paid to reserve your slot. The slot will be filled by any awaiting student, and your child will be placed on the bottom of the waiting list, if there is one. We cannot hold a slot open for a child that intends to return, unless a reserve fee is paid during the absence.

Tuition and Fees:

Tuition is due in advance - the rate is \$5.50 an hour.

Your tuition is paid in advance, for the month, along with the base fee, on the first day when you drop your child off. Arrangements must be made in advance, and be approved by the board, on a case-by-case basis if you are unable to pay for the whole month.

Tuition is due by the 5th of each month to cover the upcoming month. Any tuition paid after the 5th of each month will incur a \$25. late fee, unless you have made other arrangements approved by the director. If your payment is two weeks late and you have not contacted the school to make other arrangements, your student(s) may be denied admittance until the tuition is paid, or other arrangements are made. Therefore, it is very important that the school be contacted if you will be late with your payment so that your child does not miss any days.

Tuition is non-refundable. In extenuating circumstances, you may request a refund in writing to the Board within 90 days of your child's last day of attendance.

*Tuition for special-needs students will be at the discretion of the Champion's Choice school board dependent on the need to hire additional staff.

*Rates subject to change.

Tuition Assistance:

To be eligible for the sliding scale fee families are required to complete a simple financial statement that lists all income sources from both wage earners that are married or living as domestic partners. We will not ask for any documentation or verification of income. This is the honor system. We will assume you are providing an honest accounting

of your income level and ability. This will be reviewed every 3 months and either increase or decrease hourly rate based on this information. If it is discovered that you willfully and intentionally misrepresented your income, you may be subject to retroactive tuition rates, and your child may be denied admittance until the underpayment is paid in full.

In addition, to keep tuition from increasing, families are requested to fulfill 2 hours of volunteer time a month and provide supplies and/or snacks. Volunteer jobs and a shopping list for supplies and/or snacks will be posted from week to week, as needs arise. We may also assign a particular snack food to an individual family as needed.

Because the Sliding Scale Fee already reduces tuition, there are no additional reductions of the base fee or hourly rate for families that enroll more than one child. This also applies to those families who do not qualify for the Sliding Scale Fee because their income exceeds the limit.

You can view and print the financial worksheet on our website at <http://www.championschoice.org/tuition-costs/> or pick one up at the school during school hours.

Funding:

As a private non-profit school, we depend on tuition and base fee income, (which helps cover snacks and other supply expenses), to operate. We do not receive any federal, state or local grant assistance, and tuition income does not cover all the operating expenses. (See our latest news page for any changes.) Therefore, fundraiser income helps us continue to offer lower tuition rates with our sliding scale fee and supports the continuation of the educational program. Our major fundraiser is the cotton candy/snow cone booth. We also participate in the Box Tops for Education program.

School Hours:

School hours are typically from 8:30 - 1:00, Monday - Friday, with an option for an extended day until 3, if there are enough students to warrant the extended hours. If there are limited numbers of students on a particular day, we may be closed that day. Check our "Latest News" page for changes. Students should not arrive more than 15 min. early, or be picked up late. You will be charged a full hour for every 30 min. you are late picking up. This charge must be paid before the child will be admitted to the next scheduled class.

Students should not play outside or on playground equipment after school. Once a student is signed out, they are no longer a responsibility of the school and therefore, must be monitored at all times. Students should not play in the parking lot and should not go to their vehicles unattended by parent or guardian.

Attendance Policy:

Consistent school attendance is an important aspect of the learning process here at Champion's Choice for Early Learning to meet a student's developmental milestones and academic goals.

Tardiness:

Please be on time. It is a disruption for the other students when someone comes late, especially if they are doing a group activity, such as, circle time. But, it is also difficult for your child to come in and not have time to warm up to the different environment before going straight to an activity. If you cannot avoid being late, please contact the teacher.

There are 10 excused absences for the year from September to May. It does not matter why your child is absent, you will not be charged for these first 10 absences. But once they have been used, you will be charged a full day for the days you have signed up to come. If your child begins after September, you will be allowed 1 absence per month from that month until May. Please contact the teacher if your child is going to be absent, so that she can plan the day and not prepare materials that will have to be thrown out.

Families will be charged for the full day no matter what time they arrive, and extended charge if they are late picking up, according to our late charge policy under School Hours.

Missing School for Extended Periods:

All extended absences must be reported a month in advance to hold your child's slot and follow the guidelines below. If the absence exceeds two weeks, #4. below applies, and your slot will be filled by any awaiting student.

1. A request is made in writing at least one month in advance to the director.
2. The request should include the expected days missed.
3. A reserve fee may apply to days missed in order to reserve the student's slot.
4. A reserve fee must be paid prior to the end of the two weeks, unless you contact the school, your slot will be filled by any awaiting student.

Immunizations:

Immunizations are not required to attend. Which means there are students attending this school who have not been immunized.

We voluntarily dropped our license status in 2015 to allow families whose children are "not immunized" an opportunity to participate in our programs. We will continue to provide the same level of care and follow all the procedures as a licensed care facility except requiring children to be immunized.

Illness:

Because we do have children attending this school that do not have up-to-date immunizations, it is extremely important that you follow this policy regarding illnesses.

A student must be kept home if they have a communicable disease, a sore throat or cold that is accompanied by a fever of 101°F or greater. The student must be without fever of 101°F or greater for 24 hours before they return to school, except that children with immunization-related fevers may be excluded if they are able to participate in the routine of the day.

Covid19: Keep them home if they have any symptoms that could be related to Covid19, such as fever, sore throat, runny nose or a bad cough, or any flu like symptoms. If your child or anyone in your household tests positive for Covid19, is exposed to anyone who tests positive or is suspected of having Covid19, they must stay home for 14 days, or they and those in the household must be tested and have a negative test result before your child can return to school. If any staff member, student or family member of a student tests positive for Covid19 and has attended the pre-school within the last 14 days, the school will close until they are released by Lincoln Co. Health Dept. to re-open. This will normally be a 14 day period.

Students must be without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before they return to school. Vomiting includes 2 or more episodes in the previous 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in the stool, and/or decreased form to the stool that cannot be contained by a diaper or clothing;

Students with any of the bacterial infections listed below are recommended to be treated with antibiotics for 24 hours before they return to school.

- Strep throat;
- Scarlet fever;
- Impetigo;
- Bacterial conjunctivitis (pinkeye); and
- Skin infections such as draining burn or infected wounds or hangnails;
- Generalized rashes, including those covering multiple parts of the body, must be evaluated by a health care provider to determine their cause before the student can return to the preschool facility;
- Students with chickenpox may not be admitted to the preschool facility until their sores dry up, which usually takes 5 to 7 days.

Chickenpox is an airborne disease spread easily through coughing or sneezing of ill individuals or through direct contact with secretions from the rash. A person with chickenpox is infectious one to two days before the rash appears. They remain contagious until all lesions have crusted over (this takes approximately six days). Crusted lesions are not

contagious. Please keep your student home for at least 2 days if they have been exposed to someone with chickenpox to see if symptoms appear. And they should remain home for 6 days once symptoms appear, or until all lesions are crusted over. We will not purposefully expose susceptible children to chickenpox, even with the permission of the susceptible student's parents;

Children with symptoms of severe or prolonged illness, such as uncontrolled coughing, breathing difficulty or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food or fluid intake, or a seizure, must be evaluated by a health care provider before they may return to school.

A student can come to school with a mild discharge from the nose, if it is not accompanied by a fever.

No student shall be re-admitted after an absence until the reason for the absence is known and there is assurance that the student's return will not harm that child or the other children.

- The school may readmit a student excluded for illness whenever, in its discretion;
- The student either shows no symptoms of illness;
- The student has been free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for 24 hours; or
- The student has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours for bacterial infections.

Calendar:

We loosely follow the Eureka Public school calendar, with a few exceptions, most notable are first day and last day, and PIR days. Major holiday breaks are the same. All PIR days that fall on Monday thru Friday we are open.

Visit our website at <http://www.championschoice.org/calendar/> to view the current calendar.

Field Trip Attendance:

Field trips and special activities will be made periodically throughout the school year away from the school grounds. Local field trips to libraries, etc. will not require any additional fee to cover the event. There may be extra fees applied to field trips outside the Tobacco Valley. In all cases, families will be notified in advance. The school staff does not transport children, so families will be asked to transport their own child and families can car pool. A permission slip form will need to be signed that releases the school from liability and allows the child to be transported by themselves or another family. If a child is unable to attend due to transportation issues, they will not be charged for the day.



Family members are welcome to participate in field trips, as in all school related activities. Entry fees for family members to theme parks, etc. will be the responsibility of the family.

Lunch:

Students must bring their own "nutritious" lunch. We ask that you avoid cookies and candies. We encourage sharing, but we do not share our lunch items because of the potential of passing germs. And at this age children do not understand why they cannot have the cookie that "Johnny" brought. Besides, the sweets tend to hype them up just before nap time. We will provide a nutritious snack around 10, and if they stay for the extended time, they can have a snack after their nap.

Microwaves, plates, cups, and eating utensils are supplied by the school. These are an important aspect of their daily routine and help provide good practice for small and large muscle control as well as good manners and cleanup. A refrigerator is also available.

Cold Weather Clothes:

Please be sure students are dressed appropriately for cold weather. All students spend at least half an hour of their day outside during recess breaks. Students need hats, mittens or gloves, warm coats, snow pants and boots in snowy weather. Unless it is below 15 degrees, extremely windy, or pouring down rain, students will be outside for recess.

Students should have a dry set of extra clothes at all times. If students do not have dry clothes on campus and clothes become soaked, or soiled, a parent may be called and asked to immediately bring clothes. A parent may be asked to take a child home.

Student Property:

Students are discouraged from bringing personal property, such as a brand new toys or other favorite items they don't want to share with other students. Any toys brought to school may get broken and the school will not be responsible for lost, stolen or broken toys brought from home. However, young children often feel vulnerable and insecure away from what is familiar, so a favorite blanket or bedtime toy can help soothe them when they need comfort or are taking their nap. The staff will do their best to help each student keep these items in their cubby or where other students will not damage them. We will also do our best to teach the students to respect other student's personal property, however, there is no guarantee that something will not get lost or damaged. All electronic devices, such as, cell phones, mp3 players, game boys, iPods, etc., are to be left at home. Obviously, weapons are not allowed on campus. Fake weapons: swords, laser swords, guns, squirt guns, knives etc., must be left at home.

We try to discourage students from playing war games or other pretend play that involves killing people, animals, monsters or aliens. However, some children act out these scenarios because they have watched something scary on TV, and are trying to process what is bothering them. Therefore, we will ask questions about the play and interrupt it if we think it is getting out of hand or is scaring other children. We might say, "that sounds scary," to shift the attention to communication about why they are using this kind of play. We may ask who the bad guys are and why they are bad and who the good guys are, and what makes them good. Then, under supervision, we may defer the play to when we go outside and then allow the children to use something safe, such as, pool noodles or approved foam swords to sword fight, with the instructions that, "Noodles hit Noodles."

Daily Routines/Procedures and Curriculums:

Children love routines and consistency. Therefore we have a daily schedule that includes play time, circle time, class time, snack time, clean up time, outside play time, art/activity time, story time, nap time (if applicable), and closing time. We will post a daily schedule in the classroom for your convenience. The schedule is a guide and may change as needs and interest change. For example, the exact times to transition from one activity to the next may be altered, and an activity may be scratched for one that the children are more interested in that day, but the basic schedule of the day will be the same. It is our goal to incorporate Biblical instruction into our daily routines as well as into our curriculum.

Our daily schedule and curriculum is flexible to accommodate the different ages and stages of development of children.

The morning is our primary preschool session. At present we are offering an extended day until 3 p.m. The afternoons are a quiet time, as the younger children are taking naps. Free play occupies most of the time, with play dough, drawing, painting, puzzles and reading. There is more one-on-one time with each student, teacher observation, conversations and interaction. The morning preschool activities, craft projects and lessons are reviewed and discussed, but not in the formal "classroom" sense, as kids are tired and less attentive in the afternoons. Once the younger students wake, a music and movement activity is encouraged.

A good quality preschool needs to have, at the minimum, these three components for each student: that they feel safe, trust the caregiver and have fun. Naturally to an untrained observer it might seem that all they do is play. But, they are learning while they play. It's not a free for all, chaotic play that gets out of hand. It is a well organized thought-out routine of play that can have great impact on cognitive development.

At Champion's Choice, we provide a balance of child directed play, teacher directed activities and structured lessons. Teachers actively participate in the activities and play, conversing with the children.

We have an average of 45 minutes outside to work off the high energy, and one hour of structured lessons broke into 15 minute segments with 15 – 30 minute free play segments between. This allows the brain to process the concepts they just learned. We also have a mid-morning snack and lunch. The lessons themselves are hands on for the most part, as abstract concepts on paper are not appropriate for this age.

We also try to eliminate the electronic toys and learning devices. There are some that have learning games to help them memorize letters and numbers. But studies show they can inhibit them from being able to develop cognitively. Because the toy is feeding them information that they should be figuring out on their own, they do not generate the kind of learning that enhances their brain development in the best way.

Daily Schedule:

8:30 – 9:15 Warm up activities/ Free play
9:15 – 9:30 Circle time/Calendar/Weather/Bible Story
9:30 – 9:45 Large Motor/Free play
9:45 – 10:00 Class Time/Seat Work
10:00 – 10:30 Free Play
10:30 – 11:45 Bathroom break/Snack
11:45 – 12:45 Outdoor Free play
12:45 – 12:10 Art/Project
12:10 – 12:15 Clean up/Bathroom break/Hand washing
12:15 – 12:45 Lunch
11:45 – 1:00 Story Time/Review/Dismiss

Afternoon Schedule:

1:00 – 2:00 Nap
2:00 - 3:00 Quiet Play, (Puzzles, Reading, Play Dough, Etc.)

Our preschool curriculums are designed to meet Montana Early Learning Standards in each developmental area. Our curriculums are presented with a God-centered, age appropriate view based on the absolutes of God's Word. At the same time, we use age appropriate approaches with play centered learning and hands on activities to make each concept fun and meaningful to the child's world. With theme based lessons we use an integrated approach that includes the seven developmental domains: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Math, Social Studies, Science and Creativity.

Depending on the number of students enrolled and the goal of the families, we may use one of several curriculums or combine them to have a comprehensive program.

We have used "Mother Goose Time". This preschool curriculum applies the latest theory and research on best practices in teaching and learning and the content standards developed by states and professional organizations. While keeping an environmentally-based approach, Mother Goose Time Preschool Curriculum clearly outlines the teacher's vital role in connecting "content and teaching" with hands-on learning for preschool children.

We have also used Mother Goose Time Bible based option for Christian preschools. It is very basic, featuring a Bible story and Bible verse, along with daily activities that integrate the seven developmental domains.

We have used Creative Pre-K, for the hands-on creative teacher. This is a themed program with great activities and lesson guides. Our trained staff finds the developmental domains within these activities and expands them into a comprehensive program. Supplemental seat work is geared to each child's development.

With all of these, we supplement the “kindergarten” readiness goals with writing practice, math skills and language sheets. These seat work segments are about 15 min. long – longer if the child is engaged, and shorter if they are not mature enough to handle that. If they don’t finish the page, it is sent home or saved for later. Students are encouraged to finish, but not required to.

The daily schedule above is a guide and may change as needs and interest change. It is our goal to incorporate Biblical instruction into our daily routines as well as into our curriculum.

At the end of each day, before lunch and outside play we clean up and may review the day’s activities and what they learned during transitioning from one activity to the next, depending on the needs of the children and the goal of the families.

We use themes for the day or week, introducing a letter for the day or week and work the different developmental areas of learning around that theme or letter.

Children who need more structure and school readiness will have a more structured program, while the younger children can participate at their level of understanding.

Discipline Methods:

It is our position that children's behavior is an expression of unmet needs and wants. What we see as a want is a need to a child because they are not mature enough to know the difference. Therefore, emotional outbursts, grabbing toys from others, tug-a-wars over toys, hitting and temper tantrums are all normal behaviors for this age. Although we don't condone this behavior, we recognize it as a part of the learning process and expect conflict, and therefore, use it as an opportunity to teach them better ways to express their wants. Therefore, in discipline, we look at what is behind the behavior to help the child learn how to get his needs met in an appropriate way. This method takes time, patience and modeling.

We also take the position that emotional responses interfere with learning, therefore we address the emotion of anger by labeling it as we see it. “I can see you are really upset because you are screaming, and I see some tears. Tell me about it.” Once the emotions are under control enough for the child to express what he wanted, or what he didn't like that made him scream, he can be asked a series of questions. We can then help him decide what to do different next time, specifically using his words to express his needs or wants, and then working out a plan that he and his friend can agree on about the issue.

It is also our position to consider the ultimate goal in discipline, which is to teach them a better way of responding by addressing the problem and allowing the child the opportunity to do it different next time. We do not believe making them “pay” for their misdeeds is appropriate or effective with young children. However, if a child continues to display inappropriate behavior he will be separated from the activity. He/she may be put in a time out chair, but only as long as it takes to decide to rejoin the group without repeating the unwanted behavior. This may be immediate, or several minutes, but it is not a specific time. He/She will then be given the opportunity to cooperate with others within the activity again, so that he will learn to control his own behavior. Of course, returning to the time out chair may be necessary several times in a row before the child masters making good choices about his/her behavior.

We also take the position that crowded areas, waiting in lines and transitions from one activity to the other creates conflict, therefore, we try to eliminate these by starting activities before all the children are present and altering rest-room breaks, etc.

We use time outs, reminders and rewards to motivate children to act in appropriate acceptable ways. We do not threaten to punish, spank or send them home for parents to spank.

If you disagree with how a student is disciplined, please talk to the director or teacher without the student present. Our staff desires to work with you as a team, and not against your family structure.

Probation:

A student with severe behavioral problems that becomes a risk to other students or himself, and has not responded well to appropriate intervention or disciplinary procedures may be put on probation. The probationary period could last from one day to two weeks. The family will be asked to meet with the director and others deemed necessary by the

director, such as a teacher, board member or a specialist to discuss a viable behavior plan. It may be the recommendation of the director or the board that the family seek outside counseling from a professional in order to continue attendance at the school. A written agreement with the school board and administration will be drafted that will outline the decision. If the student does not improve to a satisfactory level, or the director and/or school board does not believe they have the necessary skill and expertise to handle the challenging behaviors or special needs of the student, they may be asked to withdraw their student, or the student may be dismissed from school. In addition, the family will be responsible for damages caused by the student's behavior.

In certain extreme breaches of a disciplinary agreement, or in a situation deemed extreme by the school administration, the school board may revoke or amend such an agreement or immediately dismiss a student from attending this school. A student may be dismissed immediately from school without probationary terms by the director, teacher or the school board if they determine a situation is beyond probationary terms.

Expulsion:

A student may be immediately expelled from school for a serious breach of conduct, for endangering the health and safety of a student or teacher, or for repeated problems with behavior that the administration is unable to handle in an appropriate or satisfactory way.

Re-admission:

Re-admission to school would require very specific changes in actions and may require probationary procedures. A conference with the director a school board member the parent and the teacher may be held prior to student's return. A report of the conference will be given to the board, who will make the final decision to re-admit the student.

School Board Members will be notified of any situation deemed extreme by the director and may immediately determine action with the authority to expel any student for non-compliance with the regulations of the school, written or unwritten.

Nondiscrimination in enrollment:

We admit students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. Although we are a non-denominational Christian school, we do not require a student to profess a belief in God, Jesus Christ, or the truth of the Bible to attend. However, families and students are expected to respect the beliefs of other students and the fundamental statement of faith of the school. Actions and statements that contradict these beliefs by students or family members can undermine the child's ability to learn. If a family member or child repeatedly makes malicious comments against the fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith or the school, the family will be called to meet with the director and school board to re-evaluate their child's enrollment. If actions or statements made by a student or family member creates a disruptive or hostile learning environment, the family may be asked to withdraw their child or the student may be expelled.

Confidentiality:

All employees are expected to adhere to our code of confidentiality and refrain from talking about students, their families, or any personal information they may become aware of, to others who are not directly affected by the student's particular issues.

In addition, a family's financial status will not be shared among staff members or others, without the family's permission. However, those who determine a child's acceptance to the school, such as the director, and board members, will have access and knowledge of each family's finances and each student's behavior and academic issues and concerns. In addition, those who deal with the school's finances and prepare letters to families, such as the treasurer, or secretary will have access and knowledge of each family's finances and in some cases behavior or academic concerns. However, this information will be handled with the utmost respect and confidentiality within that context. Families should respect one another's privacy as well and keep any information they may learn confidential while a volunteer or substitute, picking up or dropping off a child, or participating in any activities with the school.

Anti-harassment:

Children's Choice for Early Learning, (CCEL) strives to create and maintain a safe and supportive school and work environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity, decency and respect. For this reason, CCEL has a zero tolerance policy regarding harassment or discrimination of any kind. All individuals, associated with, or employed by, CCEL, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy.

The harassment of any individual because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital or parental status, disability or other status protected under state or federal law is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. As a Christian Preschool, certain exemptions apply. This policy addresses discrimination that is not covered under any exemption.

Harassment includes conduct which has the effect of causing humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment or work environment.

The School Administration and/or Board shall act to investigate all complaints of harassment, either formal or informal, verbal or written, and to discipline or take other appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy.

(A copy of the complete Anti-harassment policy is available upon request.)

Our Statement of Faith:

The Champion's Choice for Early Learning adheres to the statement of faith of The Association of Christian Schools International as follows:

- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).
- We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30).
- We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His Resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4), His Ascension to the right hand of God (Mark 16:19), and His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11).
- We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith alone are we saved (John 3:16-19, 5:24; Romans 3:23, 5:8-9; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5).
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:28-29).
- We believe in the spiritual unity¹ of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28).
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:13-14; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18).

Grievance/Conflict Resolutions:

If you have any conflicts with a teacher, another family member, the director or a board member the issue should be addressed with the individual first, in accordance with Biblical direction. After a reasonable attempt has been made to resolve the conflict the issue should be discussed with the director and finally with the chairman of the board.

If you talk with anyone else, you should expect them to ask, "Have you talked with her/him about this?" This should also be your standard response when someone comes to you about an issue. If you feel intimidated and would rather not talk to the person about the issue, you must decide if you can overlook the issue and keep quiet about it. If you don't feel you can keep quiet about it and you feel intimidated and too uncomfortable to talk with the person, you

should ask the director to go with you to act as a facilitator to resolve the problem. If you don't feel comfortable talking with the director, then you should contact the school board chairman to resolve the issue. Whatever the problem is, it should remain between those involved and not become a topic of gossip among the rest of the staff, families or within the community at large. Often misunderstandings can create a perceived conflict, which generates strife and an unfavorable learning environment for your child.

Student or Family Visitors:

Periodically students may have school age friends or relatives visiting their homes during our regular school day. We welcome these children to visit the classroom if we have enough staff to cover additional students, and they fall within, or closely within our age range of students. All enrollment procedures apply if visiting children are to be left at the school for any period of time. A regular day rate of \$5.25 an hour would apply. If an adult is present with the visiting child or children at all times, then only a supply fee of \$2.50 per child would apply. All school policies for volunteers or family members or friends of the family apply as well.

Cell Phone Use:

Students who are feeling uncomfortable and insecure may have the teacher call home to "check in" with a family member. A teacher may suggest a call home if a child is feeling extremely insecure. Most of the time this assures the child and they can resume normal activities. On occasion, a parent may need to come and sit in the classroom, or pick up a child for the remainder of the day. This is normal behavior and when the child is sure the parent is available if needed, they often settle in without the need to call. Children who are in care for the first time may need assurance two or three times. Of course, family members may call anytime to check on their child.

Licensing/Accreditation:

At this time CCEL does not hold a Montana State Day Care license for our preschool. We voluntarily dropped our license status in 2015 to allow families whose children are "not immunized" an opportunity to participate in our programs. We continue to provide the same level of care and follow all the procedures as a licensed care facility except requiring children to be immunized. According to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services preschool programs are not required to be licensed. However, we comply in every way we can in adopting Early Childhood Educational standards as described in the Montana Early Learning Guidelines for the preschool. All our staff have clear criminal background checks and are First Aid and CPR trained.

Reporting Child Abuse:

As care givers to your child, it is our responsibility to protect children and be their advocates, therefore we must report child abuse. In addition we are required to adhere to Montana State mandatory child abuse reporting laws. A copy of the law is available in our school library.

Accident or Incident Report:

When a child is injured in any way where a bruise or mark is made, or there is bleeding, an accident report form will be filled out ASAP after the immediate threat or injury has been taken care of. This should be done the same day. The form then must be filed according to the instructions on the form. A phone call will be made, or a verbal contact made with the family prior to the child going home.

In addition, any contact that could be considered abusive or sexual by another student or staff member will be reported to the family and proper authorities in conjunction with mandatory reporting laws. A record will be made of the incident the same day. An example might be a child showing their privates to another child, or touching another child in his/her private area. The form will indicate the date, the time, the circumstances surrounding the incident, who is involved and who witnessed the incident or accident. All those witnessing should make a statement and sign the form. It is important that this is done ASAP so that the information is accurate. Remember that children can often be good wit-

nesses when they can tell their story in their own words. But they can also be confused about when something happened, or who was involved. Their concept of today and yesterday is more often anytime. Yesterday could mean anytime in the past, last week, a month ago, etc. And today might mean they thought of something today that scared them that actually happened some time before and somewhere else. It's very important to not show exaggerated concern, and to not suggest what might have happened, but to ask open ended questions like what time of day it happened, if it was play time, class time, outside time, etc., and who else was there. If your child reports an injury or accident, they may not have reported it to their teacher or school official. Please contact the school ASAP and inquire about any injuries that have taken place so that a proper report can be filled out.

Emergency Procedures:

In the case of an internal emergency where the students must stay in the building due to a snow storm, danger or threat from outside, all students will be accounted for and gather in the classroom where a master attendance will be taken. Teachers will be assigned a particular number of students to be in charge of during this emergency. Once the extent of the emergency is determined, the director or head teacher will contact each family by phone, text or message, if possible. If parents are unavailable, she will contact the emergency contacts. She will also contact the local law enforcement agency to let them know the nature of the emergency, who is at the school and how we are protecting the students and staff. If this emergency involves gunmen or other threats that could cause bodily harm to students and staff, the students will be directed to the safest rooms in the building, this could be in the bathroom.

In the case of an external emergency where everyone evacuates the building due to danger inside, such as a fire, the students will follow the evacuation plan posted. A drill of the emergency evacuation plan will take place once a quarter. The students should not stop to get their coats or any personal possessions. If coats are necessary, the teacher or assistant shall gather coats. The teacher shall take the student sign in sheet and the master contact sheet before leaving the building. Students and staff shall gather at predetermined location and wait for further instructions. Once outside, the teacher shall take a master attendance to see that no student is missing. The director shall be the last to leave the building after a complete check of all rooms, bathrooms, and closets have been checked. In the event the director is absent for the day, the head teacher shall act as director, and assign another staff member to take children outside. The director shall assign someone to contact the authorities to report the emergency. Once the students and staff are safely away from the building, the director, or head teacher shall contact families.

Administrative Organization:

Champion's Choice for Early Learning is a 501-c3 non-profit organization run by the preschool director under the direction of a school board that sets policies and seeks to maintain them. Prospective board members complete an application, which is reviewed and approved by the standing board prior to election by the board. Nominees are Christians who are local community members, business men and women and parents. Board meetings are held once a quarter, or as needed. Times and dates are available upon request.

In order to understand the issues and decisions being faced by the school, parents may attend pre-session board meetings. Parents must submit any issues they want to present at the pre-session meeting to the board, in writing, one week before the scheduled meeting. Untimely issues should be presented to the board, in writing, ASAP. Any policy or other relevant decisions made will be posted within one week of meeting.

Right to Modify Handbook:

CCEL Preschool reserves the right to modify the handbook as needed to reflect the changing needs of the school, staff, students and families without prior notice to parents, staff or teachers.

Resources:

There are a couple resources in our school library available for check out that are helpful in understanding the foundational philosophies of how to approach discipline, behavior and learning for young children.