



Valley Covenant Preschool

2023-2024

Welcome

Welcome to the Valley Covenant Preschool program. We are pleased you are going to be with us and look forward to working with you and getting to know you and your child better.

Our Preschool will be a place that children will look forward to coming to each day. You can help your child to adjust to the new year by talking about the Preschool experience and introducing your child to the teachers. Preschool can provide invaluable experience for preschoolers in dealing with groups of children their own age, learning to share and play together and to respond to loving adults other than their parents.

Parents are encouraged to be involved. We have an open-door policy; parents are always welcome to visit or sign up as a parent helper. By volunteering in the classroom, it gives you the chance to become familiar with this new experience for your child. You get to know their teachers and their friends firsthand. It will also give the teachers a chance to get to know you better. Your presence in the classroom will help other students adjust to other authority figures and become comfortable with you. We encourage you to share your special interests or talents with the class. Examples: musical talents, career skills, hobbies, and art skills, etc. Parent helpers are a great addition to the classroom! Parents that help more than once every 30 days will need to be fingerprinted to comply with DCFS regulations. Please see Jill Huber for more information.

Areas of development in all preschool classes include:

1. Physical
 - a. Fine Motor and Gross Motor Skills
2. Social and Emotional
 - a. Sharing
 - b. Following Directions
 - c. Listening to Others
3. Intellectual
 - a. Language Development
 - b. Group Discussions
 - c. Self-Expression
 - d. Problem Solving
 - e. Math
 - f. Pre-Reading Skills
4. Creative
 - a. Art
 - b. Music and Rhythm
 - c. Dramatics
5. Spiritual
 - a. Short Bible Stories

Three-Year Old Classes

The emphasis on our 3- year-old classes is to provide challenging activities designed to meet the individual needs of children during the active time of growth and development. Daily we use consistent routine and engaging activities to help create a love of school. Hands-on learning allows students to develop skills in language arts and math while building self confidence and self-esteem in the classroom. We provide the materials, experiences, and the physical space for children to explore through touch, sound, and sight. Children are offered hands on experiences and encouraged to work with each other.

Four Old Pre- Kindergarten Classes

The Pre-Kindergarten classes help prepare young minds for elementary school with the emphasis on more structured learning.

Within the Pre-Kindergarten program, the focus is to help promote an enthusiastic and receptive attitude toward school. The program offers child centered learning activities allowing children to build a positive attitude toward learning through questioning, observing, and experimenting with varied materials. Teachers help promote the children's construction of knowledge and build foundations for school success in reading, math, science, and arts. Children are offered hands-on activities and are encouraged to work together, promoting language development, perspective taking and conflict resolution.

Enrollment

Registration forms are available on our website: www.valleycov.org click preschool.

To enroll your child in Preschool a non-refundable Registration fee (\$75 before June 1st and \$85 after August 1st) and first month's tuition is due. The following forms need to be completed and returned with all the signatures as needed.

- **Application and Written Consent**

Please print & fill in all 3 pages (Make 1 & 2 front to back.)

- **Medical History and Immunizations**

Also available from your doctor. Not required until first day of school.

Please make sure your doctor includes either date of TB test and lead screening, or a note for both. Also make sure the child's parent has signed this form.

- **Verification of Receipt**

Not required until first day of school. Read this document from DCFS, then **print out page 2**, fill out and sign.

- **Discipline and Dismissal**

Please read, then sign and return on first day of school.

- **Birth Certificate** We will need a certified copy of your child's birth certificate). Please bring it with you on the first day of school.

* For students who were in the program last year, we will keep your child's records on file. We will ask you to update our records at the open house in the fall. New students need to complete all required forms.

** Medical forms do not need to be turned in until your child's first day of school. Please make sure that all immunizations are up to date and medical forms are filled out, including parent and Dr. signatures. Please ask your physician about the TB skin test and lead screening, these are required by DCFS to place your child in our facility. If your physician does not feel that the test is needed at this time, he/she must attach a note stating that the child is not at risk.

If your child has a summer birthday, (before Sept. 1st) you may want to read the book, Summer Children: Ready or Not for School, by James K. Uphoff, June E. Gilmore, and Rosemarie Huber. There are excerpts from this book in the following article, "Ready or Not?" This may help you make a decision about when to start preschool or if you want to put your child in two or three years of preschool. If you are wondering which class would be best for your child, please call Jill Huber 645-8882.

If your child is already enrolled in our Preschool or you are interested in more information, please be sure to read the Preschool Handbook and the Open House Letter.

2023-2024 Fee Schedule

- 3-year old's (2 Day) - \$85.00/month
- 4-year-old's (3 Day) - \$125.00/month

Tuition is divided equally into 9 monthly payments.

Tuition is due on the first of each month. A late charge will be added of \$1.00 a day after the 5th unless you have spoken to the director about paying late. No refunds are given for absences due to illness or family vacations.

Online Bill Pay Through Brightwheel: Parents will receive and invoice through the Brightwheel App 3 days before the payment is due, payments are due the first of each month. You can make payments through the App or send in cash or check. (September should have been paid when you registered your child, the next payment will be due October 1st.)

If writing a check:

Please put your **child's name** in the **memo line**.

Make checks payable to: **Valley Covenant Preschool. Cash:**

Please remember to include your **child's name** somewhere (preferably on a piece of paper inside the envelope.)

Pay Ahead: You may also choose to pay more than one month at a time.

Doors will be locked and will open five minutes before class time. Teacher Prep time is needed to prepare for the students. Please do not drop off early unless prearranged with the staff.

When you arrive at school

- Sign In with the Brightwheel App
- Hang up Book Bag & Coat (please have them labeled)
- Child washes hands
- Check mailbox

We understand that there may be times that you are running late, please notify us if this occurs. **If we are not notified of late pick up the procedure is as follows: (per DCFS GUIDELINES WE MUST HAVE A POLICY IN PLACE)**

- 5 minutes late we will contact parent/guardian
- 15 minutes late we will contact emergency contact
- 30 minutes late we will contact Sheriffs Department

When you pick up your child

- Sign Out with the Brightwheel App
- Pick up Book Bag & Coat
- Check mailbox
- Make sure a staff person sees you leave.

Schedule / Calendar

Vacations and holidays are set up concurrently with the calendar of the Meridian Community District #223.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Valley Covenant Preschool follows the Meridian CUSD#223 inclement weather policy. Unless otherwise notified by Valley Covenant Preschool, all families should follow that policy. A remind message will be sent to all families. Closings and delays will be announced on any of the three T.V. channels, and on radio stations WHRL and WROK. Snow days are not guaranteed to be made up.

Birthday Treats/Snacks

Snacks will be served daily, your child will be able to choose from Pretzels, Cheeze It Crackers, Gold Fish Crackers, Ritz Crackers, and Cereal (dry) and the occasional birthday treat.

Birthday Treats are allowed, please sign up on the birthday sign-up sheet posted by the mailboxes and indicate what you will bring or send us a message and we will add your child's name and the treat they will bring. DCFS requires we post the snacks that will be brought in.

Sign-up sheets will be posted in the classroom for class parties. DCFS requires we post the snacks that will be brought in.

Notes Home

We will only send printed notes home to those who do not have email. Please check your e-mail often. **If you are not able to check your e-mail at least once a week**, please let us know and we'll send notes home to you both in print and by e-mail.

Also find us on Facebook.

Contact Us

- By phone 815-645-8882, Mrs. Huber's Cell 815-222-2598
- Email: preschool@valleycov.org
- Brightwheel App

Health

V. HEALTH AND SAFETY HEALTH POLICY For the health and safety of staff and students, every family must follow this Health Policy and report to the School if their student has had symptoms of, exposure to, or diagnoses of any of the following:

- Fever (must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to work)

- Symptoms of severe illness such as lethargy (more than expected tiredness), uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs (until medical evaluation determines you can return to School)
- Diarrhea
- Blood in the stools not explained by diet change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting two or more times in 24 hours
- Persistent abdominal pain (lasting more than 2 hours)
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash with fever
- Purulent conjunctivitis (pink or red eye lining or whites of the • eyes with white or yellow pus coming from the eyes)
- Lice

If students become ill at school, parents will be called and expected to pick up the student as soon as possible. A student should not return to school until he/she is fever free without medicine for 24 hours. If your child becomes ill during the day, we will make every effort to notify you immediately, so be sure we have your current home phone, cell phone, or work phone numbers. If your child becomes ill or is injured and needs emergency medical treatment, we will arrange transportation to the nearest emergency medical care facility. All children must have permission for emergency medical treatment by a physician.

Lice Policy

The School has a “No Lice/No Nits” policy, meaning that students will be sent home for treatment if lice are found, and students cannot return until all lice or nits (eggs) are gone. Clothing, hats, scarves, pillow cases, bedding, and towels worn or used by the affected person at school in the 2-day period just before treatment is started will be machine washed and dried using the hot water and hot air cycles because lice and eggs are killed by exposure for 5 minutes to temperatures greater than 53.5°C (128.3°F). Items that cannot be laundered will be dry-cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks. Furniture and floors will be vacuumed to remove an infested person's hairs that might have viable nits attached. Such measures should also be taken at the home and in the car of the affected student. Re-checks of students who are classmates, but are not considered affected with lice, remain the responsibility of the family and should be conducted on a regular basis.

HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS

All children must be fully up to date on immunizations. Immunization records and birth certificates are required prior to the beginning of the school year, or the child will not be allowed to attend school.

GENERAL SAFETY

- Staff is trained in CPR, First Aid, AED, and general safety procedures.
- All staff members are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse/neglect
- An Emergency Plan has been developed.

Ways Families Can Help:

1. When dropping off and picking up, use the designated School entrance and exit in the parking lot (please follow one way traffic flow).
2. Monitor your children carefully in the parking lot; do NOT leave children in the car unattended.

3. Make the staff aware of any safety issues or concerns.
4. Keep current on children's immunizations and check-ups.
5. Teach your children good health practices at home (wiping nose with tissues, brushing teeth after meals, flushing the toilet, washing hands before meals and after toileting, cleaning up after self, etc.). It helps if we are consistent with health practices at home and school.
6. Keep all information current with Valley Covenant Preschool. This includes phone numbers for home, work, and cell; home address; and e-mail address.
7. When you drop off or pick up your child, contact the staff so they know you are dropping off/picking up.
8. Keep teachers informed about your child's health, mood, eating habits, family situation or anything that might affect your child's behavior at school.
9. Teach your child about safety practices (good strangers/bad strangers, practice fire and tornado drills at home, stop, drop, and roll, etc.). It helps if we are consistent with safety practices at home and School.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills are conducted once a month, each room has a visible evacuation chart with the route to be taken clearly indicated. Other drills are practiced as needed.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed approved and is in place. All employees have been trained accordingly. Crisis Management is an integral component of our School safety. The most important consideration in both crisis management and safe School efforts is the health, safety, and welfare of

Health Requirements for Staff

Staff members are certified by a practicing physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children.

Pest Control Notice

Due to DCFS Regulations, we are required to inform all parents that Adams Pest Control will be spraying the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 3:15 pm

Transportation

Transportation for all children must be arranged privately by the parents. Only authorized persons as stipulated on the enrollment form may pick up the children. Children must be accompanied by an adult as they enter and exit the building. When you arrive with your child, make sure that a teacher acknowledges your presence. As you leave, again, make sure a staff member knows that you are leaving with your child.

Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips and will need to sign a permission slip for each trip. Field trips will be within walking distance, so we won't need to worry about car seats for a whole classroom of students.

Clothing

Children should be dressed in comfortable, easy to launder, clothing. All removable clothing (such as hats, boots, mittens, jackets etc.) should be **clearly marked with child's name**. We are not responsible for lost items if they are not marked.

Discipline and Dismissal

Harsh punishment is prohibited. Discipline will be handled with kindness and understanding. No child shall be subjected to cruel, harsh, humiliating, petty, severe, or provocative treatment, or corporal punishment. No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks. No child shall be deprived of needs or any part of meals or snacks as punishment. Discipline measures shall be designed and administered in such a way as to help the individual child develop his own self-control and to assume responsibility for his own actions.

We will establish simple rules that set limits of behavior required for the protection of the group. The Preschool reserves the right to dismiss any child for disruptive and / or damaging behavior. Parents will be notified of such behavior and required to help develop a plan to correct such behavior. If the child is still unable to adjust to the school routine and engages in continued disruptive behavior, the child will be dismissed. This policy is without regard to race, sex, and creed. This policy is enforced so that we can ensure all children attending the Preschool will have a safe and comfortable atmosphere in which to grow and develop.

Please read the Discipline and Dismissal **Policy** found at the back of the handbook. Then sign and return.

Insurance / Accreditation & Personal Information

The Preschool is covered by accident insurance in case of injury to your child while in attendance at Preschool. We are licensed by State of Illinois under the Division of Children and Family Services. The teachers and aides are qualified and licensed according to the State regulations. By law, teachers are required to report cases of child abuse to the Department of Children and Family Services. No personal information about your child will be released without written authorization

Fundraisers

IN THE FALL

Reading for Education : Each parent is asked to send out 6 emails to family, friends etc. We receive money per email, and through the fundraiser, we have been blessed each year with over \$6000.00 in gift cards to purchase supplies, manipulatives, games, etc. for the classroom.

ON-GOING . . .

Office Max/Office Depot Recycling

Please bring us your empty inkjet cartridges, laser, toner, or fax cartridges etc. We are enrolled in the Office Max/Office Depot rewards program. Through this program we earn rewards for turning in cartridges monthly and given 2% back on all our purchases. Reward certificates are then issued to Valley Covenant Preschool for use in the store or online.

Scholarship Fund

You may also donate to our scholarship fund to help families with tuition.

Scholastic Book Orders: Book orders will be placed in your child's mailbox each month. There are two ways to order, either fill out the form and send back with your check written to Scholastic Book Club, or order online: scholastic.com/reading club, Online **Class Activation Code:** GPZM7. If you are purchasing books for your child as a gift, please indicate on their form or send us and email, and we will put the gift books in a brown paper bag so your child does not see their special surprise. For each order the preschool will receive bonus points to use towards books or other items for the classroom.

2023-2024 School Year Calendar Valley Covenant Preschool

August

August 16 th	Open House 10:00, 1:00, 5:00 (choose a time to come) please RSVP with your time.
August 21 st (Mon)	First Day of School for Monday/Tuesday Classes
August 23 rd (Wed)	First Day of School for Wednesday/Thursday/Friday Classes

September

September 1st (Fri)	No School/ Early Out Meridian
September 4 (Mon)	No School Labor Day
September 19/20 (T/W)	Picture Day

School pictures: You should have received your picture packet in your child's mailbox. Pictures will be taken outside in case of rain we will reschedule. On picture day the students will not be playing outside so their clothes won't get dirty.

October

October 6 th	No School/Early Out Meridian
October 9 th (Mon)	No School
October 27 th (Fri)	Dress up Party (W/Th/Fr) classes.
October 31 st (Tue)	Dress up Party (M/T) classes.

Dress up Party: Please no "scary" or "spooky" costumes. We want to prevent any tears from kids who might get scared. Try and stick to characters or occupations. Your child can bring their costume and change in time for the party. The party will be the last half of class.

November

November 10 th (Fri)	No School/Veterans Day
November 17 th (Fri)	Out of town for a conference
November 20 th -24 th	No School

December

December 19 th (Tues)	Christmas Party
December 21 st (Thurs)	Christmas Party
December 22 nd -January 8th	Christmas Break

Christmas party will be the last half of class. Parents are welcome.

Snow Days: During the winter months, please be sure to watch the weather and check the morning news if you wonder if we will be closed. Generally, we follow whatever the Stillman schools do for snow days. Snow days will not be made up.

January

January 9 th (Tues)	Return to School
January 15 th (Mon)	No School

Class Preference: For students currently enrolled in our program, you will be given the chance to indicate your first, second and third choice of which class you prefer for the following year. We do this at this time of year to help us give an idea of next year's class dynamics. Final placements are not made until registration material are passed out in March. **Pre-registration:** For new students, we start collecting registration for our 3-year-old classes.

February

February 13 th (Tues)	Valentines Party
February 14 th (Wed)	Valentines Party
February 16 th (Fri)	No School/Early Out Meridian
February 19 th (Mon)	No School/Presidents Day

Valentine's Party: Bring 20 Valentines for classmates, do not write a name on each one, just sign your child's name. The party will be the last half of class.

March

March 22 nd -April 1st	Spring Break
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Play Outside: As the weather starts to warm up, remember to bring a coat in case we decide to go outside. Dress your child in comfortable, easy to launder, clothing as the playground is especially dirty in the spring.

April

April 1 st (Mon)	No School
April 26th (Fri.)	No School (Meridian CUSD#223 Teacher Institute)

May

May 14th (Tues.)	Graduation Celebration
May 16 th (Thurs.)	Graduation Celebration

Graduation Celebration: Students will sing songs and be presented with a preschool diploma. The program will be at the beginning of your child's class time. We will start the programs after everyone is settled. After the program families can leave and the kids can stay for classroom fun, pick up will be the normal time.

Guidance & Discipline Philosophy

We believe in guidance and discipline, rather than punishment. Guidance and discipline are positive ways to help a child develop self-control and confidence handling their needs in a socially acceptable way. This is an on-going process, not a single act. We are here to teach and guide each child to learn the skills to manage their own behavior.

The Classroom Rules - The rules are reviewed often with the children.

- Use helping hands
- Use listening ears
- Use quiet polite voices
- Use looking eyes
- Use walking feet
- Share with others.
- Be gentle with friends.
- Put toys away.

Guidance & Discipline Techniques Used by Our Staff

- Model socially acceptable behavior and manners along with positive reinforcement and acknowledgement of good behavior.
- Include the children in the problem-solving process.
- Give the child choices whenever possible.
- Establish eye contact with the child when talking to him/her.
- Re-direct a child to another activity.
- Remove the child from the area, discuss the improper behavior, what a better choice would be next time, and allow the child to return to the activity when he or she feels they can manage their behavior appropriately.
- Place the child in a time out for no longer than a minute per year of age in a chair away from the group.
- Physically hold a child until he/she can gain control of him/herself. Call a parent to come for the child if the child cannot regain control of self.
- If a child hurts another child, the teacher will attend to the injured child immediately. The child that did the injuring will stay with the injured child and the staff member looking after the injured child, until the injured child is ready to return to the classroom activities.

If the teachers see a continuing pattern of misbehavior, the following steps will be initiated:

- Phone call from the teacher informing the parent of the concern or “red flags” that have been observed.
- Implementation of strategies to correct behavior. These may include but are not limited to:
- Using the many resources and techniques we have available. Trying different techniques can take time.
- Observation of the child by the director and/or other qualified professionals.
- Parental observation of classroom behavior.
- Reinforcing classroom rules with the entire class, (teachable moments)
- Conference with parents, teachers, and director, to discuss goals, implementation of goals, and measuring progress.
- Follow-up meetings (face to face or phone) to discuss progress.

Prohibited Guidance and Discipline Techniques

- Any form of corporal punishment.
- Yelling at a child.
- Ridiculing a child or the child's family.
- Blaming, teasing, insulting, name calling, or threatening the child with punishment.
- Withholding food, affection, or positive attention.

Parents Role in the Guidance Process

- Share any relevant information with the teachers to help understand any underlying issues.
- Be open when the teacher gives notification of a concern or if a continuing pattern of misbehavior is observed.
- Follow through on any recommendations made by the staff including evaluation by the school district. Contact should be made within two weeks of this recommendation.
- Work as a team with the staff so everyone can be consistent in expectations and help the child understand what behavior is acceptable and not acceptable.

Child's Role in the Guidance Process

- The child will have a reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflict before a teacher steps in.
- Make an effort to change any unacceptable behavior.
- If the child has hurt another child, the injuring party will stay with the injured child until they are ready to return to normal classroom activities. The child will be asked what s/he can do to make the child feel better.

Discharge

After attempts have been made to meet the individual needs of the child, any child that has demonstrated inability to benefit from the type of care offered by our school, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be discharged from the school.

