

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO VCS PRESCHOOL	1
STATEMENT OF FAITH	2
VENICE CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY	4
OUR SCHOOL DAY	5
OUR DAILY SCHEDULE	7
DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY	11
FINANCES – REGISTRATION, ANNUAL FEE AND TUITION.....	13
DRESS CODE	14
GENERAL INFORMATION	15
SERVICE HOURS	15

WELCOME TO VCS PRESCHOOL

Welcome to Venice Christian School. The purpose of the Venice Christian Preschool is to open the door to creative discovery and expression for our children as they learn about their world and their Creator in a caring Christian atmosphere. We hope to teach the child that school is fun and is a loving, trusting place to be. Our goal is to prepare each one in the foundational areas necessary for entrance into kindergarten.

HISTORY

Venice Christian School was founded in the spring of 1987 by parents and teachers desiring a Christ-centered education for their children. Our Preschool Program is fully accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

The school is an independent, not for profit, tax-exempt corporation. Board members include individuals from the faculty and administration of the school, from the members of supporting churches and from the school parent population at large. Members of the Board meet monthly and are responsible for the operation of the school.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Venice Christian School is to educate children academically, spiritually, physically, and socially with a Biblical worldview in partnership with families, local churches and the community.

Venice Christian School reserves the right to change any policy herein
at the sole discretion of the VCS School Board to do so
in the best interest of Venice Christian School.



STATEMENT OF FAITH

Venice Christian School believes that Christian education rests on the foundation that God is central and that everything else exists in relation to Him. The mental, social, and physical areas of a person's life have no meaning apart from the unifying force of the spiritual dimension.

WORD OF GOD

We believe in the unique, plenary, verbal, inerrant inspiration of the original writings of the sixty-six books of the Bible, the Word of God, wholly infallible in all its parts including scientific and historical accuracy; and that the Bible is the full and complete revelation of God's will for man, as well as the sole, supreme, and final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

ONE GOD

We believe in one God: spirit; holy; eternal; infinite; Creator of all things; eternally existing in three persons: **Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**: co-eternal in being; co-equal in power and glory and having the same attributes and perfection.

The Father: We believe that the Father is fully God, possessing the Divine attributes, including: eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and immutability.

Jesus Christ: We believe that Jesus Christ, as the Scriptures affirm, is the Son of God and the Son of man and that He was born of a virgin, and is Himself very God.

The Holy Spirit: We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, possessing all of the attributes of Deity, and that in essence, He is equally God.

MAN

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but through Adam's sin the whole race fell, became alienated from God, inherited a sin nature, and is totally depraved. Of himself, man is utterly helpless to come to the knowledge of truth apart from the Scriptures and the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

SALVATION

Salvation is only by grace, a free gift of God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Those who thus receive Christ by faith have their sins forgiven, their hearts cleansed, are born of the Spirit, become children of God, and are made new creatures in Christ.

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification has three aspects:

1. The believer was sanctified at his conversion by virtue of his union with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit;
2. He is continually being sanctified through the Word, as he walks in the Spirit and produces the fruit of the Spirit;
3. He will be completely conformed to the image of Christ when he sees his Savior face to face.

SATAN

We believe that Satan is a personal being and was created the highest in rank of all angelic creatures; that he sinned through pride, thereby becoming the author of sin; that through the temptation of Adam he caused the fall of man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; that he is the prince of the powers of darkness; and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.

RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the visible, personal return of Jesus Christ, in power and glory. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the eternal life of the saved, and the eternal punishment of the lost.

VENICE CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

At VCS our goal in education is to join parents in training our students for eternity, as they fulfill God's plan for their lives. "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not turn away from it". Proverbs 22:6

Following the example set forth in Luke 2:52, we have established goals for the students that will cover cognitive, physical, religious and social/emotional areas of growth. "And Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and men".

The curriculum is planned around training the students mentally, physically, spiritually and social/emotional. In preparation for success in kindergarten, our curriculum teaches our students to think critically and creatively, and to value the importance of learning. Our aim is to reflect for our students the cultural diversity of our community and nation and to teach a sense of worth for their own heritage and a respect for the heritage of others.

In our center-based classrooms, students are given individual choice of several different areas of learning with ample time as a group to be exposed to the academic subjects important for youthful development. Playground time twice a day affords the social needs and exercise necessary for balanced growth. Chapel held several times a week molds the young hearts through prayer, worship and the Word of God.

In order to responsibly affect the lives of our students, parent/teacher conferences are scheduled, affording parents the opportunity to know first-hand how their child is doing. Progress reports are sent home to further inform parents of areas of success or weakness.

VOLUNTARY PRESCHOOL (VPK)

Voluntary Preschool, a government program, offers payment of 3 hours/day for the K4-5 students and 5 hours/day for the K4-3 students, if your child qualifies. He/she must be a resident of Florida, 4 years old on September 1. This process begins with enrollment at Venice Christian School and then parents must apply for the program and meet with a representative of VPK. Specific information on the VPK program can be accessed online at www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/VPK%20program.html

OUR SCHOOL DAY

We have a three-day session (M-W-F) and a five-day session (M-F) for four-year-olds. We also have a two-day session (Tues. & Thurs.) for three- year-olds. Three-year-olds must be three by September 1. Four-year-olds must be four by September 1. The class time is from 8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

DAYCARE

Daycare is available from 7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. This program is for **all** children who arrive prior to 8:15 a.m., and/or who are not picked up by dismissal and are sent to aftercare. Your account will automatically be billed for daycare in arrears at the hourly rate of \$5.20 per hour calculated in 15 minute increments, unless you have elected the monthly “FLAT RATE” of \$179/month. The “flat rate” will be billed August through May and must be arranged in advance.

Parents must sign their child out from aftercare and record the time. If a parent fails to sign and record time students will be automatically charged until 5:30P.M. All students must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. Failure to do so will result in late charges of \$1.00 for each additional minute after 5:30 p.m. Please note that the VCS Office closes at 4:00 p.m. daily. **Aftercare staff may be reached at 941-223-4682 after this time.**

ENROLLMENT POLICY

Parents should complete an application for their preschooler and turn it into the school office. The office will schedule an interview with the principal. Final acceptance requires:

- a) Approval by the Administration
- b) Submission of Parent Covenant
- c) Completion of registration and fiscal agreement forms
- d) Payment of school fees
- e) Submission of physical examination form and immunization form (HRS 680) and immunization records as required by the State of Florida
- f) Completion of Nutritional Lunch form and emergency card
- g) Copy of official Birth Certificate
- h) Read and sign “Child Care Facility” Brochure statement

VCS accepts students regardless of race, color or national origin and accords all students the same rights and privileges.

CURRICULUM

We are striving to help our students grow and mature as Jesus did based on the four areas of growth stated in Luke 2:52, “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and Man”.

Wisdom (mental)

Self-expression and listening skills, reading and math readiness skills and science experiments are all part of the curriculum. Students learn their alphabet, beginning sounds, colors, shapes, numbers, and learn to print their name. Expression through art, music, and movement exploration is encouraged.

Physical Development (stature)

Students engage in activities that build gross and fine motor skills and promote personal hygiene. Cooking, sensory experiments and participation in indoor and outdoor games are also included.

Spiritual Development (favor with God)

Bible stories and instruction are used which emphasize children as God’s special creation. Children learn Bible verses and participate in prayer.

Social /Emotional Development (favor with man)

There is an emphasis on building self-esteem, interaction with others, development of curiosity and creativity.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30 - 8:15	Early morning Day Care held in the lunchroom. If your child arrives during this time, please send him/her to the lunchroom. Teachers are not in the classrooms until 8:15.
8:15	Arrival/free play/greeting time
8:25	Clean-up time
8:30	School begins, attendance recorded Circle time: we pray, pledge, sing, greet each other and find out what we will be doing today, story time.
SPECIALS:	<u>Library:</u> Tuesday - 4's at 9:00-9:30 / 3's at 9:30-10:00 Wednesday - 4's at 9:45-10:15 <u>Chapel:</u> Wednesday & Thursday - all at 9:15-9:30 Friday – all at 10:10-10:40 (Big Chapel) <u>Snack:</u> Monday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday – at 9:00 Tuesday – 4's at 9:30 / 3's at 9:00 <u>Music:</u> Friday – all at 9:15
9:15	Center time, free choice among a variety of activities
11:15	Clean-up, use bathrooms, chapel (Mon.-Thurs.)
11:30	Playground, VPK children go home
11:55	Return, soap & water wash, gather lunch box
12:00	Lunch in Lion's Hall
12:30	Bathrooms & Playground
1:15	Return to classroom, wash hands, set up cots, read a story, Bible story & memory verse (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday)
1:20	Naptime
2:00	On Friday, staff meeting for all employees in hallway
2:40	Wake up from nap, pass out papers, snack, collect tote bags & lunch boxes, story time until parents arrive
3:15	Dismissal to parents or Aftercare Program
5:30	Day Care closes

rev. 08/2011

PARENT OBSERVATIONS

Parents are welcome to observe at school. Normally, these visits are best made after the first weeks of orientation. Make an appointment with the preschool teacher so that your observation may be arranged at a time which will not conflict with the visit of another parent. Please do not bring other children with you. Conferences with each child's parent(s) are held at least once a year and at other times as needed to discuss the child's progress, care and education. Parents are encouraged to participate in the goal-setting process for their child.

IN CASE OF BAD WEATHER

In case of bad weather, listen to area radio and TV stations such as Joy FM (88.1 FM) and TV Channel 40 for school closings. Generally, if Sarasota Public Schools are closed, so are we. You may keep your child home or pick him up early at your discretion, even if the rest of school remains open.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be using our Venice Christian School bus. If the bus is unavailable, the field trip will be cancelled.

ROOM MOTHERS

Each class will have one or two room mothers who will be responsible for organizing parties and calling other mothers to provide refreshments for holiday parties during the year. Let us know if you can help in this very important area.

HEALTH PROCEDURES

We are not equipped nor licensed to accommodate children who are not "potty trained". Therefore, your child must be potty trained on or before the first day of school. This requisite must be met in order to complete the admission procedure.

If your child shows any of the following symptoms: sore throat, rash, fever, cough, earache, headache, or upset stomach, it is the responsibility of the parents to keep him home, rather than expose others at school. In the event of childhood diseases, please check with your physician as to the number of days your child should stay out of school.

Do not send over-the-counter medications to school. Maintenance type medication for a non-contagious condition may be given at school only with the appropriate form completed by

physician and parent. Such medicine should be pre-measured single doses, and should be turned in to the school office, by the parent.

If a child becomes ill during the day, parents will be notified immediately. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the office of any changes in the emergency phone number.

ALLERGIES

Advise the office and child's teacher of any allergic reactions, including food allergies, that should be watched for and what is to be done in the event of exposure.

PETS IN CLASSROOM

Throughout the year, pets will be included as part of our curriculum. If your child is allergic to any pet, please let us know on the application under "allergies".

SNACKS & BIRTHDAYS

A mid-morning and a mid-afternoon snack will be served daily. We ask that each family contribute one day each month. A calendar is posted in the classroom and each family is asked to sign up for a designated snack. The snack should also include a gallon of drinking water. We celebrate birthdays in school and mothers may provide treats. Please consider nutritious choices.

LUNCH

Your child must provide his/her own lunch. (A suggestion for thermoses: look for the type with the sippy top. They are much easier for the children to handle). On Friday, we have pizza brought into the school. This will require you to preorder if your child wishes to participate.

If lunch is forgotten, a nutritional lunch will be provided for a \$5.00 charge.

BOOK BAGS

Tote bags are required for your child as they are needed to secure paperwork sent home with your child. For your convenience and for uniformity, the preschool department provides these on the first day of school at no additional charge.

VACATIONS

The school will close at Thanksgiving, Christmas, spring and summer vacations as stated in our yearly calendar. These calendars should be kept throughout the school year and referred to often. The Preschool will close along with the rest of the school during bad weather.

ATTENDANCE

The VPK Uniform Attendance Policy is designed to implement changes to the State VPK laws made by the Legislature.

The policy results in providers being paid the full base student allocation (BSA) for the time a child attends their VPK program unless a child misses more than 20% of the program. For those cases where a child goes over the 20% absence threshold, the provider will not be paid for those days under any circumstances.

Under the revised attendance policy, providers will continue to be responsible for turning in the required monthly attendance roster as well as completing and retaining the Long or Short Attendance Verification forms containing the parent's signatures.

After a VPK class has concluded, a reconciliation calculation will be made by applying the formula to the whole program year. In other words, if a child is absent for more than 20% in one month, but is absent for less than 20% of the entire program, the provider will receive a reconciliation payment at the end of the program. This formula **may** result in additional funds being due to a provider after the program concludes.

According to **VPK** policy, up to **3 unexcused absences per month are payable** (calculated cumulatively from one month to the next). In order to remain eligible for **VPK** funding, this policy is strictly enforced.

TARDIES

Students arriving tardy must sign in **both** in the office and in the classroom.

Tardy students affect the entire class disturbing the teaching process and learning environment. Excessive tardiness affects a student's grades and could place his promotion in jeopardy. For a tardy to be excused, the student must have a written excuse from the parent or guardian stating the cause of tardiness. A note from the parent does not automatically excuse a tardy. Normally a tardy would be excused for the following:

- Illness
- Unusual traffic problem
- Flat tire or car trouble
- Medical appointment

NAPTIME

Cots are provided for naptime. You will need to send in a crib sheet with your child's name permanently labeled on it. **SMALL** blankets, pillows and sleep "buddies" are also encouraged and all need permanent name labels. Bedding is sent home routinely for laundering and then should be sent back the next school day.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents must provide transportation to and from school. Parents may form car pools. Parents must have listed on the emergency form anyone authorized to pick up your children from the school grounds. Children will be released only to a parent or person specifically designated by the parent on this form.

ARRIVAL

Before school, daycare starts at 7:30 A.M. and is located in the lunchroom. At 8:15 A.M., all students will be taken to their classrooms. Being on time for school is **crucial**. Lateness effects your child's learning and distracts the other children.

VISITING PROCEDURES

All visitors must report to the office and sign in. Visitor badges are to be worn at all times.

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Parents must report to the office and sign their children out for all early dismissal. Advance notice should be given whenever possible, so that teachers can prepare any make-up work needed.

DEPARTURE

All preschool children must be signed out and picked up in the classrooms. VPK requires sign-in and sign-out daily.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY

As it is desirable for children to be kind, appreciative and pleasant, those qualities should be taught, not hoped for. We want to see honesty, truthfulness and unselfishness in our students, and these characteristics are the conscious objectives of our early instructional process. It is important to produce respectful, responsible young citizens, and we set out to guide them accordingly. Heredity does not equip a child with proper attitudes; children learn what they are taught.

In the classroom, we have established simple rules and we enforce them consistently. In anticipation of problems, we may redirect a child to another area or activity. We also use logical consequences: a child who knocks over another child's block creation has to leave the block center. We also encourage children to come up with their own solutions. If two children are arguing over the same toy, we say, "I see two children who want to play with the same thing. How can we solve this problem?"

No corporal punishment is allowed.

A technique that we have found to be effective to help enforce positive behavior is our apple tree/hot air balloon. Here's how it works:

The classrooms have discipline charts, one is an apple tree with names on the apples. Each apple is attached to a sign designating the student's "job" for the week. If a child breaks a rule, his apple is removed from the "job" area and he loses the privilege of doing that job for the day. At playground time, the teacher and student have a discussion concerning the offense. Children are encouraged to apologize if another child was involved. The greatest tool to good behavior is the prayer that goes on at each day's beginning. The class prays that Jesus will help them remember the rules and teach them to be a good friend.

Our apple tree also functions as reinforcement for positive behavior. Each child has a frog with his/her name on it. The frog hops up through the branches of the tree throughout the week as we observe praiseworthy actions and behavior.

PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP

The PTF of Venice Christian School works cooperatively with the School Board in the interest of your child and the school. It seeks to promote the interest and involvement of parents in their school, to provide helpful, interesting, and informative meetings, and to raise supplemental funds for the school. Meeting times will be announced at the beginning of the school year. Other activities and events are scheduled from time to time. Your active support of this organization is fundamental to the success of Venice Christian School.

FINANCES – REGISTRATION, ANNUAL FEE AND TUITION

The Annual Fee covers the cost of registering the students and all the materials that will be purchased for the students' use during the school year. These materials are ordered in large part by the end of May.

The Annual Fee must be paid prior to enrollment and is non-refundable. Returning students have an opportunity to register prior to new incoming students. Once community registration begins, all available classroom slots will be filled on a first-registered basis. Students and/or families with an outstanding balance from the current year will not be allowed to enroll until their prior balance is paid in full. If at the end of the school year the student has an outstanding balance, their enrollment status may be forfeited.

Tuition is due at the beginning of the school year. As a courtesy to parents, we offer several payment plans: pre-payment, June to May and August to May payments. Tuition monthly payments are due on the first of each month with a ten-day grace period. The twelve month payment plan option is only available to those who register prior to June 1st. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay for their tuition on time and to notify the office immediately of any emergencies or problems with payments. If the parent has not notified the school of the need for emergency payment plans or fails to provide an approved payment plan, a 5% service fee will automatically be charged on the student's account. Before and after-care privileges will be denied if any portion of the family's account becomes more than one month past due.

In the event of withdrawal, transfer or expulsion, the parents are responsible for full payment of the tuition and other fees through the last day of attendance. Parents must sign a withdrawal form prior to the student's last day. The school reserves the right to withhold report cards and student's records until tuition and other fees have been paid in full.

LIBRARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. All items are due in one week and may be renewed, however, they must be brought into the library in order to be renewed.
2. Students may not check out items if they have outstanding fines or overdue items, without permission from the Librarian.
3. Overdue fines are \$.10 per day per book and \$.50 per day per video/DVD (including weekends and holidays). If your child is sick or has forgotten their items on their scheduled Library Day, they must be returned on the next day or as soon as possible.
4. There are several types of fines/overdue notices:
 - a. OVERDUE NOTICE – This item is overdue and should be returned promptly.

- b. SECOND OVERDUE NOTICE – This item is still overdue and begins to accumulate a daily fine.
 - c. FINAL OVERDUE NOTICE – This item is assumed to be lost. If you cannot find the item, you must pay the replacement fee plus the maximum overdue fee.
 - d. FINES NOTICE – this item has returned after the due date and has accumulated a fine.
5. All items must be returned before Thanksgiving, Christmas and Spring Breaks, unless specific arrangements have been made with the librarian.
 6. Venice Christian School maintains a policy of only shelving material appropriate to Christian education, however families should review the materials checked out by students to oversee individual family guidelines.

Volunteer help is welcomed. Information about becoming a volunteer is available in the library.

DRESS CODE

Preschool - boys and girls: (School uniforms optional)

1. PreK t-shirts to be worn every Friday and to all field trips. One t-shirt is provided. Additional shirts (including adult sizes) are available for purchase for \$7 each.
2. Closed-toe shoes and socks. (Sneakers are preferred for daily climbing and running on the playground.) No sandals, “flip-flops” or “cros”.
3. Comfortable play clothes, including shorts or slacks.
4. Tops must cover the midriff.
5. Logos or pictures on clothing should be tasteful.
6. No bikini suits for our water play days.

All outer clothing should be plainly marked with the child’s first and last name. All jackets, sweaters and hats should be worn according to weather conditions and each child’s individual needs. Outdoor play is part of each day’s activities except during inclement weather.

EMERGENCY CLOTHING

The children do not need a set of emergency clothes. We have clothing for emergencies. We ask that if your child comes home in these clothes, you launder them and return them to your child’s classroom as soon as possible. We will include a reminder note in the bag with the soiled clothes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A child is not to bring gum, toy weapons or monster-type toys to school. No toys should be brought to school except for Show-n-Tell or Mrs. Clarke's "Star of the Week".

Any change of address, phone number, or place of employment should be reported to the office and to the teacher immediately.

Sometimes there are things that happen at home that may disturb or temporarily upset a child. If you notice your child is upset, please try to let us know so we may give the child the understanding he or she needs. Also, if a parent is ill or out of town, please let the teacher know.

The school reserves the right to dismiss any student whose continuance in the school is not deemed to be in the best interest of the Venice Christian School program. In case of dismissal, the student contract will be considered terminated.

At Venice Christian Preschool, special emphasis is placed on promoting creativity and establishing a one-to-one relationship with each child. This close relationship provides the basis for individual growth within the group.

SERVICE HOURS

The Venice Christian School Board thanks you in advance for your participation and cooperation with our Service Hours Program. The school and students have benefited in past from the contribution of time from many of our families. We are seeking to provide an even greater benefit for our children and our school through the development of a formal volunteer program (Our Service Hours Program).

Research indicates that the degree to which parents participate in their child's education directly influences their appreciation for the education and their child's commitment to succeed. We are excited about the wonderful changes that are sure to occur in our children's lives with this exciting program.

Our Service Program is based on a system of service hours. Each VCS family is asked to complete 20 service hours during the school year. The accumulation of hours will follow the school year, beginning with the start of the school year in August. Please record all service hours in the office.

We are on the Honor System. It is your responsibility to be sure you have completed 10/20 service hours during each school year. All selections will be handled on a first come, first served basis, so it is important to sign up for the area that most interests you as soon as possible.

We realize that many parents complete the required 20 service hours and exceed that requirement by hundreds of extra hours. We are fortunate to have these willing parents and would welcome your continued involvement over the required level of 20 hours per year.

We are certain that you will feel blessed as you serve at Venice Christian School. This is a great opportunity to serve, come to know staff, meet other parents and become a special part of your child's education.

Attention Parents!!! Important!!!!

In order to insure that parents are reading this handbook and understanding all of it, we ask that you sign the form below and return it to your child's teacher. This is a requirement of our accreditation agency and the 5-Star Quality Rating Committee.

Cut and return bottom part



I _____ hereby
Print name

acknowledge that I have read the VCS Preschool parent handbook and had my questions answered.

Signature

Date