



GOOD SHEPHERD
REFORMED EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

K4–K5 Handbook

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Dear Parents,

It is our great pleasure to introduce new parents and their children to Good Shepherd's Junior and Senior Kindergartens. It is our desire at Good Shepherd to provide a wholesome and educational experience for kindergarten-age children while their parents work. Good Shepherd's kindergartens provide an excellent foundation for grammar school and a classical education.

Many hours of thoughtful preparation have gone into planning a place for your child to develop spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically in a happy environment under well-trained, loving guidance. Toward this goal, we have compiled this Kindergarten Handbook to aid parents in understanding the policies and procedures which help to make Good Shepherd a delightful place for their children.

We believe that choosing the right school and the right people to care for your child will yield invaluable benefits for him for the rest of his life. We hope that we can work with you in the training of your special little one.

We look forward to serving you in the near future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyne White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "W".

Mrs. Tyne White
Lower School Principal

Daily Life

(schedule varies somewhat from year to year)

7:30am	Activity centers
8:15	Preparation for class Morning devotions
8:30	Phonics and reading
9:00	Handwork and numbers
9:30	Restroom and snack
9:50	Chapel
10:10	Motor skills and recess
10:40	Math time
11:00	Bible
11:15	Lunch
12:00pm	Storytime and naptime
2:00	Quiet, wake-up activities Unit Study (Science, Music, Art, History)
2:55	Clean-up
3:30–5:30	Extended care, snack (JK), playground, indoor play

What is Good Shepherd School?

Good Shepherd School is a classical and Christian school in the Anglican tradition. Founded in 1979 as an educational ministry of Good Shepherd Reformed Episcopal Church, the school offers classes from Kindergarten (4's) through 12th grade. We are committed to classical education and employ the time-honored medieval “trivium” as an educational philosophy and teaching methodology to equip pupils for the future with proven tools from the past. We serve families from Tyler and its surrounding area with various church backgrounds who desire a Christian, morally wholesome, and academically enriching environment for their young children.

Our purpose above all is to honor God who made us for Himself. In a school setting, we seek to do that by encouraging the children to use the talents and resources God has given each of them to the best of their ability and in a way which always shows love and concern for all of God's creation.

Junior & Senior Kindergarten

Good Shepherd School offers two Kindergarten programs:

- Junior Kindergarten for children who are 4 (by September 1) or 5 years old;
- Senior Kindergarten for children who are 5 (by September 1) or 6 years old.

Activity centers with books and puzzles are open 7:30–8:00am, and Extended Care (no charge for Kindergarten) is available 3:30–5:30pm, Monday through Friday. The primary instructional time, or the school day, begins at 8:15am and ends at 3:00pm.

We strive to maintain a well-structured and also a home-compatible atmosphere in our kindergartens. We want you and your children to be comfortable here. Children of this age blossom and thrive under warm, personal attention. It is our desire to see every one of our kindergartners develop a lasting self-confidence, curiosity, and joy in learning.

Staff

The members of our staff are selected carefully for their Christian commitment, teaching ability, their love for young children, and their desire to accomplish the same goals we have as a school. We put a lot of effort into the training and supervising of our teachers and staff, because they are the key to the effectiveness of our program. They will have a real influence on your children for many years beyond the students' actual kindergarten experience.

All of our staff, though they may not be members of Good Shepherd Church, do attend regularly the Christian church of their choice and do share in our vision of providing a genuine Christian environment for their students.

We encourage you to get to know our kindergarten staff. We believe it is essential that you feel relaxed and able to communicate freely with those caring for your children.

Admission Requirements & Enrollment Procedure

We welcome all area children of any race, color, national or ethnic group. Admission depends upon age, readiness, available class space, and the parents' desire for their children to be taught according to the curriculum and methods outlined in this handbook. Parents must keep their financial account with Good Shepherd current.

A child who has reached the age of 4 years by September 1st of the year he attends and is toilet-trained may enter Good Shepherd's Junior Kindergarten. A child going into the Senior Kindergarten at Good Shepherd must be 5 years old by September 1st.

The following papers must be submitted to the school office before entrance into the Kindergarten program:

- Completed Good Shepherd Application form
- Completed medical information sheet and an up-to-date immunization record signed by a doctor or health clinic

- Well-care Health statement from your child's physician
- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Parent Cooperation Agreement signed
- Registration Fee paid
- Emergency Information Form completed

The Director will meet with the parents and give them a tour of the facilities and answer any questions regarding admission.

Tuition & Fees

Tuition for the school year is billed monthly in accord with the current Tuition and Fee Schedule. Payment not received by the 8th of the month of will have a late charge attached to that month's bill. Enrollment is subject to suspension if the account is not brought current by the end of the month. Full tuition must be paid for the space reserved for your child in class, even if there is illness or absence for any other reason.

Occasionally there may be an incidental charge for some special activity or field trip. You will be notified well in advance so that you can prepare for this.

Good Shepherd provides annual Vision and Hearing Screening testing. Parents are notified in writing, and results are mailed to them.

Lunches & Snacks

Snacks are provided by the school for the Junior Kindergarten, but lunches should be sent with your child in a standard size lunch box. Catered lunches are available through local vendors. Menus will be sent home and emailed to families. If you would like to purchase lunches, payment is due upon receipt of order.

Calendar & Attendance

Please note the following school holidays when there will be no classes:

- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Fall Break (the week of Thanksgiving)
- Winter Break (2 weeks of Christmas through New Year's day)
- Civil Rights Day
- President's Day
- Spring Break (1 week in March)
- Easter (Good Friday & Easter Monday)
- Memorial Day
- Inclement Weather

School closings due to bad weather will be announced on radio stations KTBB 600 AM, KGLY FM, and local TV stations. Please do not call the Principal or teachers for this information. As a general rule, GSS will conform to the decisions of the Tyler Independent School District regarding weather related school closings.

Religious Instruction

Our Jr. and Sr. Kindergarten, as a part of Good Shepherd Reformed Episcopal Church's ministry, stresses the importance of spiritual development in children. We seek to train the students in the knowledge of and obedience to the Holy Scriptures. Our desire is to help the children realize that no area of life or truth can be separated from God. Thus we approach all of our teaching and activity from God's perspective as revealed in the Bible. Children memorize important Bible passages such as Psalm 23, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer.

In Bible class, children hear Bible stories every day. They also learn to sing many hymns and songs which Christians have sung for centuries in praise to God. We constantly seek to cultivate in our kindergartners a reverence and respect for the Lord God as they learn about His great majesty, holiness, and love.

Children's Behavior

We have found that busy, actively learning children find little time for misbehavior. The focus of our training is on directing and guiding children toward listening and obedience which, in the end, develops in them a self-control and a self-discipline.

As we guide our students' behavior, we always point them to God's requirements as expressed in the Ten Commandments. Children are taught that it is ultimately God whom they are obeying or disobeying.

Kindergartners follow a structure and a pattern in our school. They do not do things when and if they want. We have a set time, for example, for lunch (the children are expected to sit while they eat), for naps, for work, and for activities. This means that the children will enjoy themselves in a safe, predictable, and caring environment.

We try to be very consistent in explaining and enforcing our rules. If a child is asked to do something and ignores what we say, or does what we have asked him not to do, then punishment may become necessary. The punishment can be separation from the group for a time, missing a special activity, or a trip to the Director's office for a serious talk. We always try to make clear, at some point, why the punishment was necessary. We want the children to get the clear message that we are in control, and they are not.

We are here to help the children through their growing years. It is our policy not to spank kindergartners. Although we believe that, when necessary, spankings administered in love are an important aspect of the wholesome upbringing of a child, we defer that responsibility to the parents.

Please stay in close communication with us, as we will with you, the parents. Often, parents can inform us of difficult situations their children are experiencing away from school which will help us prepare for possible behavior problems at school. We will also notify you if your child is showing continued disruptive behavior.

It is important that parents and school administration agree on the importance of an orderly environment for learning. Thus, parental support of appropriate disciplinary measures is important in

achieving that and reinforcing in the children the understanding that the school and the home work together as a team.

Daily Activities

The basic kindergarten schedule consists of the following daily activities:

Morning devotions and news—Each day officially begins with a time of committing ourselves to God in prayer and praise and hearing a small portion of His Word. Following this, we pledge our allegiance to the flag, and discuss some news for the day: the weather, the month, the season.

Class time—Group instruction in the core curriculum and class seatwork time is scheduled during the morning. Periods are scheduled in which our students learn to concentrate and work hard on their phonics and math skills. The curriculum for Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten is described below. At seatwork time, the children do all sorts of enjoyable activities to develop their ability in cutting with scissors, tracing, coloring, drawing, and writing with a pencil. As the year progresses, children learn to form the letters of the alphabet and the numbers correctly.

Bible class—Each day, children listen to a Bible story and work on memorizing verses and Christian hymns. In addition to receiving religious training during Bible time, the students also develop good listening comprehension skills and memory skills.

Unit Study—Every week brings the chance to study and explore firsthand new and interesting facts of science or social studies, various art media, and music. Teachers plan many of their daily activities and classes around themes for the month such as the four seasons, Thanksgiving and the Puritans and Pilgrims, the Christmas story, community helpers, safety, health habits, plant and animal life, the Easter story, weather, and various historical heroes.

Restroom time—Children may go to the bathroom at any time, but set times for restroom are provided for those who get “too busy” and forget. Good restroom manners and cleanliness are emphasized.

Free play—Kindergartners have several play periods each day. They play on the large playground outside whenever the weather permits. They also use the gymnasium for recess times, as well as their classrooms which contain many toys, books, puzzles, blocks, and other items to enrich the children’s play.

Snacks and Lunchtime—A wholesome snack is given to Junior Kindergartners each day in the morning. A usual snack is a serving of some healthful food such as crackers, fruit, or raw vegetables, along with milk or juice. At both snacktime and lunchtime, good manners are encouraged. We teach the children to give thanks to God for their food.

Music, poetry, and stories—Throughout each day, children are taught fun songs, nursery rhymes, poems, and fingerplays. The teacher reads stories to the children every day as well. We regard these activities as absolutely essential in helping our kindergartners to become joyful learners, good readers, and articulate adults.

Afternoon activities—After lunch and a storytime, a rest period of an hour, more or less, is scheduled. The length of time shortens somewhat, particularly for the 4-year-olds, as the year advances and the children grow. All children are required to rest part of the period, and then the non-sleepers are allowed to “read” a book or do some other quiet activity at the teacher’s discretion. Please send only a king-size pillowcase and small blanket or towel for naptime. Pillows and stuffed animals are not permitted. The afternoon schedule also includes a snack, opportunity for individualized instruction and practice, free play, and special enrichment, seasonal, and art projects.

Clean-up and departure—Children are encouraged to take responsibility for cleaning up their own play areas and to help in general pick-up. We also help them learn to pack their own bags and put on their jackets by themselves. The class is then led to a designated spot to await the arrival of parents.

Curriculum

Children enrolled in Good Shepherd’s Junior Kindergarten are trained in important basic skills including recognition of left and right; critical size, directional, and comparison vocabulary, the

correct use of scissors, crayons, and pencils; an introduction to various art media and to simple music concepts; recognizing and using the basic colors and shapes; and age-appropriate physical education. Each class will be taught many Bible stories, verses, and simple Bible truths about God and His creatures. Each class will also explore a variety of science and history themes throughout the year.

Junior Kindergarten provides a solid readiness foundation laid for future reading and math. Children will vary in their mastery of these subjects for many reasons: age, interest level, and maturity, for instance. However, we strive to help each child in Junior Kindergarten to develop proficiency in the following areas:

- Reciting and printing correctly the letters of the alphabet.
- Learning the sounds of the letters.
- Sounding out and blending short vowel words.
- Recognizing and printing correctly their own names.
- Recognizing the numbers 1–100.
- Counting up to 100 objects.
- Printing correctly the numbers 1–100.
- Counting by 1's, 10's, and 5's.
- Adding and subtracting through the 10 family.
- Understanding a variety of math concepts such as the use of clocks, calendars, thermometers, money, fractions, ordinal numbers, story problems, place value, and measurement.
- Learning by various unit themes (seasons, friends, shapes, animals, helpers, body, machines, etc.).
- Developing fine motor skills, coordination, forms of movement.
- ...eye-hand, -foot, -body coordination.
- Developing social skills: self-control, cooperation, trust, feelings, manners, empathy, etc.
- Developing communication skills, imagination, following directions, problem solving skills, listening skills, etc.
- Developing spiritually: prayer, thankfulness, forgiveness, kindness, respect for God and creation, patience, etc.

Senior Kindergarten students review the fundamentals learned in Junior Kindergarten as listed above early in the school year. Each of these skill areas is extended to a greater depth and breadth so that the student develops mastery more fully. New students learn these things quickly in the group-classroom setting. On this foundation, Senior

Kindergarten works through a comprehensive phonics program so that children can advance in the reading skills:

- Learning various long and short vowel combinations as well as consonant blends
- Writing sentences by dictation as well as short stories
- Reading from books aloud in class daily as well as at home
- Counting by 2's, 3's, 100's, etc.
- Adding and subtracting through the 10 family as well as "twins"
- and many, many songs, poems, Bible passages, and interesting projects.

Field Trips

Kindergarten classes have several field trips scheduled in the course of the year. These are important times of learning and becoming acquainted with our community. Upon enrollment, parents are asked to sign a permission request to allow their children to attend class field trips. Parents will always be notified in written form of the location, date, time, and purpose of the trip at least two days in advance. Students are supervised carefully, wear name tags, and are seat-belted at all times in vehicles. Some enjoyable trips our students have taken in the past have been to the fire station, the zoo, museums, the Rose Garden, the public library, farms, and more. We also invite guests into our classrooms from time to time such as policemen, doctors, dentists, and weathermen.

Medication & Illness

Parents are expected to administer medicine to their own children. If, however, a Doctor's instruction for the prescription indicates that the medication must be given while the child is at school, please leave detailed instructions on proper administration. All medicine must be in its original container. No medications, including non-prescription medications, will be administered without a medication authorization form on file at the school.

Parents are urged to keep their children at home if they show any sign of illness (sore throat, upset stomach, rash, fever, headache, watery eyes, etc.). This is for the sick child's own protection as well as the good health of the other children and the teachers. If a child develops a fever of 100 degrees or seems ill while at school, the parents will be called and asked to provide alternative care for the child.

A child who has been absent because of a contagious illness, vomiting, or diarrhea may be requested by the school to obtain a doctor's confirmation that he is no longer contagious before returning to school. Again, in the interest of other children's health as well as our staff, your child should be fever-free without the aid of medication, and without vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

In the event of a medical emergency, school administration with either call 911 or transport the child to the nearest hospital and contact parents as written on the Emergency Contact Information submitted to the office. Parents are responsible for all costs after insurance has been applied.

Uniforms

Good Shepherd School, in all of its grades, including Junior and Senior Kindergarten, has its students wear uniforms. An important aspect of achieving the high personal, academic, and moral goals we set for students is for them to view their educational duties as their calling before God. The uniform is a way of reminding them of that. Beyond this central purpose, our parents have found many other benefits that also come with wearing a uniform. The children at this age especially enjoy it, for it underscores the importance of school to them.

Please label all removable clothing (sweaters, coats, hats). All Junior Kindergarten students, and those Senior Kindergarten students prone to accidents, need to provide a complete change of labeled clothing (non-uniform) to be kept at school. Otherwise, the parent will be called to bring clean clothing.

Birthdays & Parties

Your child's birthday may be celebrated at school if you wish to provide special birthday refreshments during snack or lunch time. Please arrange this with your child's teacher ahead of time.

For home parties, invitations may be distributed at school only if all class members (boys and girls) are invited. Otherwise, we ask that you please phone or mail your invitations separately.

The children will have several holiday class parties during the school year, for which teachers will call upon parents for assistance and refreshments. We ask the teachers to plan for foods that are appropriate for children of kindergarten age (For instance, hard candies can be easily choked on by small children).

Since Good Shepherd is a CHRISTIAN School, our emphasis in seasonal observances is around Christian themes. During Christmas and Easter our focus will be upon the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Also, while many Halloween customs may be innocent fun, too many of them are not, and require careful monitoring by parents. Since families will differ significantly in this area, we at Good Shepherd have over the years focused instead on a festival day around All Saints and Reformation Day, which brought the Bible to the people in their own language among other good things.

Pick-up Procedures

The Emergency and Contact Information Form completed upon enrollment will inform our staff regarding exactly who will be picking up each child. It is up to the parents to make us aware of any changes in this information. We will ask to see the driver's license of anyone not familiar to us to confirm their authorization as designated by you for pickup. We will not release students to anyone that does not have the parent's authorization.

Supplies from Home

Kindergartners will need to bring the supplies listed below to school as soon as possible after admittance. Periodically throughout the year, teachers will check student supplies and notify parents of any items which need to be replaced.

- one king-size pillow case for resting mat (JK only)
- one small blanket (or towel)
- one standard sized back-pack (no rolling backpacks!)
- one complete change of clothing (labeled) in a zip-loc bag

In compliance with the health standards, each Friday nap-time sheets will be sent home for washing. Teachers will be labelling students' supplies with their names, or, in some cases, instructing parents how to label each item.

What Parents Can Do

BECOME A V.I.P.

As a school, we have many needs that can only be met through the unselfish giving of parents' time and talents. This is where the V.I.P.'s come in (Very Involved People). V.I.P.'s may serve in many different capacities: as room mothers in charge of class parties and field trips; as teacher's aides who volunteer part of one day on a weekly basis; or dads that have particular occupations or hobbies that can be shared with the students in connection with their classes.

Notices

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Good Shepherd School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It

does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship, and financial assistance programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

NOTICE OF CHANGES IN POLICY OR PROCEDURE

Parents will be notified by mail of any changes in policy or procedure. To discuss policy or procedure, or any change of them, parents should set up an appointment with the Director through the School Office: 903.592.4045.

Important Points to Remember

- 1 Parents are invited to several activities during the year. Each event will be important to your child. Make every effort to attend.
- 2 Do not allow your child to bring money or prized personal possessions to school.
- 3 Establish a reasonable, regular bedtime and start the day with a good breakfast so your child will be in top physical shape for his school day.
- 4 Bring your child to school on time.
- 5 Limit your child's television viewing, and find opportunities to read to your child. Parents can establish a love for books and an early interest in reading through this practice. CAUTION: contrary to popular opinion, ample research in recent years has shown that even moderate "screen time" via tablets, smart phones, and computers do NOT enhance learning, but rather diminish development of necessary mental skills essential for higher level learning, such as verbal visualization, reflective thought, sustained concentration and focus to name a few
- 6 Parents are invited to visit the facility at any time. We encourage parents to visit classrooms at least once during the year. Please arrange a classroom visit ahead of time with the teacher.
- 7 Look at Good Shepherd as assisting, not replacing, you in your responsibility to train your children.
- 8 Talk about Good Shepherd School to your friends. Word-of-mouth has always been our best advertisement.

- 9 Chat with your child about what he does at school. Praise him for his work and accomplishments.
- 10 Refrain from engaging the teacher in conversation during the school day. Make an appointment instead. We ask our teachers to carefully tend to their children at all times.
- 11 Make tuition payments on time.
- 12 Cultivate a healthy marriage and attend church regularly with your child.
- 13 Remember to thank and encourage your child's teacher for the work and care she invests in your child.
- 14 Encourage politeness and good manners in your child. Teach him that this is merely being thoughtful of the other person.
- 15 Understand that all children are sinful and will need correction at times.
- 16 PRAY FOR US. This is God's work, and He is faithful in answering the prayers of His people as they seek to build His kingdom.



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