

Updated on August 2024



# Parent Handbook

English

**Christian Academy of Little Saints**

**Full Gospel Church of Houston  
1520 Witte Rd, Houston, TX 77080**

## PHILOSOPHY and PURPOSE

We believe the children—the next generation, are our future. Each child is unique and held valuable. Which is why through the use of various activities held at their own pace, we will help these children grow not only in body but also in their maturity in Christ.

Christian Academy of Little Saints (CALs) is a weekday early childhood learning program for children ages 18 months through 4 years. As an early childhood program, we strive to educate each individual child in a healthy and loving Christian atmosphere so that each child can develop physically, spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, and socially well balanced.

CALS is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) and, as a licensed program, uses the Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers as a basic guideline for setting policies and procedures. Should you wish to read it, a copy of this document is available in the school office or you may access it online at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us) also available is the most recent licensing inspection report.

## GOAL

CALS' educational goal is to ensure that our children grow in the following criteria.

**Spiritual Growth:** Children will learn about God as the Creator and the Trinity, and the love that God shows us through each ministry. They will be taught to apply the given Word in their daily lives and learn to obey and follow his guidance.

**Cognitive Growth:** Through a rich, stimulating, well-planned, age-appropriate curriculum and learning environment, the children's curiosity, imagination, creativity, problem solving, and language development will be encouraged.

**Physical Growth:** Through the use of a variety of activities and equipment, we will assist the growth and development of gross motor skills (large muscles), fine motor skills (hand and wrist muscles), hand-eye coordination, and all senses related to physical growth.

**Social Growth:** As the children work, play, and communicate with their peers, each child will learn how to accept and love others. As well as learning the awareness of others' needs and the rights and feelings of others.

**Emotional Growth:** CALS will create an atmosphere that encourages children to develop a positive self-image, feelings of self-worth and self-confidence, and a positive attitude toward others.

**Language Growth:** The early childhood period is a crucial time for laying the foundation for language development. Therefore, we actively support and educate children to ensure they have communication by providing appropriate support and educational environments.

## **CLASSES OFFERED**

***CALS will follow Spring Branch ISD's calendar,***

***but please check the CALS calendar as some dates may vary.***

### **CLASSES**

**School Hours : Monday – Friday ( 9:00 AM -2:30 PM )**

- **Love Class : 18 – 24 month**
- **Joy Class : Age 2**
- **Goodness Class : Age 3**
- **Wisdom Class : Pre – K ( Age 4 )**

### **EXTENDED CLASS**

**Hours : Monday – Friday ( 2:30 PM -5:30PM)**

Please refer to the Fee Form for extended class costs.

## **S T A F F**

The teachers at CALS are carefully selected to best meet the goals of the school, presented above. Staff members are well educated in child development, have an understanding and appreciation of young children, value, respect, and care for them as unique individuals. Teachers are always learning and coming up with ideas through the monthly training that is provided. All teachers are also certified in CPR and Pediatric First Aid.

## **ELIGIBILITY and ADMISSION**

CALS is open to children and all staff in the church and community without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

## ENROLLMENT

For enrollment, please submit all required documentation to the school office prior to the first day. Parents must submit a new enrollment form every year. Parents should complete all forms required to register their child.

- CALS Fee Form
- Enrollment Application form
- Emergency Contact Information Form
- Medical Statement (\*Requires Doctor's Signature\*)
- Immunization Record
- Child Developmental Assessment
- Video/Picture/Media Release Form
- Allergy Action Plan Form (\*Requires Doctor's Signature\*)

Please submit your Registration Fee and Deposit (credited towards the last month's tuition) as written on the Fee Form along with the other documents required above. The registration fee and the deposit is non-refundable. All fees already submitted are non-refundable.

## FEE and TUITION POLICIES

In order to enroll your child, the Registration Fee (as presented on the Fee Form) and deposit (Non-refundable/Credited towards last month's tuition) must be submitted. All tuition and fees must be submitted in cash or check form. Every year the tuition is decided by the CALS education board of the church and is accepted by the church. The monthly tuition for all CALS programs is an annual amount, minus the vacation days, divided into nine equal payments. **As in any school, expenses are constant, which prevents credit or discounts for absence due to illness, vacations, scheduled holidays, Spring Branch ISD emergency closings, and any CALS emergency closings.**

Tuition payments are due the first day of each month, September through May. Any tuition payment made after the 5th of the month will be considered late and a \$20.00 late fee will be assessed. Returned checks will be charged \$20.00 as well.

## CALS Financial Assistance Program.

Christian Academy of Little Saints is offering a Tuition Assistance Program for the Fall and Spring Semester of 2023-2024 to help families in need to offset the costs of child care services. This new program, made possible by funding from the 2022 Child Care Relief Fund, will provide discounted rates to assist families within our community access child care during times of need.

CALS will be offering following financial assistance programs:

### 1. Full Time Pastor's Child

If one of the child's parents is a full-time pastor serving at a local church, you are eligible to receive a tuition discount of 10% of tuition.

Employment verification must be provided to prove that the parent is a full-time pastor.

### 2. Low Income Family's Child

Christian Academy of Little Saints is committed to ensuring that every family can attend our center regardless of their financial situation. Families interested in applying for a lower tuition rate can send the director an email at [mycals1520@gmail.com](mailto:mycals1520@gmail.com) with just the first page of their 1040 Federal Tax Return for the last tax year to verify gross income. Any families with a gross income of \$45,000 or less per year will be eligible for a scholarship. Requests will be reviewed by the director, and you will receive a decision in writing by letter or by email. If you are approved for a scholarship, it will be available for Fall and Spring Semester of 2022-2023. If you have a sudden and dramatic change in your financial situation, for example due to a lay-off, contact the director immediately to determine if there are scholarship funds that could be issued temporarily.

\$37,001-45,000 - 20% of tuition discount

\$0-\$37,000 - 30% of tuition discount

### 3. Sibling Discount

We offer discounts to families with multiple dependent children in their household attending our center. Every child after the first child enrolling in our center will receive a 5% discount from tuition. We hope this helps alleviate some of the financial stress for families enrolling multiple children in child care.

If you have questions about the decision on your scholarship, you may contact the director at [mycals1520@gmail.com](mailto:mycals1520@gmail.com) and request a review of your case. All reviews are final.

You are responsible for letting the school know of your eligibility for the discount. No refunds can be given for discounts not requested at the beginning of each semester, so please check and see if you are eligible for a discount beforehand.

Checks must be made **payable to CALS** and may be dropped off at the main office of the school in person. Please write your child's name on all checks.

**Parents will be informed two weeks in advance of any changes in school policies by email or by letter inserted in your child's communication folder.**

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISAL PROCEDURE**

### **Hours of Operation**

#### **Mornings (Carpool) 9:00 AM – 9:15 AM**

Every morning, students will be dropped off using the carpool line and a staff member will lead the student to their classroom.

#### **Afternoons (Walk-in) 2:15 PM – 2:30 PM**

Classes begin at 9 AM and end at 2:30 PM. School doors are locked after carpool from 9:15 AM until 2:15 PM. No child will be accepted before 9:00 AM as teachers are occupied preparing for the day. Please understand that during this time, teachers are unable to give their undivided attention to the students. In the event that you arrive before 9:00 AM, we ask that you wait outside until carpool begins.

- **Parking Lot Safety**

Your child's safety is our most important concern. Our parking lot is especially busy at arrival and dismissal times. Please watch for your child and other children and **DRIVE SLOWLY**; During carpool time please refrain from parking in front of the building. For the safety of your children we are prohibiting the use of Cellphones in the car. **It is illegal to leave any child in an unattended vehicle, even for a short period of time.** Please hold your child's hand when crossing through the parking lot.

## **SCHOOL YEAR / INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

Our bad weather decisions will be influenced by Spring Branch ISD. **Should bad weather require that the Spring Branch ISD schools be closed, CALS will also be closed.** Please attend to radio and television stations for official word on the Spring Branch ISD closures. And you will hear the final decision through an email sent by CALS. (i.e. Hurricane, tornado, high winds, flooding, etc.) or a school emergency (i.e. No electricity, severe plumbing problems, etc.)

**No refunds are given for school closings.**

## **HEALTH, SAFETY and EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

You will receive one form to be completed listing medical information, insurance information, emergency information and a permission statement. These forms must be completed and returned to school BEFORE school begins. The medical portion MUST be signed by the child's doctor. The

EMERGENCY INFORMATION/PERMISSION FORM portion must be completed by you or a legal guardian. During the school year, please inform the school if any changes occur in the information on these forms (telephone numbers, addresses, immunizations, etc.)

If a child becomes ill or is injured in such a way that he/she needs medical attention, staff at CALS will:

1. Assess the nature of the illness or injury and care for the child apart from the other children.
2. Attempt to contact the child's parents. If neither parent is available, we will contact an authorized alternate. Therefore, when choosing person to be contacted in case of emergency, please be sure they are local people who will probably be available.
3. Contact the child's physician, if requested and if necessary.
4. Administer first-aid and CPR when needed.

If we are unable to contact parents immediately and feel we must take a child to an emergency room for a minor emergency, someone from the school staff will take him/her to closest emergency center. Parents will be notified as soon as possible and asked to meet up there. The child's parents will be responsible for any charges incurred.

### **ILLNESS**

The health and well-being of your child is important to us. Please keep your child home if there is any evidence of illness such as:

- Fever (**100 degrees or higher**)
- Persistent cough and/or sore throat
- Heavy non-clear nasal discharge
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Skin rash
- Symptoms of a possible communicable disease including conjunctivitis

No child with a fever(100 degrees or higher) may return to school for **at least 24 hours** until after his/her temperature has returned to normal and/or after vomiting and/or diarrhea has ceased **without any medication**. Please report any communicable diseases to the school, so that we may inform other families.

## **MEDICATIONS**

We prefer not to administer any medication, but should it be necessary for us to do so, the following state of Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services rules must be followed.

- Any and all medications brought to school must be in the original container.
- Medications must be labeled with the child's name.
- Prescription medicines must be labeled with the date.
- Medications must include directions to administer.
- Prescription medicines must include the name of the doctor prescribing the medication with permission with Doctor's Signature.

**Any medicines, ointments, etc. brought to school MUST be handed directly to a staff member.**

**Please do not put any medications in your child's bag, lunch box, or etc.**

## **HEARING AND VISION SCREENINGS**

The state of Texas requires all child care facilities to have a vision and hearing screening on each child above the age of three. If your child has had this screening please bring a copy of the screening for us to obtain in your child's file.

## **FIRE AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

Children's safety is the most importance to our school. The first priority and responsibility of the staff and teachers is to move children to a designated safe area or alternate shelter. Severe weather drills are performed every two months and fire drills are performed monthly. Emergency maps are posted in each classroom and emergency information is posted in the main office.

### **GANG-FREE ZONES**

**What is a gang-free zone?** A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center.

**What is the purpose of gang-free zones?** Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

**What does this mean for my day care center?** A child care center must inform parents or guardians of children attending the center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

## **POLICIES ABOUT CHILD ABUSE**

CALS is required by the state to help prevent child abuse and neglect and aid parents in this prevention as well. Teachers receive specific training on prevention and reporting of child abuse and neglect on an annual basis. Both parents and teachers are encouraged by school to understand and clearly identify signs of abuse and neglect and further their knowledge in this prevention. Teachers are asked, but not required to inform the director before making a report. CALS will always advocate for the child if abuse or neglect is ever suspected. For more information or if there is a question on abuse or neglect, please come by school office or look on the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services webpage.

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF Family and PROTECTIVE SERVICES** Address: 5425 Polk St, Houston, TX 77023

Phone #: (713) 767-2700

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Texas License Office : 713-940-3009

You may report suspected abuse of neglect at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)

Website address: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

**The Texas Minimum Standard will always be posted in the CALS main office and is available to read. It is also available online to read as well. ([www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us))**

## **CURRICULUM**

**CALS uses the curriculum created by Funshine Express.**

It is our desire to teach each objective in a fun, interesting, imaginative manner that encourages children to learn and achieve desired behaviors and responses, and to create an environment of fairness, friendship, and trust between peers and feelings of love and respect between teacher and student.

### **Spiritual Objectives**

- We must obey the Bible for it is God's word and the truth.
- God created us and He loves us.
- Jesus is God's son and our savior.
- The Holy Spirit walks with us in our daily lives, teaching and guiding us.
- Prayer Training: We can communicate with God through prayer (God hears and answers our prayers).

- We all have a purpose in life.
- Use the Bible stories to teach real life application in the children's lives.
- Educate the meaning of Christian holidays.

### **Social Skills**

- Respect authority
- Take responsibility for actions, property and clean-up
- Putting others before self; i.e. let others go first, wait your turn, sharing, be helpful to others
- Develop and show appreciation for other's interests, attempts and accomplishment

### **School Skills**

- Keeping rules: Walk in a quiet, straight line, pass out items, take or look at something and pass it on, sit in a free standing chair, problem solving, peer interaction
- Always attempt a task and ask for help when needed
- All actions have some sort of consequence
- Appropriate manners
- React to other people's needs
- Good health habits

### **Academic Objective**

#### **Phonics**

- Recognize and write legibly (using correct position) the alphabet
- Hear and replicate the phonetic sounds of letters and identify those sounds at the beginning of words
- Listen for rhyming sounds in words
- Read simple words

#### **Math**

- Write numbers 1-10 and counting 1-20

- One-to-one correspondence from 1-10
- Understand the concept of addition and subtraction
- Recognize same patterns and shapes
- Learn the patterns of the years, months, weeks and days

### **Language Arts**

- Listen to and follow verbal and visual directions.
- Understand the concepts of opposites, position words, sequencing, and same/different
- Foster an environment which allows freedom to speak in front of a group of peers
- Develop interest in books and reading

### **Science**

- Introduce scientific vocabulary and concepts such as: sink / float, freeze / melt
- Needs of plants/animals/humans, life cycle, seasonal changes

### **Motor Skills**

- Provide various activities that promote the growth of large muscles.
- Provide activities that promote the growth of fine motor skills: writing, play clay, scissoring, gluing, coloring, drawing, and other finger-based activities.

### **Art and Music**

- Encourage creative expression, independent thinking and help build self-esteem
- Learn to find "singing voices" pitch and rhythm, steady beat, dynamics
- Experience a variety of music and learn about instruments of the orchestra from other lands.

## CELEBRATIONS

### **Birthdays**

Birthday students receive a special birthday crown during chapel while friends sing them the birthday song. On the day of celebration, parents may send a simple snack or goodie bag for the class.

However, we do not hold birthday parties inside the classrooms. There are students with specific allergies. Therefore, if you are bringing birthday treats or goodie bags, be sure to discuss the contents and allergy list with your lead teacher.

### **Holiday celebrations**

CALS celebrates the following holidays during snack time: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the End-of-Year Party. At the beginning of the year, there will be a Celebration Sign-up sheet in each class where parents can volunteer to provide simple table decorations and goodie bags for the holiday of their choice.

## WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

**Please write your child's name on all of their belongings.**

- Your child's backpack for carrying his or her belongings.
- Lunch: Bring in a divided plastic container and a drink, packaged in a bag that will keep food hot or cold as needed. All food should be cut up and ready to eat –food should be cut into pieces no larger than ½ inch squares, grapes and hot dogs cut lengthwise.
- A complete change of clothes, including socks and shoes, appropriate for the season, in a gallon size Ziploc bag with their name on it.
- Sufficient disposable diapers for the day and sufficient training pants and outer clothing if your child is being toilet trained.
- **At the beginning of the school year: one large box of Kleenex, one large container of disposable baby wipes and one roll of paper towel. Additional requests can be made at any time during the school year.**

## WHAT **NOT** TO BRING TO SCHOOL

### **TOYS AND VALUABLES**

Except for "security toys" that may be needed during the opening days of school, we ask that all toys be left at home. If brought to school, children must be prepared to share their toys. Play guns, knives, war toys, action figures and similar toys are inappropriate in our program. In addition, please do not let your child bring money or other valuable items such as jewelry which might be lost. Gum and candy should also be left at home. Items that are easily damaged or broken should not be sent. Items that are brought for show and tell or items that might relate to the curriculum must be thoroughly sanitized, and directly handed to the teacher in a sealed bag. Teachers will keep the item in a safe place until it is time for Show & Tell. If the item is fragile, please pack it securely in a closed, taped container labeled with your child's name and a description of the contents. The teacher will be careful to place these items in a safe place until they can be used.

### **CLOTHING**

Shoes – For safety reasons, shoes should be well fitting and have enclosed toes. Tennis shoes are strongly recommended and are required for participation in motor skills. Sandals, Crocs, cowboy boots, and dress shoes should not be worn to school. If your child insists on wearing these, please place a pair of tennis shoes in your child's school bag and your child's teachers will be happy to put them on your child.

Dress - Please dress your child in washable play clothes that allow your child freedom to run, jump, climb, and crawl. We do our best to protect clothing with smocks, but certain washable paint colors and damp playground sand do stain clothes and fabric shoes.

### **STUDENT FOLDER**

All children will have their class color folder that CALS provides. We will put a folder inside of your child's bag. This enables the teachers to easily see that you have sent something to us. This folder will also be used by us to send you notes, newsletters, lesson plans and other items that are important for you to read. Always keep this folder in your child's bag and if you have notes or comments you may write and put it in this folder as well.

### **LUNCH and SNACK**

Your child expends a lot of energy while at school. Please include healthy foods in her/his lunch box. Since we are unable to provide refrigeration for the children's lunches, please put an ice pack in your child's lunch box to keep perishable foods cold. We recommend and encourage you to send healthy snacks that can be easily taken out and eaten. (Fruit, Cracker, Cheese, Apple Sauce, Veggie Sticks, etc.)

## DISCIPLINE

Teachers support children's social and emotional development, assisting them to be comfortable, happy and involved in play and other activities. The staff helps children deal with anger and frustration by comforting them, encouraging them to identify and verbalize the problem, helping them find words when necessary and helping them use various strategies to problem solve.

By setting clear, consistent and reasonable limits, the children gain a sense of security: they know what is expected. Within these limits, children are encouraged to make choices and decisions. Mistakes become learning opportunities and the child's sense of self-esteem grows as he/she experiences success in a variety of situations. Teachers plan ahead to avoid conflicts and redirect unacceptable behavior. They model, reinforce, and nurture positive actions. All teachers and staff will strive to discipline each child sincerely, calmly, consistently, and fairly. We will close each day with blessings and send each kid home with encouragement and hugs.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication between school and home is very important.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, once in fall and again in spring.

**Weekly Lesson Plans :** the teachers plan developmentally appropriate activities designed to teach the skills the children need to further their education and based on the needs of the children in each class. An overview of the activities planned in your child's classroom will be sent home each week.

**Monthly Newsletters :** Approximately once a month, you will receive a newsletter with reminders and updates about activities at the school and parenting tip articles.

**Notes from Teacher / Daily Report :** Check your child's backpack each day for notes about your child's day, contagious diseases, reminders of events, "ouch" reports (sent home if your child has gotten hurt), etc.

**Kakao talk group chat :** we will announce quick reminders in Kakao group chat. Please remember that this chatroom is not for social communication but school announcements. You do not have to reply to any of the announcements.

## **PARENT OPPORTUNITIES**

We encourage you to visit the school any times and to be involved in the activities as you wish.

- If you have a special talent or interest you would like to share with us – helping in the classroom, substitute teaching, reading to the children, doing a project with the children, playing (or just showing the children) a musical instrument, etc., please let the teachers and/or the director know.

Every year, CALS provides opportunities for parents to meet other parents, such as parent orientation, Christmas family chapel, and the Mother's Day Party.

- If you ever have a problem or concern about anything at the school, please let us know immediately by talking with a teacher, the director or the assistant to the director by phone calls, e-mail or anything else that you might feel comfortable with.

## **Change to the Parent Handbook/Policies**

Christian Academy of Little Saints reserves the rights to change any policy included in the Parent Handbook. Parents will be informed two weeks in advance of any changes by email or by letter inserted in your child's communication folder.

# Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

**Please sign and return this page to the CALS office.**

I acknowledge that I have received the 2024-2025 CALS Parent Handbook. I understand the CALS policies and agree to follow the school procedures, regulations, and policies. I also understand that failure to comply with these policies may jeopardize my child's continued enrollment or re-enrollment for the next term.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please print your name clearly.)

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_