

Vernon Christian Preschool Handbook



Vision Statement

Vernon Christian School and Vernon Christian Preschool are a Christ-centered community, which, led by the Spirit, seeks to instill in all our children the knowledge of the Sovereignty of God.

We encourage and challenge our children to develop their unique gifts and talents, to glorify God, to serve their neighbours and to care for God's creation.

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Mr. Matt Driediger, Principal
Mrs. Tania Driediger, Director

Welcome

Inclusion Policy At Vernon Christian Preschool, we believe every child is a unique creation of God, wonderfully made in His image (Psalm 139:14). Preschoolers are naturally full of imagination and curiosity, ready to explore the exciting world around them. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment that celebrates each child's God-given uniqueness and fosters a lifelong love for learning.

Guided by Christ's example of love, compassion, and acceptance, we are committed to creating an inclusive community where children and families feel valued, respected, and supported. We welcome children of all backgrounds and abilities, recognizing that God's Kingdom is beautifully diverse.

Quality Staff with an Inclusive Focus Our staff are qualified Early Childhood Educators who actively engage in professional development and training to ensure our programs are evidence-based and reflect current best practices in early learning. Our school and staff are committed to inclusion, ensuring that children with diverse abilities can participate meaningfully in every aspect of our program.

Play-Based Focus & Kindergarten Readiness

Exploration, Discovery and Creativity. Through play—the work of a child—and activities such as creative art, games, stories, outdoor & gym play, school library visits, Bible teaching, and learning activities, music & movement (available to the 3 day a week program), children are given opportunities to develop their God-given gifts in all areas: social, emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical. Social development is a very important part of your child's emotional growth and preschool is a gentle introduction and transition into this social playground. We foster social development through free play time, discussion time at circle, drama, show and tell and special helper. Our art, math, science and circle curriculum is based on themes throughout the year, with many opportunities for the children to express themselves creatively. We focus on process rather than product; what your child brings home from preschool may not look like a finished project to you, but it's something they have worked very hard on and will be very proud of.

Family-Oriented Focus Our goal is to help each child grow in faith, character, and confidence while learning to love God and others. Together, we affirm our commitment to a Christ-centered education that reflects the love of Jesus and celebrates the worth and dignity of every child.

Small Class Sizes with Strong Teacher Connection Our program is fully licensed, and we believe that **small class**

sizes with one teacher offer a calm, nurturing environment. Smaller groups promote increased engagement and participation, as children feel more comfortable asking questions, sharing ideas, and developing relationships. Small classes also encourage more child-initiated activities and spontaneous conversations, allowing teachers to follow children's interests rather than simply managing the group. This approach helps foster curiosity, confidence, and independence. *Note: because there is only one staff member in the classroom, we may not be able to accommodate every level of support need.*

Best-Fit Policy If the preschool director determines that the program does not have the capacity to meet a student's needs, the family will be required to withdraw from the program. There will be full communication and transparency with the family throughout this process. To ensure best fit for the child and their family, it is the *parent's responsibility* to communicate any support needs or behaviour concerns in their child's registration paperwork. This allows our program time to plan accordingly and apply for additional support if eligible for funding through Supported Child Development (SCD).

Parents are also responsible for updating the Preschool Director **as soon as possible** (by email) if there are any changes to their child's needs or circumstances.

How do we as early childhood educators facilitate your child's growth during the preschool year?

- Giving every child unconditional love with smiles, friendly words, encouragement and care.
- Showing each child respect by considering his/her opinions and validating feelings.
- Providing limits that are reasonable and understandable to the children to create a safe place.
- Giving opportunity to succeed and build confidence; being sure the tasks are challenging and not frustrating.
- Helping each child be responsible; giving him/her the tools to do his/her own task.
- Providing opportunities to make choices.
- Developing problem solving skills; giving guidance while children work through their own problem.
- Knowing the individual needs of each child through a good knowledge of child development; working at meeting areas of growth by planning appropriate activities.
- Celebrating accomplishments, one step at a time.
- Nurturing and supporting children's differences and uniqueness.
- Providing opportunities to develop children's interests as the children initiate them, but also introduce and utilize teacher initiated activities.

Philosophy Vernon Christian Preschool is a play-based program, which focuses on exploration, discovery, and creativity with small class sizes. Social development is a very important part of your child's emotional growth and preschool is a gentle introduction and transition into this social playground. We foster social development through free play time, discussion time at circle, drama, show and tell and special helper. Our art, math, science and circle curriculum is based on themes throughout the year, with many opportunities for the children to express themselves creatively. We focus on process rather than product; what your child brings home from preschool may not look like a finished project to you, but it's something they have worked very hard on and will be very proud of.

Admissions

Children must be 3 years of age by December 31

Children must be toilet trained or in pull-ups if they have occasional accidents

If there is space in a class we will enroll throughout the year.

Registration Process

You will receive a registration form only after the Inquiry Process has been completed. Attach a non-refundable registration fee of \$50. Make cheques payable to Vernon Christian School.

Please return to the Elementary Campus office:

1. The completed registration form(s)
2. The registration fee (\$50)
3. A copy of your child's birth certificate
4. A copy of your child's immunization record
5. A copy of any court order pertaining to your child(ren)
6. P.A.P form and a void cheque.

Start Date Details The teacher will contact you by email in mid-August with specific class details. Preschool starts the same as school (Sept. 3) and ends June 12th. There are 2 two-week closures (Christmas & Spring Break) & 2 PRO-D days. Monthly fees are averaged out over the entire year - i.e. October, a long month - June, half a month - same monthly fee.

***** Admission into the preschool does not automatically transfer into admission into the rest of the Vernon Christian School system. A separate application must be made for admission into Kindergarten. Contact Savaya Hofsink for more information about school registration.**

Drop Off The teacher will open the preschool exterior door at the class start time. If you are late (or need to pick up your child early) please knock on our window or door or phone our office.

School Parking Preschool families can park in the upper lot. Please enter the driveway in the left lane and proceed to the upper lot. The two right lanes are for curbside pick up for older students. Please do not leave your car unattended in this area at elementary drop off or dismissal times.

Pick Up Outside: Please be Prompt  Pick up will be at our preschool playground in good weather. **Parents and siblings can wait outside our playground and the teacher will dismiss the children at the end of class.** If the weather is cold/rainy the children may be dismissed from our classroom. If that is the case please wait between the school entrance and our door. It can be distracting if families are waiting in front of the classroom windows. If you are late picking up your child at the end of class there is a fee. Please call the elementary office if you will be late 545-7345.

Preschool Fees Fees may be paid by monthly pre-authorized payments by filling in a Personally Approved Payment Service form and attaching a void cheque. Families may make arrangements with the Business Office by paying in full prior to Aug. 1. Without payment or arrangements made, your child's space may be given to someone else on the waiting list. Our preschool is part of the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI). Reduction in fees are automatically taken off of monthly fees. Parents are encouraged to sign up for the Affordable Child Care Benefit. This funding is applied for by the parents and is income based (please submit your form to Tania Driediger so she can add the licence documentation and signature).

Music & Movement taught by Mr. Francois Vermeulen is available for the M/W/F program and is an additional \$20/month. If you want to opt out of that program (and fee) please sign up for a T/Th class.

Thirty days' written notice is required prior to withdrawal for refund of any paid tuition. Please contact Tania Driediger at tdriediger@vcs.ca if you need to withdraw your child from our program. **Please contact the VCS Business Office to make refund arrangements as necessary. 250-545-7345 ext. 30.**

Repayment Agreement Tuition Fees (that are paid through pre-authorized payments) that have already been received are non-refundable. If the school is closed due to unexpected circumstances the pre-authorized payments will be

discontinued until the program resumes as usual. If you have fully paid the year or half year, you will be refunded the month(s) fees following the unexpected closure.

*****It is important to note that if your child is unable to attend due to sickness (or if health authorities determine that children who are unimmunized cannot attend if an outbreak occurs) then this time away would not be refunded from your tuition.**

Class times (2.5 hour program)

4 yr old Mon/Wed/Fri a.m.	8:30 – 11:00
4 yr old Mon/Wed/Fri p.m.	12:30 – 3:00
3 yr old Tues/Thurs a.m.	9:00 – 11:30
3 & 4 yr old Tue/Thurs p.m.	12:15 – 2:45

About Your Preschool Teachers At VCS Preschool we believe small class sizes serve learning better. The staff/child ratio is in line with regulations from the Community Care Facilities Licensing Act. The preschool teachers are licensed to practice in BC as Early Childhood Educators and have up to date first aid certification. The preschool teachers are required to submit a criminal record check.

General Program Outline

- Free play: Children explore centers and art is available
- Clean up time: All children are encouraged to help
- Wash routine: All children will wash their hands before snack
- Snack time: Sit down for snack, prayer
- Learning Circle/Discussion time: Music and movement, stories, drama, discussion time, show & tell, felt stories
- Outside play or gym time (depending on weather): Gross motor time

Separation We would like the first days of school to be a positive and happy experience for each child. Separation can be difficult for some children and parents. We ask that parents:

- Discuss with their child their intention to leave.
- Say goodbye in a kind but firm manner.
- Reassure the child of the parent's intention to return when school is finished.
- Be consistent and loving and the child will have a smooth and happy start to the school year.

Separation Anxiety It is important to note that a few students resist wanting to come to preschool a few weeks into the year. The honeymoon stage ends and the reality of routine starts to set in. They dig in their heels a bit and realize that this feels like work and home feels pretty cozy and easier. It doesn't last long but it is tedious to work through. The staff have been teaching for 20+ years and come to expect it late September/early October. Your child's teacher can give you some helpful information separation anxiety if requested.

Gradual Entry If this is your child's first preschool or group experience away from you, the teachers can help assess his/her gradual entry needs. If your child is having difficulty adjusting, the teacher will help decide how long your child will stay each day. **Please do not discuss your child's problems or concerns with a teacher when your child is within earshot.**

Parent Communication Throughout the year you will be receiving newsletters or emails to inform you of things happening in the preschool such as field trips, themes, etc. Please inform your child's teacher of any pick-up/drop-off changes, days your child will be away, or any other relevant information, such as changes in behaviour at home, or a health issue, etc. Time is set aside after each class to allow for brief conversations between the teacher and parents/guardians. This includes discussing behaviour concerns if they arise. However, staff have very limited time allotted for additional 1-1 communication beyond the 15-min. before/after class.

During class, if a situation cannot be resolved within the classroom, the office may contact parents/guardians to arrange for the child to be picked up. Ongoing or repeated concerns will be followed up through written communication via email. If behaviour challenges persist despite these supports, a referral to Supported Child Development (SCD) may be recommended to provide additional guidance and resources.

Late Fees Parents are required to pick up their children promptly at the end of class. More than one late occurrence (more than 15 minutes late) could result in a late fee charge of \$10.00 per late occurrence. This fee must be paid before the child returns to class.

Withdrawal Withdrawal notice of 30 days is required. Failure to provide adequate notice will result in forfeiting one month's fees.

Attendance School is in session from September to mid-June observing the same statutory holidays, Christmas and Spring break as the rest of the Elementary Campus (K-6). Preschool begins on the first day after Labour Day. There will be two professional development days for preschool teachers. There are no refunds or fee reductions for statutory holidays, sick days, or for family holidays that may be taken throughout the school year. Please regularly visit the school's website to check the calendar. As a parent of a preschooler at Vernon Christian School, you are warmly invited to attend all school events.

For school closures due to bad weather, lack of heat or water, or emergency, please listen to **Beach Radio 107.5FM**. The school will contact the radio station as soon as possible.

What to do if your child is sick:

[Quick Guide to Common Childhood Diseases](#) Please reference this resource to refer to if your child gets sick. It outlines symptoms, how to prevent, when to stay home and when your child can still attend preschool despite still having symptoms (if they have the energy/disposition to be social). **Please be diligent with this.** It is the parents responsibility to keep up to date with symptoms as well as check your child before attending preschool.

For your awareness: Measle outbreaks have been increasing in Canada. It is recommended that children receive 2 doses of the MMR immunization (At 1 year of age and the other between ages 4-6). Measles can also lead to serious complications. 1 in 10 cases require hospitalization.

Symptoms of measles include:

Fever, Cough, Runny nose, Red and inflamed eyes often sensitive to light, Rash starting on the face and neck, spreading to the chest, arms and legs (lasting 4-7 days), Small white spots inside the mouth.

Symptoms can start between 7 and 21 days after a person is exposed.

If exposure happens at our preschool, the children who are not immune to measles might not be able to attend our program for up to 3 weeks after an exposure (this is determined by Interior Health on a case by case basis). Fees will not be reimbursed during the time your child may be required to have time away in an outbreak scenario.

Immunization For the health of all our preschoolers, all children who attend Vernon Christian School Preschool are strongly recommended to have completed the standard course of immunizations. The student registration form has space for providing this information and parents are required to notify the preschool updates to their child's immunization.

If you choose not to immunize it is required by licensing that you write a brief note on your child's registration papers.

Illness in Child Care – A Quick Guide

Disease	Symptoms	Infectious?	Remove from Centre
Chicken Pox	Fever Blister Type Rash	YES 5 days after onset	YES From when spots first appear and 5 days after
Cold With Fever	Runny nose, clear discharge, doesn't want to eat, slight cough, plus fever - above 37C. Runny nose-green discharge, tired, severe cough, hurts all over	YES Before and during symptoms	YES Until symptoms return to common cold
Common Cold	Runny nose, clear discharge, doesn't want to eat, slight cough	YES Before and during symptoms	NO
Diarrhea #1	Runny stools, if no other problems, check with parent. It could be normal or because of diet.	NO	NO
Diarrhea #2	Runny stools, fever about 37C, bad smell, fussy, cranky, pain and/or vomiting	YES	YES Until Doctor says it is not infectious.
Ear Infections	Fever, clear discharge from nose, cranky, pulls on ear	NO	NO
Flu	Fever is about 37C, cranky, in pain, may have runny nose, nausea or vomiting.	YES	YES Until symptoms are gone
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	Spots on palms of hands fingers and soles of the feet. Sometimes on buttocks; for 7 to 10 days.	YES	NO
Herpes Simplex (common cold sore)	Fever blister or sore around mouth	YES	Decide each individual case with a Public Health Nurse
Impetigo	Crusty rash, mostly on face, arms or legs	YES	YES Until on antibiotics for 24 hours
Nausea-Vomiting		YES	YES Until it stops
Pink Eye	Thick discharge from one or both eyes, redness or itching of one or both eyes	YES	YES Until seen by a doctor who says child may return

Rashes	Red spots anywhere - can be measles, chicken pox, allergies, impetigo	YES	YES Until doctor says it is not contagious
Sore Throat	Fever, red throat, hurts to swallow (could be strep throat)	YES	YES Until on antibiotics for 24 hours

Health and Illness Our preschool is committed to provide a safe and healthy place for each child. A child with a communicable disease must be kept at home. This includes fever, cold, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, chronic cough, pink eye, etc. Everyone appreciates you leaving a sick or potentially sick child at home. Please be considerate of germs that spread so quickly among children. The following points are observed:

- **Parents should call or email the teacher if their child is not attending.**
- Children must be kept home if not able to participate in regular activities including outdoor play.
- If a child has been exposed to any contagious disease (Chickenpox, mumps, measles, etc. or a parasite like lice) the school must be notified. A child may only return to the school with a doctor's consent.
- Children must be fever free and have stopped vomiting/diarrhea for a twenty-four hour period before returning to school.

If your child becomes ill at school:

- (a) your child will be isolated in comfort and with supervision
- (b) the parent or emergency number will be contacted
- (c) if no contact person can be reached, the child will remain isolated and observed.

Active Play Policy The staff will ensure that the children have 30 minutes of daily active play time outside or in the gym in poor weather. This playtime will consist of both teacher and child led games and activities that will provide gross motor and fine motor skill development while raising their heart rates. Active play builds strong bones and muscles, improves concentration, coordination and balance, as well as thinking and learning skills. Active play also provides opportunities to develop social skills and builds confidence in children.

Updating Information in Your Child's File Information about your child needs to be kept up-to-date at all times. Please inform the Preschool Director of any information changes such as: immunization records, email address, address or phone number, custody or authorized pick up persons etc. We will transfer all the information you provide into your child's file.

Pictures Throughout the year photos will be taken of your children in the preschool. If you do not wish to have your child photographed please indicate your preference on the registration form. If you are hesitant to sign this you can opt out of website/publications but opt in for class shared photos. The preschool is required to keep one photograph of your child on file (confidential).

Clothing Children should wear comfortable play clothes to school. During cold or rainy weather, please send along coats, boots and mittens. An extra pair of non-marking VELCRO shoes are required to be left at the school for indoor play. Sun protection should be worn from April to June and in September. Children should bring a backpack with an extra pair of pants and underwear for unexpected accidents. All personal belongings should be labeled with the child's name.

Birthdays Birthdays are special and exciting for each child. You may bring in a special birthday treat for your child's birthday.

Snacks Snacks are **NOT** provided by the preschool. Please send a healthy snack with preferably 2 food groups (or more). When you arrive the snack can be placed in the small fridge by the cubbies. Please send a labeled water bottle with your child daily (no juice please).

The preschool staff will encourage eating and drinking but will not force your child to eat. If your child has difficulty with snack, the staff will apprise you of their observations at the end of the day. **Please note we are an ALLERGY AWARE preschool alignment with the rest of Vernon Christian School.** An email will be sent if a child in your child's class has an allergy.

Children With Allergies Your child may be allergic to various substances and this needs to be brought to the attention of the teacher. This is especially true if the allergy or insensitivity is to any food type.

Life Threatening Allergies If your child suffers from a life-threatening allergy (ie: anaphylaxis), it is of paramount importance that you fill out an extended medical form prior to admission into the preschool. **NO CHILD WITH A LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY WILL BE ADMITTED INTO VERNON CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL WITHOUT EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS BEING ESTABLISHED AND IN PLACE.** This is required by Licensing.

Medications No medication will be administered by any staff member, prescription or over-the-counter, unless a “Permission to Give Medication” form has been completed. The school secretary in the office dispenses all medications. Please ask your doctor if the dosage times can be set up to fit your home schedule. This way you will have control personally of administering amounts and time of dosage. Verbal consent will not be accepted. (Licensing regulation).

Guidance and Discipline Children feel accepted and secure when they know what is expected of them. The classroom is a happy place when it is free from confusion and disorder. There are clear guidelines that we use to encourage appropriate social and behavioural development such as:

- Setting limits early in the year to recognize appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Using choices and natural consequences
- Redirection and distraction
- Teacher-facilitated problem solving
- Giving clear instructions

Cool down time is used when a child physically hurts another child. (A short amount of time away from the other child/ren s/he has hurt, where the child will be given a moment to engage in something quiet and easy. The teacher will then explain and model a positive response for future situations.) This method allows the child to have a few minutes to reflect on his/her feelings and those of the other child if applicable. Then, with the help of the teacher, the child is given the opportunity to come up with a positive plan for success in future situations.

Conflict Resolution Following the scriptural guidelines in Matthew 18, when a parent has a concern, grievance, or complaint it must first be directed to the teacher or parent involved through open dialogue, with the intention of resolving the problem. If healing does not occur due to tension, lack of communication, etc., the School Principal shall be notified and both parties shall meet with the Principal in an effort to restore a healthy situation. If a satisfactory resolution is still not made, the concern may be brought to the Vernon Christian School Board.

Other Early Childhood Professionals On occasion, we have various professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists that visit the Preschool. I will notify you if they have any concerns about the development of your child. If you have any concerns, please let us know so that

you can make a referral as soon as possible. Contact www.nona-cdc.com to make a referral (referral form is located at the top corner of this website page) to the Supported Child Development Program. Wait lists can be very lengthy and the younger the therapy starts the better chance your child has at overcoming the obstacle.

Child Abuse Policy We hope and pray that all children attending our school are growing up in a secure and loving environment. Should a situation arise in which a staff member has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is abused or neglected, that staff member is morally and legally obligated to file a report immediately with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. In these matters, we follow a protocol published by the Society of Christian Schools in B.C.

Arrival and Pick Up The protocols regarding arrival and pickup are for the safety of your child and must be respected. Parents or caregivers must bring in and pick up their child from the preschool room and sign in upon entry. **Children will only be allowed to leave the facility with parents, guardians, people specified on the registration form or a person who has written permission from the child's parent.** The Preschool Director may choose to verify permission by telephone prior to release. The preschool will assist in making alternate arrangements if a parent/guardian appears "unable" to safely deliver the child home. In the event that there is a concern for the safety of the child due to the adult's ability to drive safely, the police will be notified.

If the parent does not arrive to pick up the child the teacher will contact the parent(s) work and home number(s) and all emergency contact people listed. We will keep trying for two hours at which time the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCF) will be contacted.

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up the child the teacher will ask the person to remain outside the classroom until the parent is contacted for consent and check the person's ID before allowing the child to be released. If the unauthorized person becomes confrontational to the teacher's request, the teacher will notify the principal and ask him to talk with the person and attend to the children in her care including the child in question. If the unauthorized person forcefully removes the child the principal will write down the license plate number of the vehicle in question, call the police and MCF.

Parental Access If a parent has a family emergency and arrives unexpectedly please call the school secretary or come to the office. The office secretary will be apprised of the preschoolers' whereabouts if not in class. The preschool must have

all copies of custody agreements, restraining orders or court orders denying a parent access. If a parent informs the school that the other parent no longer has access to the child, the written documents must be submitted before access is denied. If a prohibited parent arrives to pick up the child or visit, the police will be notified immediately and asked to intervene. The supervisory parent will be contacted and asked to pick up the child.

Fire Drills/Evacuation Fire and evacuation drills are posted in the centre and practiced monthly in accordance with regular Vernon Christian School procedure. All staff, volunteers and other adults will be familiar with fire drill procedures. **In addition to monthly fire drills, it is a requirement that Vernon Christian Preschool practice a disaster evacuation once each year.**

Disaster Planning If we are unable to remain in the Elementary Campus, we will be located next door at Vernon Christian School **Secondary Campus**. If the emergency requires that preschoolers be removed from our property, designated staff (with First Aid) will transport the preschooler by vehicle to PLEASANT VALLEY CHURCH at 6161 Pleasant Valley Road. Listen to Beach Radio 107.5 FM for disaster information. Your child will remain at PVCG until you or someone on your child's form is able to retrieve them. **ALL release protocols must be followed. All preschoolers will be supervised and attended to until a parent or certified designate is able to pick up the child.** In the event of a disaster, please **do not** call the school. We must have all the lines open for outgoing emergency calls.