

# *Calvary Learning Academy*

## *Parent Handbook*



A ministry of

### **Calvary United Methodist Church**

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## Table of Contents

Welcome, Mission Statement, and Admission Policy.....	3
Teaching Goals, Registration, and Class descriptions.....	4-5
Financial information.....	6
Discipline Policy.....	7
Drop off and Pick Up, Child Custody... ..	7-8
Conferences, Health Information, Classroom Visits.....	9
Naptime, Safety, Clothing, Toilet Training.....	10
Weather closing policy, Newsletters, Special Occasions, Lunch, Snacks and attendance.....	11

## **WELCOME**

On behalf of the Board of Calvary Learning Academy, welcome to our Early Childhood Program. We would like to thank you for choosing our program. We are excited to serve your child and family in our academy and have an exciting year planned.

The Calvary United Methodist Preschool was established in September 1992 as a part of the Children's Weekday Ministries. The name was changed to **Calvary Learning Academy** in 2003 to encompass all the early childhood programming offered at Calvary during the week.

The Learning Academy is staffed with committed Christians who have your child's development as their priority. The pastors, Calvary Learning Academy Board, teachers, and staff are here to serve you. Please feel free to call us at any time.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Calvary Learning Academy is to provide the members of Calvary, and the community at large an opportunity to instill and foster Christian values, provide education, and nurture families in a closer relationship with Jesus Christ

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Calvary Learning Academy at Calvary United Methodist Church exists for the purpose of providing support, education and nurturing for the children and families of Brownsburg and the surrounding area.

The Learning Academy is designed to provide a Christ-centered early childhood program where children receive age appropriate, play based learning experiences. This will be accomplished through use of Bible stories, songs, activities, and experiences that reinforce principles of Christian living.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

Calvary Learning Academy will accept children who have turned 12 mo. (and walking steadily) through age 6 (before starting Kindergarten). We follow the August 1<sup>st</sup> cut-off for age placement in Classrooms.

Upon admitting students to the program, it is the policy of the Academy to not discriminate based on the applicant's race, color, sex, or ethnic background. Parents should be aware that we will base our program on Biblical teachings. Our focus is to remain Christ-centered, while providing developmentally appropriate activities and school readiness skills.

Class size is limited. For the toddler class, our ratio is 1 teacher to every 5 children. Our Two's class ratio is 1 teacher to every 6 children. A maximum of 14 children will be accepted into the Jr. Pre-K and 15 students will be accepted into the Pre-K and Kinderskills classes with a teacher and an aide.

When the class size reaches maximum capacity, the child shall be placed on a waiting list and receive admission as openings become available. If adequate enrollment is not met, classes may be combined or canceled at the discretion of the Board. Full reimbursement of registration fees will be given in the case of canceled classes.

## **OUR TEACHING GOALS**

- 1) To provide a Christ-centered knowledge base
- 2) To develop each child's sense of self as a unique child of God
- 3) To reinforce respect of self and others
- 4) To develop a sense of responsibility for good stewardship of God's world and all living things
- 5) To provide educational experiences that promote social, developmental, and school readiness skills.
- 6) To encourage parents in a life-long involvement with their children's spiritual, emotional, social, and physical development

Please remember that it is the process, not the project, we value. Perfect pictures are not our goal. It is more important for the child to learn from doing projects on his own, at his own skill level.

## **REGISTRATION**

A **non-refundable** registration fee of \$150.00 will be required with the registration form. (There will be an additional registration fee of \$100 for each additional child in the family). Preschool children who sign up for 5 days a week and take up two class spots will be required to pay a \$225 registration fee. This fee will hold your child's spot in the program. Current students, alumni and church members will register a week before the community registration begins to provide families with priority placement for classes. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis. Every child must have the following information on file before their registration is complete: enrollment form, auto debit form, registration fee and immunization record.

## **PROGRAMS**

The Learning Academy operates five days per week, Monday through Friday. The following programs are available:

### **GOD'S LITTLE ANGELS**

This program meets 5 days a week, Monday through Friday. It is for children who will be aged 12 mo. and walking steadily. You may register for one day, or up to 5 days a week, either half day or full day. We introduce colors, shapes, and numbers in a fun way. Your child will create simple crafts and play with other children. Children participate in music and chapel class daily.

### **LORD'S LAMBS & PRAYER BEARS**

This program meets 5 days a week, Monday through Friday. It is for children who will be age 2 by August 1<sup>st</sup>. You may register for one day, or up to 5 days a week, either half day or full day. In this class we encourage learning through interactive play, crafts, art, and music. We introduce numbers, letters, colors, and shapes through play. Our weekly activities are theme based. All children participate in a music, chapel, and gym class daily.

## **IR. PRE-K**

This program meets three days per week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. A class is also available on Tuesday/Thursdays and Wednesday/Friday. It is for children who will be age three (3) by August 1. **All children entering this program must be toilet trained and independent in the bathroom.**

The program includes:

- ⇒ Socialization experiences in pairs, small and large groups that emphasize sharing, kindness, taking turns, and respect for God's world.
- ⇒ Development of a sense of self, both physically and emotionally through life skills play, dress up, song, dance, and sharing time.
- ⇒ Development of listening skills using stories, echoes, songs, and following directions games.
- ⇒ Development of gross and fine motor skills using movement, dance, finger plays, manipulatives, sand, water, and play dough.
- ⇒ Development of academic readiness through learning shapes, colors, sizes, numbers, and alphabet.
- ⇒ Experiential learning.

## **PRE-KINDERGARTEN**

This program meets three days per week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The class is also available on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It is for children who will be age four (4) by August 1. The program includes the following:

- ⇒ Development of social readiness skills through small group activities, self-directed play, and following directions.
- ⇒ Development of gross motor skills through dance, exercise, and movement.
- ⇒ Development of fine motor skills through experiences with puzzles, toys, paint, clay, using scissors, and writing one's name.
- ⇒ Development of academic readiness skills in listening, alphabet, and number recognition, left to right progression, rhymes, and opposites.
- ⇒ Development of self-esteem and verbal skills through group sharing, oral stories, and value education.
- ⇒ Experiential learning.

## **KINDERSKILLS**

This program meets three days per week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or 2 days a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It is for children who will be age five (5) by February 1. It is designed for older preschoolers and those five (5) year olds who need an extra year of growth before kindergarten.

This class will continue to emphasize Kindergarten readiness skills, with in-depth focus on phonics, writing, math, and hands-on science.

## **ENRICHMENT**

Our enrichment classes meet in the afternoons from 1-3 pm, after preschool. These classes are designed to provide additional instruction for the children if needed and playtime fun with their friends. Many parents use this class for childcare needs also. Children can enroll in enrichment class any day following their preschool class.

## **CURRICULUM**

We strive to provide developmentally appropriate activities that integrate Christian beliefs into each piece of the day. Teachers develop written weekly scheduled activities and plans that are driven by the students and aligned with developmentally appropriate practices consistent with the development of the WHOLE child. We strive to remain current with educational practices for early childhood and the Indiana Academic Standards.

At the preschool level each child will receive a written calendar of events. This will inform parents and children of what is coming up in the classroom. It will include the theme, color, and letter of the week, and also announce special events to look forward to. It is our hope that this will be a tool for you and your child to use in discussing current happenings and those to come! Your teacher will also send home a weekly newsletter listing all the classroom activities.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION:**

Tuition for the **ten-month** school year is available on the registration forms. Please refer to the registration form for additional information.

**Calvary Learning Academy requires automatic tuition payments.** Please fill out the Automatic Debit Authorization form and turn in with your registration packet. Each month on the 5<sup>th</sup>, your tuition payment will automatically transfer from your preferred banking account or be charged to your credit card. If you do not have sufficient funds in your account to cover the withdrawal, you will receive notice of non-sufficient funds and be required to pay the tuition in cash along with a \$20 penalty. The first transfer will occur on August 5 and the last on May 5. You may make changes to this form any time by stopping in the office. You may pay your tuition in full by Aug. 5<sup>th</sup> if you do want to participate in the payment program.

**\*\*\*Tuition payment is not subject to adjustments due to illness, vacation, absences, weather closings, covid quarantines or acts of God.**

**NON-PAYMENT POLICY:** Any student whose tuition is not paid by the end of the month, or a payment plan is not worked out with the director, will be asked to leave the program until such time as repayment is made. Re-entry is encouraged under the following conditions:

- a. Repayment for the previous month is made, along with late fees as applied.
- b. Payment for the current month is received in cash.
- C. Space is still available in the class.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child, please give the director two (2) week notice. This will allow the teacher to bring his/her records up-to-date and provide proper closure experiences with classmates and staff. Fee adjustments will be made if the child is withdrawn before the 15th of the month.

Under extreme circumstances, the Learning Academy reserves the right to ask that a child be withdrawn. This would be for prolonged behavior that is detrimental to the child, classmates, teachers, or property and the child has not shown a positive response to modification techniques used by the staff. A tuition refund of the unused portion would be allowed.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The five different areas of experience inherent in the curriculum seek to give each child:

- ☺ A feeling of belonging and acceptance
- ☺ A feeling of understanding forgiveness for himself and others
- ☺ A feeling of wonder
- ☺ An understanding of limits for his own self-control and welfare of others
- ☺ An encouragement of creativity

With this as the basis of each session, children are constantly building skills in appropriate classroom behavior. Positive reinforcement and self-evaluation will be used continually; discipline problems will be few. If a child fails to respond appropriately, discipline will be carried out in the following manner:

- 1) Redirection or gentle, but firm restatement of the desired behavior
- 2) A short "conference", he/she will be taken aside by the teacher.
- 3) A short period of time-out will be implemented within the classroom if the problem persists.
- 4) Under extreme conditions of aggression, bad language, or assault, the child may be removed from the classroom by the teacher and taken to the office.
- 5) The parent would then be called to pick up the child, if necessary.

The teachers will work with the parents in providing continuity and consistency in dealing with any behavioral problems. Any form of physical punishment by staff is prohibited under all circumstances.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

A color-coded nametag will be attached to your child's backpack. You will also be given color-coded name strips. Please hold your name strips in your hands when picking up your child. If you do not have your child's name strip, please be prepared with your ID to verify that you are authorized to pick up your child. We have provided two name strips, knowing that multiple people may be on your authorized pick-up list.

## **DROP-OFF**

Please follow the traffic direction map that has been given to you. There are directional signs with arrows in the parking lot. Toddlers, 2's and Jr. Pre-K will drop off at the CLA entrance under the blue awning. Pre-K and Kinderskills will drop off at the main doors of the church in the circle drive at the front.

- **8:50 am drop-off: Jr. Pre-K and Kinderskills**
- **9:00 am drop-off: Toddlers, 2's, Pre-K**

**\*If you have multiple children in the program that should be dropped off at different doors, please drop off all the children at the Learning Academy entrance, under the blue awning.**

Please be aware of your drop off times and do not enter the drop zone until your scheduled time. Remain in the outer parking lot until it is your time to drop off/pick-up. Two lines will be formed, side by side, for drop off. Please pull all the way forward to the orange cones. Park, help your child out of the car, **walk them to the door** and into the care of a CLA staff member. Please keep your car in PARK until a staff member gives you the "all clear" to exit the line. **Do not change lanes once you have entered the drop zone and please do not use your cell phone at this time.**

If you arrive later than **9:05 am**, please park and walk your child to the Learning Academy entrance, under the blue awning, where a staff member will meet you to transfer your child to their classroom.

If you are a parent of a toddler or 2-year-old and would like to drop your child off in the classroom, please park in the parking lot near the Learning Academy door. At **9:05 am** a staff member will let you in the door.

## **PICK-UP**

All children are to be picked up at the same door where they were dropped off, using the same traffic map. Remain in the outer parking lot until it is your time to pick-up.

- **12:50 pm pick-up: Jr. Pre-K and Kinderskills (MWF)**
- **1:00 pm pick-up: Toddlers, 2's, and Pre-K**
- **2:50 pm pick-up: Kinderskills (T/Th)**
- **3:00 pm pick-up: Enrichment students, Toddlers and 2's staying for the full day**

Just like drop off, please pull forward, in two lines, to the orange cones. Please walk to the entrance door to pick up your child with their name strip in hand. Please keep your car in "Park" until a staff member gives you the "all clear" to exit the line.

**If you need to pick your child up early, please call CLA at (317)852-2594. We will meet you with your child at the Learning Academy door at the designated time.**

You are expected to pick up your child promptly at the end of class. If you are late, your child will be taken to the Director's office to wait for your arrival. If late pick-up becomes habitual, the Learning Academy reserves the right to issue warnings, fines and ultimately remove your child from the program.

If someone other than a parent is to pick up a child, you must give written authorization to the Director to release your child. This is done by filling out the Permission to Release form with enrollment. With safety in mind, this will be strictly enforced.

Always exercise extreme caution when operating your vehicle in the parking area!! **Please do not talk on cell phones when driving. DRIVE SLOWLY AND USE CAUTION!!!!**

## **CHILD CUSTODY & PARENTAL RIGHTS**

The Learning Academy will require a court document to be on file which indicates child custody in cases where parents are in dispute. Direct contact will be made with the primary custodial parent for daily information, parent conferences and school mailings. The non-custodial parent may have access to any student records, and general information regarding the program, which is available to any person interested in our programs. If there is a court order indicating the non-custodial parent should not have access to the child or his records, this needs to be on file for the Learning Academy to be in compliance. In matters of divorce, the school recognizes both natural parents as having custody of a child unless an official court order is on file giving one of the parents' exclusive custody. In the absence of a court order, either parent may pick up. Any parents that are unable to settle their differences between themselves and continue to harass the staff may be asked to remove their child from the program. This also applies to disputes about tuition payments.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In the event of illness, family vacation, or emergency leave, please notify the school as soon as possible. You may call the Learning Academy office (317-852-2594) to leave a message or email [learningacademy@calvaryunited.org](mailto:learningacademy@calvaryunited.org).

## **BUILDING SAFETY**

We have a building safety access system installed in the Learning Academy. You will not be able to enter the building without a staff member letting you in. Once you have entered the building you will need to go to the office and sign in as a visitor. The use of tobacco or vaping, as well as the use/possession of alcohol, illegal substances and firearms are prohibited on school/church grounds.



## **CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held once a year for preschool age children three and up. Conferences for all preschool classes will be held in November. You will be notified of conference days and asked to sign up for a convenient time. Your child will not have class on these days. Parents or teachers may request additional conferences when necessary. We encourage parents and teachers to communicate directly and honestly. Teachers will be happy to set aside a time to talk with you (other than class time) to discuss your concerns. We do not hold parent conferences for children in the toddler and 2's programs.

## **IMMUNIZATION RECORD**

Each child will be required to have an immunization record showing all shots are up to date and noting any physical problems, abnormalities, or allergies. If your child has food allergies, you must complete a Food Allergy Action Plan, to have on file for treatment of your child if they ingest anything that would cause a reaction. If your child has been prescribed an epi-pen by their doctor, they should supply one to the school or always have it in their backpacks.

## **IMMUNIZATION POLICY**

Calvary Learning Academy programs requires documentation that a child is fully immunized against vaccine preventable illness unless the child's parent or guardian can produce physician documentation that the child has a medical contra-indication to receiving specific vaccinations.

CLA makes every effort to make our programs a safe environment for its young students. This includes taking precautions against the spread of infectious illnesses. After sanitation and proper hand hygiene, vaccination is a critical line of defense against the spread of serious diseases. The child at greatest risk for contracting a vaccine-preventable disease (like measles) is the un-vaccinated child. However, since vaccines are not 100% protective, even vaccinated children rely on the immunity of those around them to help keep them safe. Therefore, to maintain as safe an environment as possible for our students, immunizations are required.

While the Learning Academy gladly accepts and enjoys children of all faiths and backgrounds, parental/guardian religious or personal beliefs against vaccination do not suffice as reason to waive the immunization requirement. While the CLA staff regrets that this may result in some children being denied access, they recognize that attending the Learning Academy is a privilege, not a right.

## **ILLNESS**

Each child should be in good health upon arriving in the morning. Your child should be free from fever, diarrhea, and vomiting **WITHOUT THE USE OF MEDICATION** for **24 hours** prior to a school session. If your child becomes ill during the day, a parent or guardian listed on the emergency contacts will be contacted to pick-up the child immediately. We realize that children enjoy attending class even though they may be ill. Common colds spread quickly among small children, and though most of the time they are not serious enough to warrant your child staying home, it is our duty to see that every child is protected from unnecessary exposure to illness. **If your child has a cold accompanied by sneezing, coughing, and discolored (yellow/green) mucus, you should keep your child home.** If they tell you that they are not feeling well, please take this into consideration.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Learning Academy personnel are not allowed to administer medication at any time. Children should not be sent with pills, cough drops, or other medication to administer themselves. Epi-pens and Benadryl will be used in an emergency allergy situation by the staff if instructed by parents. These must be approved by the Director and stored in the office.

## **SAFETY**

Your child's safety is our primary concern. Your child will be under the constant supervision of our staff, and we will take all measures to keep your child safe when they are in our care. Please be sure the office has a phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency involving your child. If at any time this information changes, please contact the office immediately.

## **ACCIDENTS**

If your child is injured while attending our program, the teacher or director will administer appropriate first aid. An accident report will be filled out which will require your signature and will be placed in your child's file. This form is simply to inform you of an incident and action taken. In the event of a serious injury which requires immediate medical treatment, an ambulance will be called, and the parents will be contacted immediately.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

All children 3 yr. and older who are enrolled in the Learning Academy need to be toilet trained. This means the child can tell the teacher he/she needs to use the toilet, can wipe themselves and the child is able to pull down his/her own clothing. They must be self-reliant in toileting.

For our younger children, our teachers will work with you to assist in the toilet training process with your child when they are ready. Any child who is toilet training should use pull-ups until he/she is totally free of accidents. Children should bring diapers/pull-ups with their names on them for use throughout the day. Please send in a change of clothes in case of accidents.

## **CLOTHING**

Comfortable clothing and tennis shoes are encouraged. Gym time is very active and tennis shoes are most appropriate for this class. Clothing that is easy for the child to work with independently is encouraged. Children should feel confident to run, climb, paint, and play in what they wear. Outdoor activities will be scheduled often, so weather appropriate outerwear is a must each day. It is highly recommended that a change of clothing is sent in the backpack in case of accidents. **Please label all items with the child's name.** A diaper bag for young children, or book bag for older children serve as great totes for a change of clothes, in addition to carrying activities/papers home.

## **NAP TIME**

Children 2 and under have a nap time after lunch. Your child will need to bring a blanket and/or nap mat for this time. Please label them with your child's name, as space is available to leave these at the program if you wish. Children aged 3 and older who are staying for enrichment but are still in need of a nap will be able to rest as needed.

## **"LOVIES"**

We realize small children often have comfort toys that they do not like to part with. These may be brought, if needed, in the toddler and 2's rooms. Please be sure your child's name is clearly marked on such items. We strongly recommend that you limit the number of items your child brings. This will eliminate your child having to share their special things. Large or sharp objects that may cause injury, or weapons, are inappropriate and need to be left at home.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

A school calendar will be available online at [calvaryunited.org/academy](http://calvaryunited.org/academy). Teachers will keep you informed of class schedules and activities. The Learning Academy will follow a balanced school calendar.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of inclement weather, check local radio/TV listings for school closures. If **Brownsburg Schools** are closed, **we will be closed for the day**. If **Brownsburg schools** are on a 2-hr. delay, we will follow our 2 hr. delay policy that is cited below. If school has started and bad weather begins, school will dismiss 15 minutes before the earliest dismissal of the public schools. An announcement will be placed on the CLA voicemail if school is closed or delayed. **Please call 317-852-2594 and listen to voicemail**. There is no reimbursement for days or hours missed due to closure or delays. **Missed days due to inclement weather will not be made up.**

- In the event of a 2-hour delay, we will attend with the following schedule:
  - Children who normally attend from **9AM-1PM** will attend from **11AM-1PM**.
  - Children who normally attend from **9AM-3PM** will attend from **11AM-3PM**.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

Each month a newsletter will be emailed from the Director. It will include items of interest, special events, upcoming church events, and reminders of vacation day closings.

## **SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

Every month has Christian and National holidays to celebrate! Birthdays are special to everyone and will be celebrated at school. Holiday parties will focus on the Christian or wholesome aspect of the holiday and excessive attention to secular themes will not be planned.

## **LUNCH**

Lunches are provided by the parents and children need to pack a lunch each day. Lunch is eaten at approximately 12:00 pm. Please label everything in your child's lunch box. If needed, please include a cold pack to keep lunches cold and/or a Thermos to keep lunch items warm. Most classrooms do not have a microwave or refrigerator.

## **SNACKS**

Toddlers, 2's, and Enrichment students will have a snack each day. Each child should pack a snack in their lunch box. We will not have daily scheduled snack time in the preschool. However, we will observe a snack to celebrate a child's birthday in the preschool. Staff will prepare a snack schedule for the celebration of the child's birthday and let the parents know the date they may bring snacks. Your donations are greatly appreciated. All food will be eaten at tables provided in each room. Please bring snacks that are ready to eat and do not need to be prepared by the teaching staff. We ask that snacks be store bought and not home made.

The Learning Academy Board has established the following policy on snacks:

- We ask that all snacks served be health conscious.
- NO candy will be served in the classrooms. Candy may be brought to the program only if it is bagged and ready to be sent home with the children.
- On special occasions such as birthdays and class parties, cupcakes or cookies will be considered acceptable. We would like to keep this to a minimum and encourage frozen yogurt, juice pops, and fruit muffins.

**Please notify classroom staff if your child has any food allergy**

## **Notes:**