****



Table of Contents

##  2023-2024

 **Parent Handbook**

[Table of Contents 2](#_Toc72956714)

[About us 5](#_Toc72956715)

[Our Mission 5](#_Toc72956716)

[Regulatory Agencies 5](#_Toc72956717)

[Communication 5](#_Toc72956718)

[Parent Newsletter 5](#_Toc72956719)

[Teacher Notes 5](#_Toc72956720)

[Questions, Concerns, or Suggestions 6](#_Toc72956721)

[Hours of Operation 6](#_Toc72956722)

[Enrollment 6](#_Toc72956723)

[Disability Accommodations/Modifications 6](#_Toc72956724)

[Waiting List 6](#_Toc72956725)

[Arrival 7](#_Toc72956726)

[Attendance 7](#_Toc72956727)

[School Calendar 7](#_Toc72956728)

[Departure\* 8](#_Toc72956729)

[Legal Circumstances 8](#_Toc72956730)

[Visitation\* 8](#_Toc72956731)

[Tracking\* 9](#_Toc72956732)

[Daily Schedules 9](#_Toc72956733)

[Praise, Worship and Devotion 9](#_Toc72956734)

[Supervision of Children 9](#_Toc72956735)

[Curriculums 9](#_Toc72956736)

[Screen Time Limitations 9](#_Toc72956737)

[Clothing cont. and Personal Belongings 10](#_Toc72956738)

[Getting Dirty 10](#_Toc72956739)

[Meals 11](#_Toc72956740)

[Nutrition Policy 11](#_Toc72956741)

[Menus 12](#_Toc72956742)

[Nutrition and Discipline 12](#_Toc72956743)

[Choking Hazards\* 12](#_Toc72956744)

[Transitions 12](#_Toc72956745)

[Classroom Transition 13](#_Toc72956746)

[Transitions out of PCLA 13](#_Toc72956747)

[Child Abuse and Neglect 13](#_Toc72956748)

[Respect 13](#_Toc72956749)

[Discipline\* 14](#_Toc72956750)

[Dismissal 15](#_Toc72956751)

[Emergency Procedures 15](#_Toc72956752)

[Accidents and Injuries 15](#_Toc72956753)

[Bite Policy 16](#_Toc72956754)

[Emergency Medical Plan\* 18](#_Toc72956755)

[Illness Policy\* 19](#_Toc72956756)

[Medications/Treatments\* 20](#_Toc72956757)

[Evacuation Drills\* 21](#_Toc72956758)

[Lockdown Policy and Procedures\* 21](#_Toc72956759)

[Hold and secure 22](#_Toc72956760)

[Confidentiality\* 22](#_Toc72956761)

[Photographs 22](#_Toc72956762)

[Field Trips\* 23](#_Toc72956763)

[Withdrawal/Termination of Services 23](#_Toc72956764)

[Potty Training 23](#_Toc72956765)

[Tuition and Fees\* 24](#_Toc72956766)

[Annual Registration Fee 25](#_Toc72956767)

[Sibling Discount 25](#_Toc72956768)

[School Closures 25](#_Toc72956769)

[Additional Discounts 26](#_Toc72956770)

[Referral Incentive 26](#_Toc72956771)

[Returned Check Fee 26](#_Toc72956772)

[Staffing\* 26](#_Toc72956773)

# About us

Poplar Christian Learning Academy is owned and operated by Mrs. Marquita and Mr. Shamon Aiken. PCLA was birthed from the Aiken family’s heart to serve other families. As working parents, we understand how important it is to find a safe and nurturing place for your little ones. A place where they will be loved, cherished, respected, and educated while their parents’ work.

# Our Mission

Poplar Christian Learning Academy's mission is to provide working parents with a wonderful home away from home for their little ones while they work. We strive to reach and teach every child in a unique way as every child is different yet fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God.

# Regulatory Agencies

Our Preschool must abide by and follow the procedures and regulations from our state-licensing agency, the Department of Social Services (DSS). In addition, authorized representatives from the Charleston County Fire Marshal, the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), and other local and federal safety administration regularly check our school for compliance.

# Communication

Building relationships with parents is of the utmost importance to our adequately caring for your child(ren). We take seriously the responsibility and task of providing a loving, caring, and Christian environment for your child(ren). We welcome and encourage open communication concerning all aspects of your child's development and wellbeing. If at any time you have a question or concern about your child's progress, please call the center's office and we will be glad to schedule an appointment to discuss your concerns. **When picking up and dropping off your child, please do not put the teacher on the spot or take time away from the class by asking questions about their progress during classroom time.**

# Parent Newsletter

Each month you will receive a **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** newsletter from the preschool. This will address important information regarding the school such as school closings/holidays, current illnesses, special/upcoming events, etc.

# Teacher Notes

Please be sure to check your child's cubby daily for notes from their teacher. These notes are usually concerning your child's behavior, conference, or other important information. As for infants through two's/three's, your child's teacher notes may include a request for more diapers and or/ baby wipes.

# Questions, Concerns, or Suggestions

 Any questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding the operation of Poplar Christian Learning Academy may be addressed to the Director via e-mail at poplarcla@gmail.com, phone call or signed written letter.

# Hours of Operation

Poplar Christian Learning Academy's hours of operation are 6:30am-6pm.

There will be 2 professional workdays as well as holiday closings as listed on the academic calendar.

In the event of inclement weather, Poplar Christian Learning Academy will follow closings of Charleston County School District. Parents will receive an email, phone call, or text as soon as possible to make them aware of any closings or delays.

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** is open 12 months of the year, Monday through Friday. The school closes for major holidays like the Charleston County School District. There is no discount or reduction in tuition for holidays. We are closed the week of Christmas and parents will not be charged for that week. Please see the school calendar for exact dates.

# Enrollment

Poplar Christian Learning Academy accepts children 6 weeks through age 12 year (afterschool enrichment). PCLA does not discriminate based on a child’s ethnicity, economic level, family structure, language, religion, sex, national origin, or disability. Parents must keep all their child’s information up to date for them to attend school.

# Disability Accommodations/Modifications

PCLA will provide program reasonable modifications and accommodations to all children to ensure they can fully participate in their program of enrollment. An interview with prospect families of children with disabilities will be conducted to determine what reasonable modifications and accommodations are needed for their child to fully participate.

PCLA will work with families to allow and recommend interventions and specialized services to be provided to children with disabilities to support the child’s development, learning, and participation. These programs will be incorporated into the child’s classroom setting.

# Waiting List

Despite our best effort to accommodate all children, we may have to create a waiting list. All applications and required fees are recorded on a first come first-served basis. An application received without the required fee will not be recorded until the fee is received in our office. Valid, current, contact information is the responsibility of the parent. PCLA will not be held responsible for outdated contact information on the waiting list. If we cannot contact you using the information on file, we will contact the next family on the list.

When a spot opens for your child:

If your child is on the waiting list and you are notified of an opening, you will have 24 hours to accept or decline the offer.

• At the time you accept you must pay the registration fee to secure the spot. Regular tuition payments will begin following your acceptance.

• If you decline, your child’s name moves to the bottom of the waiting list. You will be given one more opportunity to accept an available spot. If you decline a second time, your child’s name will be removed from the waiting list.

# Arrival

Children benefit from consistent and predictable routines. Regular attendance helps them gain the most from Poplar Christian Learning Academy’s program. With that being said, we appreciate the children arriving no later than 9:30 am for instructional time and to avoid disrupting the class. Please inform your child's teacher or the director if your child will be arriving late. Upon arrival, each child must sign-in. A parent or another adult must accompany every child to the classroom and notify the teacher that the child is present. Children may not walk to their classrooms alone or be left in the hallway unattended. Poplar Christian Learning Academy is not responsible for the child until the parent has contacted the appropriate teacher and the teacher recognizes the child as being present. Teachers must be informed when a child arrives or leaves the classroom or playground.

# Attendance

Regular attendance is imperative to your child(ren) getting the most out of the program in which they are registered, however daily attendance is not mandated. Parents have the option to keep their child home or pick them up early should they choose to.

# School Calendar

Programs at Poplar Christian Learning Academy are available year-round. The instructional school year runs from August to the end of July. Changes to the school calendar (listed on page 7) will be posted in the school and on the website.

# Departure\*

Children must be signed out every day. Parents must notify the school if someone who does not regularly pick up their child will be picking up their child. Parents must provide the school with accurate contact information for this person if the parents will not be reachable. The names of all adults authorized to pick up each child must be on file with the school.

When an adult who does not routinely pick up a child comes to **Poplar Christian Learning Academy**, a photo ID must be presented to the administrator before the person enters the child’s classroom.

# Legal Circumstances

If there is a court order prohibiting any individual from having access to a child, the school must have a copy of the documentation ordering such prohibition on file.

**Late pick up**

 Parents need to call the school immediately should an emergency arise that prevents them from timely picking up their child. Parents will be charged a $5.00 per minute late fee for every minute after the center’s closing time until they arrive at the center, even if parents call the staff to let them know they will arrive late. It is important to call, however, because it is comforting for children and staff to know a parent is on the way. If a child has not been picked up by 7pm and no word or directions have been received from the parent or other authorized adult, a protective service worker or law enforcement officer will be notified to pick up the child. In such cases, the administrator on duty will stay with the child until he/she is united with his/her family. We understand traffic and unexpected meetings can happen, but please try to be on time each day. Our center closes at 6:00 pm; therefore, we have staffed accordingly. Late pick up imposes unnecessary hardship on our staff. In addition, SCDSS only allows us to operate within certain hours. Finally, our staff works extremely hard caring for your child, and it is important for them to have time to care for their own lives and families. Promptness is especially important.

# Visitation\*

Poplar Christian Learning Academy\* has an open-door policy for parents to have full access to their child(ren). Families are welcome to participate in activities, come read to the children in their child’s classroom, or simply to peek in to check on their child(ren).

# Tracking\*

Each classroom will keep a tracking log to include each child in attendance and location of each child at any given time. This tracking form is to help teachers account for each child as they move about the school.

# Daily Schedules

Daily routines in each classroom will vary. All schedules will consist of mealtimes, free play, center times, reading time, class meetings, outside play, sensory play, and nap time.

# Praise, Worship and Devotion

Two’s class and up will have Devotion time every morning led by the teacher. We encourage you to come and join us if you are available during that scheduled time.

# Supervision of Children

Appropriate adult supervision is always required, both in the classroom and on the playground. No child is ever to be left unattended or out of a teacher’s sight. Teachers will conduct head counts frequently and as children move about the school. Supervision will also be guided by the Department of Social Service’s ratios.

# Curricula

Curriculum is a planned program framework which includes class meeting times, stories, songs, and finger plays; creative arts activities and crafts; games and large music activities; science and nature activities; exposure to shapes, colors, numbers, and letters, as well as celebration of holidays and birthdays. **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** uses components of Abeka and ABC Jesus Loves Me Curricula. **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** takes a developmental approach to all our preschoolers. Every child is an individual therefore we want to take into consideration where the individual child is and customize a learning plan specifically for them.

# Screen Time Limitations

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** does not permit screen time (e.g., television, movies, video games and computers) for children two years and younger. Screen time for children aged three and over is limited to 20 minutes per day.

# Clothing cont. and Personal Belongings

All clothing and personal belongings should be labeled with your child’s name. Clothing should be comfortable enough to allow children to fully participate in a wide variety of activities (i.e., painting, water play, sandbox, etc.) without undue concern that these clothes will be damaged. For safety and health reasons, children should wear comfortable footwear that has closed toes and fit securely on their feet during active play. Sneakers are recommended. Please do not send your child to school in flip-flops or open-toed shoes. Children are expected to dress appropriately and be ready to go outdoors in every season. Please dress children in cool clothing for summer, warm coats, hats and gloves in the winter, sweaters in the fall and spring, rain gear for wet and mildly rainy days. Parents are responsible for providing a new bottle of sunscreen, labeled with their child’s name, each spring as needed. Sunscreen will be applied when needed if written permission for its application is on file. Each child is expected to keep a complete change of extra clothing, including socks and shoes at the school. Extra clothing should be placed in a plastic Ziploc bag clearly labeled with your child’s name.

During toilet training please bring at least (3) extra changes of clothing. Parents of toddlers who are not potty trained also need to provide disposable diapers and any needed wipes, powder, or ointment.

Parents should provide a small blanket about (45 inches by 24 inches) and small pillow (if the child desires) for nap time. Parents will be responsible for laundering these items on a weekly basis. A soft toy or doll from home may also be provided for nap time comfort. **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** cleans cots/mats at least once weekly.

 Children should not bring other toys from home except for special projects. The school provides adequate toys and materials for all children and cannot take responsibility for items from home that may get lost or broken. Parents are responsible for providing a kinder mat for children at nap time. As per SCDSS, nap mats with holes or rips must be replaced immediately.

# Getting Dirty

Here at PCLA, we encourage learning through play. The children will be doing quite a bit of playing outside, digging in dirt, painting, as well as other exploratory activities and their clothes will get dirty. Please send your child to school wearing "play" clothing. Clothing that you do not mind them getting dirty.

\*Learning to feed oneself is an exciting milestone which requires lots of practice. PCLA encourages our older infants and toddler to feed themselves, which can get messy. Please send plenty of changes of clothes for your little ones. PCLA will wash clothing that is soiled from food or wet. However, any clothing which is soiled with feces will be sent home for sanitary reasons.

# Meals

PCLA provides breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack daily through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The food served meets the guidelines of the CACFP under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Menus are, posted on the information board in the cafeteria and in classrooms for parental review.

 Meals at PCLA are served family style and are used as an opportunity for developing appropriate social behaviors, conversation skills, good nutrition habits, and ecological attitudes that discourage food waste.

PCLA is a peanut/tree nut free center. Foods that contain peanuts or tree nuts will not be permitted in the school. To keep everyone safe, please be sure you and your child are free of particles and residue on skin and clothing if you consume these foods prior to entering the school. All families will be notified of allergies that are present within the school for the safety of our children.

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** strives to partner with families to accommodate the nutritional and cultural needs of each child. It is important to indicate any special dietary needs (e.g., allergies or cultural/religious dietary restrictions) on enrollment forms. Parents need to bring these needs to the attention of the director at the time of enrollment and when their children transition into a new classroom. PCLA will provide alternative meals and snacks if the regular menu cannot accommodate any child’s special dietary (allergy or religious) restrictions. Food brought from home is strictly prohibited as bringing outside food causes unrest in the classrooms due to small children not understanding why one child is being offered something different and outside foods could potentially contain allergens in which other children could be exposed.

# Nutrition Policy

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** follows the CACP guidelines (Child and Adult Care Food Program) for all the foods we serve. To provide a healthy and balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and limits foods and beverages that are high in sugar, and/or fat, our nutrition policy includes the following:

Fruits and Vegetables

We serve fruit at least 2 times a day.

We offer a vegetables other than white potatoes at least twice a day.

Grains

We serve whole grain foods at least once a day.

**Beverages**

We only serve water, milk and 100% juice

We do not serve sugar sweetened beverages.

We serve only skim or 1% milk to children ages 2 years and older.

**Role of Staff in Nutrition Education**

Staff provide opportunities for children to learn about nutrition 1 time per week or more.

 Meal and snack times are planned so that no child will go no more than four hours without being offered food. We provide a variety of nutritionally balanced, high quality foods each day, therefore, please do not send your child with outside food and drinks.

# Menus

Our menus are carefully planned to follow CACFP guidelines at every meal. Each menu is designed to provide a wide variety of nutritious foods that are different in color, shape, size, and texture. All our childcare menus include foods that are culturally diverse and seasonally appropriate. We also like to introduce new and different foods and include children’s favorite recipes in our menu planning. Menus are rotated on a four-week basis to provide the children with a balance of variety and familiarity. Menus are adapted to incorporate local and fresh in-season produce when available.

# Nutrition and Discipline

Staff will never use food as a reward or as a punishment.

# Choking Hazards\*

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** does not serve the following foods and recommends that parents not send them for a child's lunch or special classroom snacks/parties….

* Gummies
* Whole Hot dogs for children under 3
* Nuts and seeds
* Chunks of meat or cheese
* Whole grapes
* Hard, gooey, or sticky candy
* Popcorn for children under 2
* Chunks of peanut butter
* Raw vegetables
* Raisins
* Chewing gum

*Choking Items\**

* Hair barrettes should not be worn, as they can be a choking hazard if placed in the mouth.
* Earrings may only be worn if they have safety backs in which your child cannot remove*. PCLA is not responsible for lost jewelry, use at your own risk.*

# Transitions

The first day of a new **preschool**, or even the first day in a new classroom in the old **preschool**, can be met with a mix of excitement and **anxiety** for kids and parents alike. Many children will start off with no problems and seem to suddenly have trouble at drop off. This is completely normal. Your child's teacher will offer comfort, cuddles, and an activity to help your child through this sometimes-tough transition. We ask that parents help their children through times of separation anxiety by keeping a consistent routine at drop off. For example, giving kisses and passing the child to their teacher will help them learn what to expect at drop off. Many times, when parents linger, it can prolong the child's discomfort. If you have any concerns with your child's transitions, please see the director or schedule a conference with your child's teacher.

## Classroom Transition

Many children will transition into a new classroom at the start of the academic year to mid-September. All children are unique and develop at different rates, therefore we do not move up solely based on age. Your child’s teacher will assess your child for developmental signals that they are ready to move up to the next program. In preparation, they will begin introducing your child to the changes that will take place in the next class. For example, the Sunflower (infant’s) class is based on each child’s individual schedule. Once they move up, they will begin the school wide schedule which includes nap time and outside exploration. To help your child get ready, your teacher will have them to visit the new class several times and take part in their activities to make them more comfortable with the final move.

## Transitions out of PCLA

At PCLA we want to be a part of your child’s transition out of preschool or even to another program. It is an exciting time when our preschoolers graduate to move on to “Big School”. We will begin talking about the move during instructional time to help them get excited about new friends and teachers.

# Child Abuse and Neglect

Childcare providers are mandated by state law to immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services (DSS). A written statement is signed annually by all staff and parents in PCLA indicating their awareness of this policy. The number one priority of **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** is to protect all the children in its care.

# Respect

We do not condone disrespect to or from parents, teachers, or children. We wish to provide a safe, loving, and nurturing place for the children in our care. Children learn by example and if they see that you are disrespectful then they too will be disrespectful. Please refrain from using profanity in the school or on the school premises. Please help us maintain a positive and respectful atmosphere at PCLA.

# Discipline\*

We encourage positive redirection and positive correction which teaches children where limits are set, how to maintain control of their bodies, and how to problem solve in the event of a conflict.

**In accordance with the South Carolina Department of Social Services regulation, our policy for discipline is Discipline is non-violent; no child shall be hit or ridiculed. Time out will be used to modify behavior. Time out shall be in a designated spot apart from other children but still facing others in the room. If a problem develops that is so severe that time out discipline is not working, the parent will be called for a conference.**

We encourage children to empathize with one another’s feelings and see the results of their actions. We discourage inappropriate behavior. We use “Time Out” as our last resort. Any child that is put in time out or sent to "take a break" is always supervised by a teacher and shall remain in time out only 1 minute per year of the age of the child. When time out is over, it is explained to the child why time out occurred and what correct behavior is expected. No child is subjected to corporal punishment or physical discipline at any time. Discipline shall never be related to food, rest, or toileting.

We will make every effort to work with parents of children having difficulties in childcare. Behavior of children which disrupts normal classroom group activities on a frequent or extended basis may indicate physical or emotional problems requiring the attention of a professional specialist. Children displaying chronic disruptive behavior which is upsetting to the physical or emotional well-being of another child may require the following actions:

1. Parents of the child will be called in for a conference. We will discuss the issues and identify some possible solutions. A plan of action will be developed and agreed upon by the parents and staff.
2. If the plan of action is not working, the parents will be called in for another meeting. We will discuss what is not working and develop another action plan.
3. If no progress has been made towards solving the problematic behavior, the child may be suspended from care. This suspension may range in length from the rest of the day to indefinitely.

All employees are required to sign this policy stating that they understand this policy and will abide by this procedure. If a disciplinary situation ever occurs that you are concerned about, please speak with the Director.

If the disciplinary action described above is not effective in dealing with a child's behavior and he or she is continually injuring other children or staff, you may be asked to immediately pick up your child from school and schedule a parent conference to develop a plan of action. Teachers may be asked to attend the conference. If the behavior begins to affect others at school, the child may be dismissed.

We ask that you inform us of any changes at home that may help us understand changes in your child's behavior, such but not limited to change in marital status, visiting relatives or sickness.

# Dismissal

We reserve the right to dismiss a child when the child's presence imposes a threat to the health or safety of others (children and adults). A child may also be dismissed when fundamental alterations are required for the program or class, for example, when one teachers' attention must be focused on one child for extended periods.

# Emergency Procedures

Current emergency phone numbers for each child shall be kept on file so that a parent or designated emergency contact can be reached in the case of an emergency. Be sure that your emergency contact people understand that they will be called upon to pick your child up from the school if we are unable to reach you. It is important that families report changes in their own and emergency contacts’ phone numbers to the office.

 Parents and then emergency contacts will be telephoned in case of the following:

* If a child becomes ill or injured while attending school. Emergency contacts will be called if parents cannot be reached in a reasonable amount of time.
* If a child is left at the school until 6:00 pm or later.
* If **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** must close because of extenuating circumstances such as a weather emergency.

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** will follow the evacuation plan in case of fire or other emergency that requires leaving the building. Please inquire with director or see emergency evacuation plans posted in classrooms.

# Accidents and Injuries

In the event of a minor accident at the school, first aid measures will be taken, and an Accident Report Form will be completed. The original Accident Report will be given to the parent, and a copy will be placed on file in the child’s folder. Minor scrapes and bruises are treated with tender loving care. PCLA does not call parents for every minor injury. Parents will be called in the case of accidents that may need a doctor’s attention. PCLA will always call parents if their children experience one of the following:

Injury to the head or face

Injury that causes a great amount of bleeding

Injury or incident that upsets the child to the point of inconsolability

In the event of a serious accident or emergency, the child will be taken to Centre Pointe Emergency at 249 Emmett I. Davis Jr. Ave. North Charleston, SC 29418 Phone: (843) 746-2400, by ambulance.

Every effort will be made to contact parents immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the school will attempt to reach the emergency contacts and then the physician listed on the Enrollment Information Form. In the event the child’s physician cannot be reached, an assigned member of the staff will stay with the child and secure needed medical treatment.

# Bite Policy

*Biting in the Childcare Setting: Infants and Toddlers*

Biting is a common stage in development that many children go through. It is usually a temporary stage that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of your child is of primary concern. Our biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs at **Poplar Christian Learning Academy**.

*Developmental information:*

Toddler’s bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his/her peers. Toddlers have limited verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. We will establish a rule at our center that "teeth are for biting our food, not our friends." We encourage children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. We always maintain close supervision of children. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident does occur:

* The biting will be interrupted with a firm" No .... We don't bite our friends!"
* The bitten child will be comforted.
* We will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be placed in time out.
* The wound of the bitten child will be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and an ice pack used.
* An incident/injury report will be filled out for both children involved in the biting.
* Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

If the skin is broken during a biting incident and an exchange of blood has occurred, PCLA will follow the steps below:

* Assess the bitten area.
* Clean area with soap and water.
* Make sure child's immunizations are up to date.
* Notify the parents immediately. ·
* File an incident/injury report.
* Confidentiality will be always maintained.

\*Exclusion of the child who bites:

Some children will continue to bite other children despite interventions by staff and parents. These biting incidences can become very disruptive to the classroom. We will make every effort to reduce the number of biting incidences at PCLA by “shadowing” that child, if additional staff is available, as well as having staff stay in close proximity. We will continue to use a firm but positive approach. However, if the biting continues on a regular basis, then exclusion of the child from must be considered. A child will be excluded from **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** if the biting behavior exhibited by that child poses an increased risk to the children or adults in the classroom. Exclusion of the child must also be considered if the biting behavior interferes with daily classroom activities. The parents will be asked to remove the child from the center until the biting behavior has stopped. Sometimes a child who bites will benefit from being in a smaller setting. The Director, along with the parents, will determine when the child should return to the childcare setting. Each child and the subsequent biting situation will be handled on an individual basis. The Director and Staff here at PCLA will work closely with the parents to help the child through this developmental stage.

 **BITE POLICY cont.** *Biting in the Childcare Setting: Threes & Fours*

Biting is a common stage in development that many children go through. It is usually only temporary stage that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of your child is our primary concern. Our biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs here at **Poplar Christian Learning Academy**.

*Developmental information*

By the time a child reaches 3 & 4 years of age, they should not be biting. If biting occurs in this older age group, the Director will observe the child in the classroom to try and determine why the biting is occurring. Our rule is that “teeth are for biting our food, not our friends.” We encourage children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. We always maintain close supervision of children. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our center:

* The biting will be interrupted with a firm" No .... We don't bite our friends!" · The bitten child will be comforted.
* We will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be placed in time out.
* The wound of the bitten child will be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and an ice pack used.
* An incident/injury report will be filled out for both children involved in the biting.
* Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

If the skin is broken during a biting incident and an exchange of blood has occurred, **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** will follow the steps below:

* Assess the bitten area.
* Clean area with soap and water.
* Make sure child's immunizations are up to date.
* Notify the parents immediately.
* · File an incident/injury report.
* Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

\*Exclusion of the child who bites: Some children will continue to bite other children despite interventions by staff and parents. These biting incidences can become very disruptive to the classroom. We will make every effort to reduce the number of biting incidences at PCLA by “shadowing” that child, if additional staff is available, as well as having staff stay near discourage biting. We will continue to use a firm approach. However, if the biting continues a regular basis, then exclusion of the child from **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** must be considered. A child will be excluded from the PCLA if the biting behavior exhibited by that child poses an increased risk to the children or adults in the classroom. Exclusion of the child must also be considered if the biting behavior interferes with daily classroom activities. The parents will be asked to remove the child from the center until the biting behavior has stopped. Sometimes a child who bites will benefit from being in a smaller setting. The Director, along with the parents, will determine when the child should return to the childcare setting. Each child and the subsequent biting situation will be handled on an individual basis. The Director and staff here at PCLA will work closely with the parents to help the child through this developmental stage.

# Emergency Medical Plan\*

In the case of a medical emergency in which emergency medical care and treatment is warranted, the following steps will be followed:

Call 911. The parents/guardian will immediately be called after that. If parents cannot be reached, PCLA will attempt to reach the emergency contacts and then the physician listed on the Enrollment Information Form.

If CPR or First Aid is necessary, trained staff will administer treatment until the ambulance arrives.

First Responders will assess and determine whether the child needs to be taken to the hospital. If deemed necessary by First Responders, the child will be taken to Centre Pointe Emergency at 249 Emmett I. Davis Jr. Ave. North Charleston, SC 29418 Phone: (843) 746-2400, by way of ambulance.

A teacher will accompany the child to the hospital and remain until a parent or guardian arrives.

A qualified staff member will be assigned to the classroom until the regular teacher returns.

 Emergency information for the child will be taken with the child to the hospital or emergency room.

# Illness Policy\*

To protect the health of all children, **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** follows the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Department of Health and Environment Control for exclusion. **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** requires that a child, teacher, or other staff with the following conditions not enter the building until his/her recovery has reached a stage conducive to inclusion in regular school activities.

DHEC school exclusions are listed at this website:

http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/schoolexclusion.htm

The following illnesses or conditions shall result in exclusion from **Poplar Christian Learning Academy**:

Fever of 100° F or above as measured in an auxiliary position (under the arm). **Child must be fever free for 24 hours** **without fever-reducing medication**; this includes ear infections.

Diarrhea – uncontrolled diarrhea, increased number of stools, increased water and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper or toilet use. The child may return to the **school 24 hours after the symptoms stop**. In the event of an outbreak, **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** may choose to follow the advice of a DHEC representative and require that affected children not return to the school for a longer period.

Vomiting –defined as two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours. The child should remain home until vomiting resolves, or a physician determines it to be non-communicable and the child is not in danger of dehydration. The child may return to **school 24 hours after the vomiting stops.**

Chicken Pox – until seven days after onset of rash or until all sores have scabbed over

Hand Foot Mouth disease (Coxsackievirus) - The child may return **three to six days** after no longer contagious.

Streptococcal pharyngitis (strep throat) – Child may return to the **center 24 hours after initial treatment and after 24 hours of being fever-free.**

Viral or bacterial infections – until treated and released by physician.

Symptoms of possible severe illness, such as unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other unusual signs – until medical evaluation indicates inclusion.

Pink eye (purulent conjunctivitis) – after the condition has been evaluated and treated.

Rash with fever or behavior change – until a physician determines that it is not a communicable disease.

 Ringworm or Pinworm – The child may return **24 hours after treatment is begun.**

Roseola – after rash and fever are gone.

 Rotavirus - The child may return after the diarrhea stops **for 24 hours which can be up to 9 days but no less than 2 to 3 days.**

Scabies – The child may return **24 hours after one treatment** with prescription cream.

Head lice – **The child may return 24 hours after treatment is begun and nits are no longer present.** The parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a statement indicating that his/her child received appropriate treatment. The statement must include the name of the specific Head Lice medication administered either by a physician or the parent(s)/ guardian(s) before the child may be readmitted to our center. Contact an administrator for information about effective and approved treatment plans.

## Covid 19 Policy\*

As it stands we are still in the Pandemic. PCLA will follow the guidelines of the CDC and DHEC concerning school closures. If your child is experiencing any Covid like symptoms they must be excluded from the school and if they have been in attendance with 48 hours of developing symptoms, their classroom will be closed for the recommended

\*Please understand that health and cleanliness is of the upmost importance to **Poplar Christian Learning Academy**. When ill children attend school, it becomes difficult to keep their illness contained, and it can affect everyone who comes into our school. Please help us keep our school and families healthy by complying with our policies and procedures for illnesses.

If a child becomes ill at school, a staff member will notify a parent. In the event they cannot reach a parent to come pick up the child, an emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. If the parent or other contact cannot or does not come pick up the child **within an hour and a half**, the school will call the next person on the emergency contact list. While waiting for pick up, the student will sit with the director in the office.

# Medications/Treatments\*

 **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** requires written authorization to administer any medication or medical treatment including OTC medication. Medication Forms are available by the director. Completed forms are kept in a medication log. If a child requires prescription medication, parents will complete the Medication Form requesting and authorizing administration of the medication and specifying the dosage and times of day the medication is to be administered. An administrator will check the name and date of the prescription to be sure the medication is prescribed for this specific child and is current. The prescription label or doctor’s note should also indicate the nature of the condition being treated.

Written, signed, and dated parental consent is required prior to the administration of any prescription or over-the-counter medication or administration of special medical procedures:

- The medicine must be in its original container. All medications shall be used only for the child for whom the medication is labeled.

- Medications shall not be given more than the recommended dose.

- Prescribed special medical procedures ordered for a specific child shall be written, signed, and dated by a physician or other legally authorized health care provider.

- Medicine will be administered for only one day with a parent’s authorization. Continued usage requires a physician’s written authorization.

Storage of medication:

-All medications shall be kept in their original labeled containers and have child protective caps.

-The child’s first and last names shall be on all medications.

-All medications shall be stored in a separate locked container under proper conditions of sanitation, temperature, light, and moisture.

-Discontinued and expired medication shall not be used and shall be returned to the parent or disposed of in a safe manner.

Medication Log:

For each medication that is administered by a staff person, a log shall be kept including the child’s name, the name of medication, dosage, date, time, and name of person administering the medication.

This information shall be logged immediately following the administration of the medication and a copy provided to child’s parent(s)/guardian(s).

# Evacuation Drills\*

Fires drills are regularly scheduled to ensure that teachers and children are familiar with the exit routes before the emergency occurs (routes are marked on a map near the doorway of the classroom). Teachers are trained during initial orientation and yearly training sessions evacuation procedures including accounting for each child, checking the bathrooms, turning off lights and shutting the door.

* Flood and Gas Leak-In the case of an emergency evacuation of the building, teachers will follow the emergency evacuation plan and take the children to Lovely Mountain Baptist adjacent to the preschool.
* Tornado Drills-Exit routes are marked on a map near the doorways in every classroom and restroom. In the event of a tornado all children will be directed to the interior hallway away from windows.

# Lockdown Policy and Procedures\*

A lockdown is an emergency, which prevents the safe evacuation of the daycare and requires steps to isolate children and staff from danger by requiring everyone to remain inside the building. This policy is to establish procedures for various levels of threats and emergency situations. Two (2) practice drills will be held per year. Notice of these drills will be posted in advance.  Please note you will not have access to the building during these drills, as the doors will be locked. Should you arrive while these drills are being conducted, we ask for your patience, as the drill only lasts for a few minutes.

In recognizing that each potential crisis will vary, these procedures may be modified to adapt to each unique situation.

Levels of threat can range from an imminent building threat to a National Emergency.  Emergency Evacuation Procedures are outlined in a separate policy and are different from Lockdown Procedures.

An alert will be called in the event of an emergency when the daycare cannot be safely evacuated.

“THIS IS AN EMERGENCY – THE SCHOOL IS NOW IN LOCKDOWN”

The staff must then lock the door to their room and remain inside with the children until all clear is given.  The Director or designee will initiate lockdown procedures depending upon the type of threat.  Specific instructions will be given as soon as possible depending upon the situation.  Staff does not unlock the door until the Director or designee has given the “all clear”.

# Hold and secure

A school official, emergency personnel or authority, or the Coordinator/Site Supervisor or their designate will issue a hold and secure when an incident occurs in the community.  This type of incident poses no immediate danger to the children or staff unless they leave the building. Therefore, the school doors will be closed off, children and staff will continue their day.

Full procedures for a designated Lockdown or Hold and Secure are posted on the Family board.

# Confidentiality\*

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** is extremely sensitive to the fact that information concerning you, your child, and your family is private and personal. Trust and confidentiality are essential to building trusting relationships. We are committed to maintaining your privacy and protecting your personal information. All family, child, and employee information are kept in a locked file cabinet located in the director's office, which only the director and assistant director have keys. **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** will not disclose information except as required by law or when there is a threat to the health and safety of the individuals and families we serve. With that being said, please do not ask or try to encourage our **Poplar Christian Learning Academy** teachers and staff to disclose any information regarding any other family or staff member. We ask that parents also respect our school and office confidentiality.

# Photographs

For your child to be photographed, for any purpose, consent must be given. This can be found in your enrollment packet. Photos are used for classroom materials, enhancement, and personalization. If Poplar Christian Learning Academy wishes to use any photo of a child for a publication, such as the school website or an article, we will seek written permission from the parent or guardian.

# Field Trips\*

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy**, for safety and liability reasons, has chosen not to transport children at this time. Instead, the school will bring outside activities to our facility. **Poplar Christian Learning Academy’s** “field trips” will be just as interactive and even more frequent and more convenient for families to come participate in these activities. Families will be notified well in advance when these activities are planned.

# Withdrawal/Termination of Services

 Except in the case of an emergency, it is expected that parents will notify PCLA in writing at least two weeks in advance of withdrawing from the program. If this advance notice has not been given, tuition for the two-week notification period will still be due.

Service may be terminated when a pattern of any of the following becomes excessive:

- Habitual late pick-ups

- Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner

- Failure to comply with school policies concerning ill children

- Being unreachable and out of touch by phone

- Failure to provide documentation requested by Poplar Christian Learning Academy staff and/or required by DSS

- Failure to keep immunization records current

- Failure to provide emergency contact updates

\*The South Carolina Department of Social Services requires that we have the South Carolina DHEC Immunization Form 1148 on file prior to your child attending their first day at **Poplar Christian Learning Academy.** Your local physician (South Carolina) or an authorized person at the Department of Health can furnish you this form. A new form will be required upon its expiration or when new immunizations are administered.

# Potty Training

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** has a "no pressure" potty training policy.

Children must be physically, cognitively, and emotionally ready if they are to be successful with learning to toilet independently. The child’s primary caregiver will follow the family’s lead and will partner with the family to make toilet learning a relaxed and successful process that build’s the children’s self-confidence and self-esteem. The process usually begins when children are about 24 months old. Whether a child is potty trained is not a determining factor in moving a child through Poplar Christian Learning Academy. Please note that having "accidents" is a normal part of potty training.

Please be sure to pack at least 3 full changes of clothes for your potty-training child(ren).

#

# Tuition and Fees\*

The guidelines for registration, tuition charges, and payments are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class |  Registration  (Annual August) | Weekly Tuition   |
| **Infants****(Infants, Creepers)**  | $110 | Full time |  Part time\* |
|  $245 |  $150 |
| **Toddlers**  | $110 | $245 | $150 |
| **(Two’s Class)** | $110 | $245 |  $150 |
| **Three’s** | $110 | $245 |  $150 |
| **Four’s** | $110 | $245 |  $150 |
| **After School**  |  $110 | $125 | $95 |
| **Summer Enrichment** | $110 | $180(When offered)  |   \* |

Payments may be made by Card payment (2.75% + $.10) check (made payable to Poplar Christian Learning Academy or PCLA), Himama app. Overpayment will be applied to future tuition. **Tuition is due Mondays at drop off. If tuition is not paid by Monday evening at pick up a late fee of $36 will be applied to your account.**

**Should your child not attend PCLA on Monday, tuition must be paid on the morning of their return.**

**Unpaid tuition will result in forfeiture of your child’s spot in their class.**

**\*Limited spots available.**

**Families will be given (2) weeks of vacation per year which you can use for the week of Christmas or Thanksgiving, in which no tuition will be due for their family. If the center is open (3) or more days, full tuition is due regardless of your child’s attendance. No call, no show after a week will be disenrolled from the program.**

#  Annual Registration Fee

Registration is due at time of enrollment and yearly in August for the new school year. The registration fee is non-refundable. The registration fee reserves and guarantees your child’s spot in their class for the upcoming school year.

# Sibling Discount

We offer a 10% sibling discount for full time students only. The discount applies to the oldest child and is only offered while you have more than one child enrolled at the same time. Both children must be full day students.

# School Closures

In the event of a weather-related emergency in which the school is required to be closed for 3 or more days, we will prorate tuition for that week. As per PCLA’s current tuition policy, we will not prorate under any other circumstances aside from emergency closures such as those related to weather.

# Additional Discounts

PCLA offers a 5% discount off the total family tuition for military, public service, Boeing, and Mercedes employees. Limit 1 additional discount per family.

# Referral Incentive

Share the love of PCLA with other families you know! PCLA will give a $25 discount off one week's tuition for every family you refer to PCLA. The families you refer will also receive a $25 discount off their first week's tuition.

# Returned Check Fee

A $35.00 charge will be added to your bill if a check is returned for non-sufficient funds. The amount of the returned check and the service charge must be paid in cash immediately. While this should be an unusual circumstance, we will however allow not more than 2 returned checks per year. You will then only be permitted to pay your child(ren's) tuition in cash, money order, or electronic means for the remainder of the year.

# Staffing\*

**Poplar Christian Learning Academy** may at times need to provisionally hire teachers in the event of a staffing emergency. However, any teacher/caregiver must first favorably complete the state fingerprint review as per SCDSS.

\*Any questions or concerns about the information in Poplar Christian Learning Academy’s Handbook can be addressed with your child’s teacher or the director. The Handbook can be amended at any time per the director’s discretion. Families will be notified of any additions or changes to the school’s handbook with a written form.

2522 Nazarene St

North Charleston, SC 29406

Phone: (843)

Fax: (843)

5411 Dorchester Rd

North Charleston, SC 29418

Phone: (843) 225-1004

Fax: (843) 396-6077