



## **The Bridge Academy Team**

***Robyn Zwilinske*** *Preschool Director*

***Tina Foskey*** *Transitional 5 Year Old Teacher*

***Jennifer Franco*** *4 Year Old Teacher*

***Ryan Lycans*** *4 Year Old Teacher*

***Courtney Snyder*** *3 Year Old Co-Teacher*

***Gliny Sam*** *3 Year Old Co-Teacher*

***Stephanie Pantaleo*** *2 Year Old Co-Teacher*

***Janet McCann*** *2 Year Old Co-Teacher*

***Helen Mills*** *Spanish Teacher*

***Rachel Boyd*** *Snack Coordinator/Preschool Assistant*

***Belinda Mills*** *Snack/Preschool Assistant*

***Nan Bowman*** *Substitute*

***Vayda Gamble*** *Substitute*

# PARENT HANDBOOK



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## DEFINITION OF PROGRAM

Organization  
Ministry Programs  
Philosophy  
Licensing Exemption

## PROGRAM CONTENT

Curriculum  
Open- Ended Art in the Classroom  
Dress Recommendations  
Nutrition  
Discipline

## TEAM MEMBERS

Placement  
Training  
Evaluation

## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Communication  
Evaluation  
Grievance Policy  
Participation

## ATTENDANCE

Inclement Weather  
Wellness Policy  
Medication

## EMERGENCIES

Accidents  
Child Abuse  
Crisis Planning  
Security

## WEEKDAY MINISTRY SPECIFICS

Drop Off & Pick Up  
Fees  
Withdrawal

## DEFINITION OF THE PROGRAM



### **Organization**

The Bridge Academy is a half day Christian program, a ministry of The Bridge Church of the Nazarene. Our program serves families with children between the ages of 2-5. The Bridge Academy is governed by the official Church board. The Preschool Ministries Director , provides supervision to the program, while qualified team members staff the rooms.

### **Ministry Programs**

Our Preschool Ministries offer many programs throughout the year to meet the needs of your family! Please see your yearly calendar for up to date information on these events and more!

### **Weekday:**

**The Bridge Academy:** This weekday program meets during the school year. The Bridge Academy focuses on basic Bible truth and all aspects of development in preparation for life.

### **Weekend:**

**Preschoolers:** This Sunday morning program allows preschoolers the freedom to explore basic Bible truths while visiting thematic centers.

### **Social Events**

**Field Trips:** We have 2 field trips per year, Fall & Spring. Preschoolers and their families are invited to meet at a predetermined destination for a day of fun and exploration.

**Thanksgiving Feast:** Begin your family's holidays with our Thanksgiving Feast. Enjoy lunch with your preschooler and The Bridge Academy Team.

**Christmas Cookie Exchange:** Celebrate the holiday and show off your baking skills at our cookie exchange before the holiday break!

**"Love Your Neighbor" Service Project:** Let's work together to serve others at the MSK market.

**Spring Tea:** Join us for tea and refreshments as we celebrate the bloom of spring.

### **Parent Growth & Training**

**Parent Volunteer:** There are several opportunities throughout the year to volunteer for different events/activities. A great way to get involved and connected.

**Parent Board:** The parent board help plan and facilitate events throughout the school year.

**Parent Brunch:** This event is in September. It is a meeting/ brunch for the families of our program. A great event for meeting others and a time where you can ask questions!

**Life Groups:** The Bridge offers a variety of Life Groups throughout the week which parents are encouraged to participate in to create personal friendships and to edify their spiritual development.

### **Philosophy of Learning**

We offer a nurturing and safe environment, in which children's success will be measured by the process of their learning, not the end result. Thereby, allowing children the satisfaction of their completed individual work. Focus points will be repeated using free-choice activities, that allow exploration with hands on and sensory activities. While teacher directed exploration will use literal interpretations that solidify understanding for each child, and will provide them with avenues to imitate what they have learned.

Our program will strongly encourage the involvement of families, in all levels of our ministry will actively pursue the relational development of each family in accordance with the ministry. We want to ensure that every student and their family know that God loves them and that they are prepared for life.



How will we do this???

- Create a loving and safe environment that promotes healthy life skills
- Teach Biblical truth
- Children's success will be measured by the process of their learning, not the end result. Teacher / Parent conferences will be held twice a year to discuss student's progress.
- Focus points will be repeated using open-ended activities, that allow exploration with hands on and sensory activities. While teacher directed exploration will use literal interpretations that solidify understanding for each child, and will provide them with avenues to imitate what they have learned.
- Offer life groups through The Bridge Church to resource families
- Provide events so that parents can connect with other parents therefore creating a supportive network.

Our goal is to ensure that we teach to the whole child: Spiritually, Academically, Socially, Mentally and Physically.



### **Licensing Exemption**

The Bridge Academy includes biblical teaching in a preschool learning format, With programs and events that are less than 4 hours a day. As such, we operate under NC General Statute 110-86, which does not require our facility to be licensed by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

## **PROGRAM CONTENT**

### **Curriculum**

Our teacher created curriculum is based upon a system of monthly themes. The curriculum is a total development curriculum that focuses on all the developmental areas of a child's growth (spiritual, academic, social, mental and physical) Special emphasis is placed on the spiritual development of children. Our goal is that all preschool children in our programs would learn the following three points:

\*God loves me

\*Jesus wants to be my friend

\*God made me and others special

### **Letterland**

A phonics program that teaches young children letter sounds and letter recognition. The Letterland characters transform letter shapes into child friendly characters. It teaches pre-literacy with multi-sensory activities, which include hands on and music. Learning letter sounds assists in learning to read at a faster pace. It is currently being used in the local school districts. [www.letterland.com](http://www.letterland.com)



**Child-friendly phonics**

### **Opened Ended Art**

Art is a very important part of our ministry. At this age children experience art purely for pleasure, and their creative representations are an integral part of the development process. Participation in art helps enhance all areas of growth. Many methods and mediums are used daily, including, but not limited to: paint, markers, crayons, glue, scissors, clay, play-dough, collage materials, paper, sand, chalk. Some days your child's art will look very "abstract" to you. However your child will be extremely proud of the masterpiece they created through hard work, thought, and dedication. The value of each art project is in the process of creating the work, not the final outcome. Please understand that each child's work will not be identical! We believe there is a time when children must achieve similar results, such as letter formation and other academic practice. We hope that you will embrace this method of art teaching, and eagerly encourage your child's exploration!



**Spanish:**

Each class will receive Spanish lessons on Tuesday and Wednesday. They will learn conversational and basic Spanish with child friendly activities, songs and dance.



**Technology:**

Twice a week each class will have access to an Ipad with educational apps, especially Letterland, for 20 minutes each morning. They will work in small groups as this builds social and academic skills at all ages.



### **Dress Recommendations**

A complete change of clothes should be kept in your child's bag, and sent daily in the event of spills or accidents. In addition your child's clothes should meet the following guidelines:

- Simple clothes to facilitate diaper changing and toilet training (no belts or onesies)
- Clothing appropriate for the weather! We go outside every day unless there is active precipitation or the temperature is below 32 degrees.
- Clothes may get messy during art projects; please dress appropriately for art projects that may bypass art smocks!
- Rubber soled shoes should be worn. No flip-flops & sandals.

### **Nutrition**

Part of our total development curriculum encompasses physical growth and healthy life skills. Snacks are part of that learning experience. Healthy and organic snacks are provided, and team members informally model good health practices during snack time. With regards to allergies, if any one student in a class has a food allergy, the entire class will be served a different option. We also ask that you would make sure your child has breakfast before coming to school. We do not allow children to bring in cups or additional food to have during the day. Snack is served during the mid-point of the day and students are allowed a water break as often as necessary. On birthdays

parents are allowed to bring in a special snack. Additionally, we ask that you verify if there are any food allergies, so all of the students can be included in the celebration.



### **Discipline**

Discipline will be used to teach children appropriate actions, and to keep them safe. By disciplining we will teach children how to express themselves in socially acceptable ways, and help them develop self-control. Prevention through planning will be the most important step to discipline. This means providing stimulating, developmentally appropriate activities to interest children, thereby reducing their misbehavior. Other techniques as listed below can also be used to dissuade poor behavior. Leading by setting a good example:

- Praising children
- Actively listening to children
- Allowing natural and logical consequences
- Distraction & Redirection
- Ignoring inconsequential behavior
- Social rewards

**If misbehavior occurs we will administer consequences following this procedure:**

- Redirection (2x)
- Child sent to the Director for additional discussion
- Parent Call

**Unacceptable discipline methods include:**

- Physical punishment
- Denial of snack
- Isolation unattended by an adult

- Speaking inappropriately to a child

Reasonable adaptations will be made to meet the individual needs of each child. However, the safety and successful functioning of the whole class always has priority over the individual needs of any given child. Therefore consistent hitting, biting, or spitting are grounds for dismissal, and will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

## **TEAM MEMBERS**

### **Placement**

Care is taken to ensure that every team member has a passion for working with children and is a believer in Christ. Placing team members is the responsibility of the Director & Family Ministries Director with approval from the Senior Pastor, who has the final say in all placement issues. The screening process used for choosing team members consist of the following:

- Completed application (Resume, Spiritual Application, Early Childhood Philosophy)
- 3 Interview process including panel interviews
- Verification & Documentation of references
- Background check

Each team member receives a trial period of ninety days. During this time both the Preschool Director and team member have a chance to determine if they would like to continue in the ministry relationship. During the trial period, if performance doesn't meet or exceed the qualifications set forth, the team member will be separated from service.

### **Training**

All team members are expected to earn yearly contact hours. Contact hours are composed of attendance and participation at special events or attending a training program. In addition, team members are all trained in CPR, First Aid, and Bloodborne Pathogens per state requirements.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Communication**

Open lines of communication are integral to the success of our program. Parents and families are encouraged to make an appointment to speak to the Preschool Director. Teaching team members are available after classroom instruction time to discuss any concerns you may have. If you feel extended time is needed for discussion, you may always request to have a conference. We will promote communication between families and team members by using email, written notes, informal conversations, phone calls, REMIND texts and our private Facebook group. Families should leave written notes with information so all team members who work with your child can share the information. On Wednesday's every parent is required to walk in and pick-up their student, giving them the opportunity to chat with their child's teacher.

## **Evaluation**

With that said, we like to know your opinion of our program! Your responses help us identify both strengths and areas needing attention. Yearly, formal written evaluations are made available in the spring, for parents to complete. However, if ever you have a care, concern, or criticism, please feel free to call the church or preschool office. Written anonymous concerns can also be placed in the Preschool Directors box in the copy room. Please take the time to let us know your thoughts and concerns about our program. What you have to say is very important to us!

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

Inclement weather delays and closures will be made by the director and communicated via the REMIND text app, email and posted on the preschool Facebook group. If there is a 1 hour delay we will operate at regular time, a 2 hour delay we begin one hour later, 3 hour delay we are closed.

As always the safety of your children and our staff is the primary consideration in school delays!

**\*\*The Bridge Academy does not make-up for missed school days .\*\***

### **Wellness Policy**

We ask that you not bring your child if they are unable to participate in the normal classroom activities, or have displayed one of the following symptoms in the past **24 hours**:

- \* Unidentified rash
- \* Severe cold, cough, or infection
- \* Fever of 100.4 or higher
- \* Vomiting

#### **Added symptoms (8/2020)**

- **Fever or chills**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Fatigue**
- **Muscle or body aches**
- **Headache**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Congestion or runny nose**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**

**Please be sure that your child is symptom/fever free for a full 24 hours before returning to school.**

### **Medication**

Children who have received fever reducing medicine or any medicine to relieve symptoms of one of the above mentioned items should not be sent to school. As our programs are not full day events, and children should only be in attendance when they feel well, we respectfully ask that you would give your child their routine medications at home. Please do not send prescription or over the counter medications with your child or in their personal book bags. We only have a very small amount of storage space designated for medicines that are necessary for the treatment of severe allergic reactions.

## **EMERGENCIES**

### **Accidents**

In the event that your child has a minor accident, a team member will notify the Director and complete an accident report. In the event that a serious incident takes place, the team member with your child will provide first aid, and the Director will followed procedures as outlined in our Emergency Crisis Plan. A call will be placed to the parent, and emergency contact, if needed. The child will be transported to LNRMC, and accompanied by the Director. The Director will remain with the child, until their parent arrives and assumes responsibility.

### **Child Abuse**

The Director of Preschool Ministries, will handle suspected cases of child abuse. A written documentation of observations will be made and placed in the student's file and forwarded to NCDHS. The Director will call NCDHHS to report the suspected abuse/neglect. After which the direction of NCDHHS will be followed in the completion of additional written reports. If the parent/guardian is suspected of abuse, the guidance of NCDHHS will be taken into consideration in the notification process. If a team member is suspected of abuse, parents will be notified of the allegations in order that they may share any concerns they have had. No affirmation of guilt will be made until an investigation is complete.

### **Crisis Planning**

Our program is responding to the national concern regarding threatening situations, and has adapted an Emergency Crisis Plan. All team members receive training for events such as fire, power failures, chemical spills, natural disasters, medical emergencies,

and violent situations. Our first priority is the safety of our students and staff. Since we don't know what form a crisis may present itself, we have designed plans to handle the specifics of each situation, and will review and practice them regularly.

In addition, our Emergency Crisis Plan is not available to the public, in order to protect the effectiveness and efficiency of the execution. However flexibility is the key and responses will be based on the specific situation. In the event of any such incident, all employees will remain on premises as service workers, as designated by law.

Parents will be called if possible, to be informed of changes. If evacuation from the program becomes necessary, radio announcements will be made on 105.7 FM or 107.9 FM, and children will be transported to Troutman Elementary. Once there, children may be picked up by any person listed on their Emergency Card.

### **Security**

Parents will be required to complete Emergency Care and Authorization cards, as well as online forms, which will list additional contacts, in the event that a parent cannot be contacted.

Changes to the Emergency card must be made in writing. Any unrecognizable person attempting to pick up a child will be required to present a legal photo identification that matches a name on the Emergency card, before the child is released. Children will not be released to anyone who can't safely care for them, this includes persons under the apparent influence of drugs, alcohol, or anyone who poses a safety risk. This also includes vehicles without a car seat. In the event of such a situation, the police will be notified to manage said person. An additional person, as supplied by the parent, will be contacted to make arrangements for the child's safe transportation.

## **WEEKDAY MINISTRY SPECIFICS**

### **Drop Off & Pick Up**

Preschool hours are from 9:00AM—12:00PM, Monday through Friday. We follow the Iredell/ Statesville calendar, in regards to holidays and school closings, and class will not be held when public school is not in session. Calendars are available from the Director. During the first week of the weekday program, parents will need to escort their child into the classroom. After this period is up, drop off will begin at 8:55AM in the back of the church. In the afternoon, all children will be transferred back to their parents utilizing an afternoon car line. **Please note:** there is no afternoon car line on Wednesdays. All parents must park in front parking lot and walk in on Wednesday to pick up their child. Parents are asked to stay in their car during the drop off and pick up times, allowing our team to transfer your student from and to the car. By law, staff cannot buckle your child in their carseat. If for any reason a parent needs to park, they should stay in the car line formation and park on the side of the building, using the sidewalk to enter. Parents should not park in the lower parking lot during drop off or pick up times. This slows down the car line, and creates a very hazardous situation as children cross through traffic. Please note our program is always open for you to visit, however we ask that you plan those visits in advance as not to disrupt the normal classroom routine or distract the teachers from their duties. In addition, please call

ahead, if you have a need to discuss with the director. This ensures that adequate time is available to address your concern and that you don't drop in during another scheduled appointment.

If your child will not be attending weekday classes, or you are late due to an emergency, please call the office to notify the Director.

### **Early Bird**

Early Bird is a convenience program on an as needed basis for an additional fee of \$4.00 per day. Early Bird drop off begins at 8:15. Please do not drop off any later than 8:40. This program is an early drop off service for parents who may have early appointments.

### **Fee's**

A yearly non-refundable fee is payable upon registration to the weekday program. Tuition varies based on the class your child will attend, and is based on a yearly rate that is broken into payments for your convenience. Tuition fees are the same amount each month, and due in advance, on the first of each month.

**Monthly tuition is due regardless of holidays, vacation, or sickness, to confirm student placement.**

**\*\*Pandemic Clause: There will be no refunds or reimbursements due to illness or closures.\*\* (Updated 8/2020)**

**\*\*\* For example if you take your child out for a month, the month or months that your child is not in preschool, tuition still must be paid in full for months missed. Failure to pay month's tuition when a child is not present will cause the loss of their spot, which means if there is not a spot available when the child returns you will need to go on the waiting list.\*\*\***

Tuition can be paid online at [www.thebridgelkn.com](http://www.thebridgelkn.com). Tuition becomes late after the 10th of the month. Once tuition is late on the 15th it will incur a \$20 late fee which will be added to your total money owed. **Please note we do not accept cash, check, or money orders.** In the event of hardship, please contact the Director regarding arrangement.

### **Withdrawal**

**If for any reason you decide to withdraw your child from the weekday program, a two week notice should be submitted.** If the withdrawal occurs before classes begin for the year, the non-refundable registration fee will be kept, with paid tuition being reimbursed.

If the withdrawal occurs in the middle of a month, fees will not be prorated/refunded and that current month's tuition is still due.



(Updated 8/2020)