

Effort Christian School and Preschool

Parent and Student Handbook

2019



A Ministry of Effort Church

7820 Thomas Jefferson Pkwy
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(434)808-2447
www.effortchristianschools.com

Welcome

Your child's educational and spiritual development is important to us, and we believe that your association with us will be a pleasant and rewarding experience. Our faculty and staff stand ready to help you in any way we can, so please don't hesitate to ask for assistance or guidance.

You have made a wise decision to provide a Christ-centered education for your child; one which will help to promote Christ-centered living, as well as the development of your child's unique God-given gifts, both natural and spiritual. Although parents/guardians are their child's primary educators, the objective of the school is to assist parents/guardians in this educational process. Working together, we plan to help your child learn to make good decisions and to grow in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Effort Christian School and Preschool is accountable to God for the time your child is entrusted to our care. Let us agree to pray for one another and to resolve in every situation to demonstrate our Christian love for each other.

"Bring up a child in the way they will go and when they are old they will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

Mission Statement

Effort Christian School and Preschool (ECSP) is founded upon the firm conviction that Christian education will make a difference in the lives of children, both now and eternally.

ECSP's ministry goals are:

- To provide families within our community a Bible-centered academic education that challenges students to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in thought, word, and deed.
- To encourage students to draw closer to God and to practice Biblical principles.
- To strive for academic excellence and Biblical knowledge, resulting in the discipleship of others.
- To act as an extension of both the church and home, while remaining a primary institution for learning.

Philosophy of Christian Education

We believe the very essence of a student's Christian education is not only academic, but should include the integration of scripture and the application of Biblical truth in every aspect of life.

It is our goal to foster the development of faith in our students by stimulating cognitive, moral and ethical thinking, along with modeling grace-filled relationships and providing experiences that allow students to put their faith into action in every dimension of their lives. All of these collectively are part of the Christian educational process.

The vision we share with our students and the attitudes with which we equip them will enable them to become principled adults whose lives are lived in relationship with God, and who bless their fellow humans by their commitment to love and justice. We believe that Christian education is for Christian life. It is the call for our students to be conformed to the model of Christ in the whole of their existence, in the whole framework of their beliefs, in the whole complex of their feelings and attitudes, and in every spectrum of their actions. (Ps. 119:105, Pro. 22:6, 2 Cor. 5:20, 2 Tim. 3:16, Acts 1:8, Matt. 5:14-16, Rom. 12:2, 1 Peter 3:15)

Effort Christian School and Preschool Governing Body

The School Board is the governing body of Effort Christian School and Preschool. It consists of appointed voting and non-voting members. The School Board reports directly to the Effort Church Council who has the final decision-making responsibility.

Voting members include: the Chairperson, the Church Council Representative, the Church Members-at-Large Representatives and the Parent Representatives.

Non-voting members include: the Church Administrator and the School/Preschool Director(s).

The School Board meets regularly. All parents of ECSP students are welcome to attend regularly scheduled monthly meetings if they wish to discuss issues or concerns. To attend, please contact the office by calling (434)808-2447.

Admission and Enrollment

Effort Christian School and Preschool is an outreach of Effort Baptist Church. Effort Christian School and Preschool seeks to admit students who are committed to spiritual, personal, and intellectual growth. All children of parents who desire a Christian education for their children are welcome to submit an application. ECSP makes no distinction concerning an individual's gender, race, color, or ethnic origin because we acknowledge that there is no preferential treatment with God (Romans 2: 11). It extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available at the school. Applications are available online at www.effortchristianschools.com and in the office. Completed applications should be returned to the School and Preschool office.

Instructional Programs

Preschool Programs

2 ½ Year Old Program:

This program is geared toward children who will be two-and-a-half before September 30th of the present school year. It focuses on learning through play. This class is a great first step into preschool. It gives a child the opportunity to learn to transition from one activity to another, and develops self-help skills in a loving and nurturing environment. This class is offered as either a full- or half-day program. You may choose from 5, 3, or 2-day programs. Children should be potty trained or on their way to becoming potty trained (disposable underwear should be worn until fully potty trained).

3 Year Old Program:

This program is geared toward children who will be three before September 30th of the present school year. This class focuses on learning colors and shapes, basic counting skills and the alphabet. Self-help skills, such as separating from family, learning to share, and following directions are emphasized to prepare a student for Pre-K. A student must be potty trained. This class is offered as either a full- or half-day program, and you may choose from 5, 3 or 2-day programs.

4 Year old Program:

This program is geared toward children who will be four before September 30th of the present school year. This class focuses on pre-kindergarten skills, such as facility with oral language, ability to listen, a desire for independence, and an ability to play well with others. Academically, it will focus on basic letter and number recognition. As the letters are introduced, the sounds will be emphasized. There will be a focus on fine motor skills through pre-writing and art activities. This class is offered as either a full- or half-day program. You may choose from 5, 3 or 2-day programs. Many parents choose the 5-day program to ready their child for a smooth transition to elementary school.

SCHOOL PROGRAM (K-6)

The teaching staff at ECSP is highly qualified and thoroughly dedicated to helping each student achieve positive spiritual, mental, and academic growth. We see ourselves as partners with parents/guardians in helping children learn to trust God and grow academically.

Our teachers consider each student's learning style and incorporate all modalities of learning. We strive to engage visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile learners. A variety of curriculum resources are used in the different grade levels. We incorporate *A Beka Book*, *Saxon*, *Alpha Omega*, *Reading and Writing Workshop*, *America the Beautiful*, among others, to enhance learning. Hands-on activities are also a part of our classroom's daily routine. We begin each day with the Pledge of Allegiance, Bible reading and prayer.

Children with Special Needs

ECSP does not have a Special Education Program. However, we strive to meet the individual needs of each child within the structure of our program, while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff. We will make reasonable accommodations to afford children with special learning styles equal enjoyment of our programs. We will make individual assessments to determine if we can meet each student's need in our school setting. Once enrolled, a child may be released if ECSP subsequently determines we cannot meet the student's optimal educational needs.

Special Activities

Children at ECSP will participate in special enrichment activities, which may include: Chapel, Art, Music, Keyboarding/Technology, Library, Sign Language and physical activities.

Communication

We will do our best to keep lines of communication open with our parents/guardians. We will send home weekly newsletters and other information that pertains to our classroom activities. In an effort to encourage our teachers' full, undivided attention to all aspects of each child's school life, we ask that parents do not have unscheduled or informal conferences with teachers. At the request of the parent or teacher, conferences may be scheduled at mutually convenient times when discussion is necessary.

Report cards will be issued four times per year. Parent and Teacher conferences will occur throughout the school year and will be announced by your child's teacher.

Hours, Attendance & Illness

Early Drop Off:	7:00 AM – 9:00 AM
Preschool full day hours:	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Preschool half day hours:	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Preschool Afterschool hours:	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
School Day hours:	8:20 AM – 3:00 PM
Afterschool hours:	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Students will be grouped according to age levels for Early Drop Off and Afterschool activities.

Arrival

Please arrive on time for class. Teachers are not responsible for early arrivals.

Dismissal

Full-day preschool and school children will be dismissed at 3:00 PM. Please arrive by 2:55 PM. Teachers will inform you of the procedures for picking up your child.

Half-day preschool parents should arrive by 11:55 AM and wait for children in the designated gathering space. Dismissal is 12:00 PM.

Pickup Authorization

We will not release your child to anyone that is not authorized by you. If your child will ride home with someone else other than his usual ride, please notify the teacher with a note.

Please let the teacher know if you will be picking up your child early.

Attendance

Regular attendance is important to your child's educational experience.

No allowances, credits, refunds, or make-up days shall be made for occasional absences. Tuition must be paid in full.

Absences should be reported to the teacher or school office with the reason for the absence.

***For School students, see Attendance Responsibilities Addendum at the end of this handbook.

Illness

Please do not bring your child to school with a contagious illness. Children with the following symptoms should not come to ECSP:

- Earache
- Elevated temperature - over 100 degrees F

- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Persistent or serious cough
- Red, runny, or crusty eyes
- Skin rashes - undiagnosed or suspicious of being contagious
- Swollen glands or sore throat
- Thick colored mucus from eyes or nose
- Unusual lethargy or sluggishness
- Upset stomach
- Wheezing chest

A child must be symptom-free, without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school or preschool. If your child is seen by a doctor and put on antibiotics for a contagious infection (like strep throat), please keep your child at home until he/she is fever-free and has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours. If a child contracts or is exposed to a contagious disease (including but not limited to: chicken pox, flu, impetigo, lice, pink eye, ringworm, pinworm, or strep throat), you must report this information to your child's teacher or director immediately. Children with a contagious disease may not attend school until the child is no longer contagious, and a doctor's note is required for admittance. In the event of a possible exposure to the disease in a classroom, a notice will be given to other parents/guardians of children in the classroom. Confidentiality will always be maintained.

Injuries

If a child is injured on campus, the child should report this injury to a teacher, a Director, or the church office staff immediately. When a child has been injured, we evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis. When appropriate, we will apply ice packs to bumps and bandages to cuts and scrapes, etc. If the injury is more serious, we will notify the parent/guardian. Accident reports are completed for all injuries.

Medication

We discourage the taking of medication while at school unless there is a special reason or serious situation. If medication is necessary, or there is a special circumstance, please talk with

the director. Certain documentation will be needed. We do not administer Tylenol or Advil without prior consent. Medication outside of its proper container will not be accepted. All medication will be secured and dispensed by a staff member who has completed Medication Administration Training (MAT).

In the event that a child needs to have an inhaler or Epi-pen on hand, it must be left at the school and accompanied by a doctor's note or prescription. No student is allowed to take medication of any kind by himself/herself or have any medication in his or her possession.

Peanut and Tree Nut Policy

We are a totally nut-free school, and this means that products made from or containing tree nuts or peanuts may not be sent to school. Products produced in a facility that produces nut products are allowed. For example, a nut-free granola bar made in a plant that processes nut products is okay. A granola bar that has peanuts, one of the tree nuts listed below, or a peanut butter topping is not okay.

Why are we nut-free?

Peanut allergies are unique. Most people with food allergies -- even severe allergies -- can manage their allergies by simply not eating foods that have the allergens in them. They read labels, avoid foods if they don't know their origins, and ask questions to stay aware of cross-contamination. People with peanut and tree nut allergies will follow all these steps, but can still have problems.

First, it's possible for people with these two allergies to react to traces of nut dust in the air (from peanut shells, for example). Second, nuts are full of natural oils that leave residues. While these residues can be removed with common household cleaners, it can be difficult or impossible to clean tables in the middle of lunch, for example, or for school cleaning staff to know to clean oils off of tainted walls, computer keyboards, pencils, paintbrushes, or doorknobs during the school day.

Because of these issues, and the reality that peanut and tree nut allergies can be life-threatening, ECSP will be nut-free.

Here is a rule of thumb for reading labels: Under federal law, peanuts and tree nuts have to be clearly identified in a food label if they're used as an ingredient. When checking ingredients or

checking labels, foods containing the items listed below fall under our Peanut- and Tree Nut-Free Policy and cannot be brought to school or preschool:

- Peanuts
- OR
- a particular type of tree nut such as:
 - almonds
 - beechnuts
 - brazil nuts
 - cashews
 - chestnuts
 - gingko nuts
 - hazelnuts
 - hickory nuts
 - macadamia nuts
 - pecans
 - pine nuts (pignoli or pinon)
 - pistachios
 - walnuts

A recent study, conducted by the University of Michigan, showed that 50 percent of patients react to the equivalent of one-fiftieth (1/50) of a peanut -- a very small amount. The allergy is even more serious because the food does not have to be ingested to have fatal effects.

We appreciate your attention to this policy that is designed to keep our students safe.

Lunch

Students may either bring their own lunches and snacks from home, or they may purchase lunch from our Hot Lunch Program. There is no cold storage available for students. Please send lunches and snacks that can be eaten without preparation. Microwaves are not available for student use. WE ARE A PEANUT AND TREE NUT-FREE SCHOOL. Please refer to our policy above for clarification. Due to food allergies, sharing or trading food items are not permitted.

When school is cancelled due to inclement weather, parents are responsible for cancelling any lunch orders for that day by contacting the school office. A credit will be given on the next month's lunch order.

Dress Code and Code of Conduct

Preschoolers should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and suitable for running and playing. Avoid drawstrings, since this may be a safety hazard. Clothing should be marked with your child's name. Shorts should be worn under dresses and skirts. Play clothes should be worn to preschool because clothes may become soiled from art, outdoor activities, or other messy learning and play activities. Dresses with ruffles or bows and pants with difficult belts or fasteners should be avoided. Parent should choose clothing that the child can manage without adult help. Children who are potty training or children who struggle with fastening their pants/shorts should wear elastic waist pants/shorts.

We recommend that preschoolers wear tennis shoes or rubber-soled shoes to preschool because they are best suited for climbing, running, and playing outside. Our playground has several items on which children can climb. Shoes that are not securely fastened are a safety hazard. Please, no flip-flops.

Please send in a complete change of clothes, labeled with your child's name, to be kept at preschool in case your child has an accident or spill. If an accident occurs, please send in a clean change of clothes, labeled with the child's name, the next day your child returns to preschool.

School-age girls are not permitted to wear spaghetti straps, but are encouraged to wear tops with sleeves; skirts should be of modest length (consider the fingertip length when deciding if the length is appropriate), and girls should wear shorts under their skirts for playtime. Short shorts are to be avoided as well. Overly glittery (distracting) items such as tutus should not be worn. T-shirts with skulls or inappropriate humor should be avoided. Jeans with holes and rips should not be worn. Long blouses will be required with Yoga pants and leggings. Make-up is not permitted for school-age children. Flip-flops are not to be worn to school.

The Matthew 18 Principle

We at ECSP encourage others to obey the teachings of Christ. Those teachings include the 2nd greatest commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22: 37- 39). In spite of our efforts, there are times when people have different views or perceive situations differently.

Jesus, in His perfect wisdom, knew we would need instruction for these situations and provided this wisdom in Matthew 18: 15-17. When differences of opinion cause conflict, it is our policy to practice "The Matthew 18 Principle." Using this scripture passage as our guide, we have listed the appropriate steps that are to be taken by students, parents/guardians, teachers, and staff in the event of a misunderstanding or disagreement.

- Keep the matter confidential. "With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor ..." (Proverbs 11:9a). Only share the problem with those directly involved, maintaining confidentiality.
- Keep the circle small. "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you" (Matthew 18:15). The first step, and most often the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem, is for one of the two people involved to initiate a face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two-person level.
- State your concern clearly and concisely. "...tell him his fault. ..." (Matthew 18:15). Jesus tells us to be forthright and to love honestly. Sometimes it is difficult to be straightforward and tell someone the very heart of the matter. But restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly and clearly presented. Going to the person is not an option; it is a command.
- Be forgiving. "If he listens to you, you have won your brother over" (Matthew 18:15b). This implies that once the matter is resolved we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore our relationship with the person whose fault has offended us.

As mentioned earlier, most problems are resolved at the two-person level. Forgiveness and restoration are the normal and happy conclusions. However, there are unfortunate times when an individual will not "hear" you or will openly disagree with your version of the problem. The next step is:

"...take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses' " (Matthew 18:16).

You and the other individual should go together to share the matter with the appropriate Director. Each person should come to the meeting with a humble and prayerful attitude, willing to submit to the Lord's will and also willing to submit to discipline or correction, if needed. In summary, "The Matthew 18 Principle" requires that parents talk to teachers about student problems before talking to anyone else, including the appropriate director, other

students, or parents. If unresolved at the two-person level, the matter is prayerfully and in an orderly fashion moved upward in the school organizational structure.

A Christian school is a ministry in Christ's name. Everything that is done in the context of the school must be done His way. Satan would love to destroy the normal flow of friendships and peace found in Christian school education through gossip and slander. But if all of us follow Christ's way of "The Matthew 18 Principle," the Christian education experience for students, parents, teachers, and staff will be one of consistent harmony. "Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble." (1 Peter 3:8).

Code of Behavior

A very important part of the educational experience is helping children learn how to get along with other children, as well as following the direction of an adult other than their parent/guardian. Our teachers focus on the positive behaviors of children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible.

At Effort Christian School and Preschool, we emphasize that discipline will always be in love and with grace. More than anything else, we want each child to know that he or she is loved. The following strategies will be used to help preschool children who exhibit disruptive behavior:

- Encouraging small children to "use their words" when having a disagreement with another child
- Redirecting behavior
- Separating a child from the group -- one minute away for each year of age
- Counseling children individually about their behaviors
- Making parents/guardians aware of disciplinary concerns

Corporal punishment is not used at Effort Christian School and Preschool.

Violence & Harassment

ECSP prohibits any student or adult behavior which could be construed as threatening, aggressive, confrontational or violent. These acts would include:

- All incidents of threats of violence, direct or indirect
- Sabotage
- Harassment or intimidation
- Assaults, attempted or challenged
- Presence or suspected presence of weapons
- Placing someone in fear of physical harm
- Use of obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures

Smoking Policy

The buildings on our campus are smoke-free environments. Smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited on all property, both indoor and outdoor.

Volunteer Involvement

Effort Christian School and Preschool welcomes parent/guardian involvement. Please make arrangements in advance with your child's teacher or the director.

Parent Volunteer requirements are as follows:

* All parents/guardians who volunteer for us, or attend field trips, must follow the dress code and abide by the ECSP standards of conduct.

* Those that volunteer on a continued regular basis or teach a special supplementary class must undergo a background check.

Parent Volunteers will maintain confidentiality in regards to children and agree not to discuss with other parents/guardians or community members things regarding teachers, students, or classroom procedures. We respect the right of privacy for the children. Please be aware of this when you are helping in the classroom. Children sometimes are the source of much information outside of the classroom. If you have any concerns, please direct those to the teacher or the director.

Tuition & Payments

Effort Christian School and Preschool is a ministry of Effort Baptist Church. All expenses are paid from tuition, fees and fundraising. Our tuition is competitive with other private schools in the area, as we offer outstanding Christian care to the students, as well as stellar educational programs.

Registration forms are available on our Web site, in the school office and church office. Once a child is admitted, every family is given a contract to sign agreeing to the total amount due for the entire school year (tuitions, supplies and fees). ECSP uses Smart Tuition, a Web-based program for payment.

Effort Christian School and Preschool is a non-profit entity. We strive to make Christian education available to those who desire a Christ-centered education for their children. All cash gifts and gifts-in-kind are income tax deductible, as long as they are not designated for an individual. We welcome and appreciate our friends and community neighbors who support the programs at Effort Christian School and Preschool. There will be several school fund-raising events throughout each year that will give our friends opportunities to support the school and encourage the student body. We thank you in advance for your support.

Fire Drills

We will conduct fire drills and other safety drills on a regular basis as required.

Field Trips

Field trips of an educational nature are vital to the curriculum enrichment emphasis at Effort Christian School and Preschool. Each class will be going on field trips during the year. For each trip, every child must have a permission slip and a medical release form signed by the parent or guardian. Transportation is usually by van, bus, or parents/guardians providing transportation for their child. Parents will be notified in advance of any extra field trip expenses (admission fees, souvenirs, food, etc.). Since these fees are generally paid in advance, there will be no refund on field trip fees.

Inclement Weather/School Closings or Delays

When severe weather or other circumstances create hazardous conditions, the regular school and preschool schedule may be suspended or delayed to ensure student safety. We follow the Fluvanna County Public Schools' closing schedule for inclement weather. However, if Fluvanna County Public Schools close due to below freezing temperatures, icy secondary roads, their schools being used for Inclement Weather shelters, or power outages in the school system, we will make an independent decision. When Fluvanna County Public Schools are delayed, we will open at 10:00 AM even if there is a two-hour delay. Usually, notification is sent by e-mail directly from the director or teacher to the parents. The website is also updated with closing information. Parents will need to cancel their child's hot lunch/ice cream order by 9:30 a.m. on a snow day.

Lost and Found

The best way to insure the return of your child's belongings is to put his/her name on all items of clothing, lunch boxes, etc. Items marked with a name will be returned to the student. If your child finds something on the school grounds which does not belong to him/her, it should be turned in to the teacher for return to the rightful owner. Please make sure your child brings home only those things belonging to him/her.

Lost and found items not claimed within thirty days will be donated to a suitable charity.

Withdrawal Procedure

If withdrawing a student, you will be charged for the full month in which the withdrawal notice was given.

Your director must be notified in writing of your plans to withdraw your child. Without notification, it will be assumed your child is still enrolled, and you will be charged accordingly.

Disenrollment

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to discontinue a child's enrollment. This decision is based on the best interests of the child concerned, other children in the class, and the well-being of everyone at the school. Every effort will be made to correct a situation before a final decision is made (i.e., moving a child to another class, redirecting behaviors, providing choices, separating children who are not getting along, or other interventions).

Disenrollment may be the result of one of the following:

- Abuse of other children, staff or property by child or parent/guardian
- Continued violation of any school policies
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- School's inability to meet the child's needs or the parent/guardian's expectations
- Non-payment of tuition.

We reserve the right to end the enrollment of a child at any time and for any reason deemed appropriate. Prior to this event, we will work with families to remedy any of the above situations.

Student Referral Incentive

A family who refers another family who enrolls and attends for a minimum of six weeks will receive a credit to their account for an amount equal to one week's tuition.

**SCHOOL POLICY ADDENDUM for Grades Kindergarten through 6th:
Attendance and Timeliness Responsibilities**

The teachers and administrators of Effort Christian School desire for students to get the best education possible. Parents are expected to cooperate with the school by assuring daily attendance at school. If a student is absent, a written excuse, signed by a parent, stating the reason for absence from school, must be sent to the teacher immediately upon the student's return to school.

Since tardiness is distracting and disruptive to teachers and classmates, any student arriving late to school must be signed in by a parent at the school office. Please make every effort to ensure prompt daily arrival for class.

Excessive or unreasonable absenteeism and/or tardiness may lead to a conference between the parents and the director.

If an early dismissal from school is necessary, a written note signed by a parent or an email must be sent to the classroom teacher on the day such early dismissal is requested. Parents are encouraged to schedule a student's medical, dental, or other appointments after school hours (whenever possible),

Students with only minimal tardies and/or absences will be considered for an outstanding attendance award.

School Start Time

Every minute in the classroom is important. Class will start at 8:20 a.m., when the doors open, instead of 8:30 a.m., which is indicated in the current handbook. This adjustment in start time will allow us to bank time, which can be used to offset potential instruction hours lost in the case of inclement weather-related school closings.

**Acknowledgement of Receipt of
Attendance and Timeliness Responsibilities Addendum**

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Important Parent Responsibilities document and that I will partner with the teachers and administrators to ensure regular, consistent attendance.

Name of Student: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____