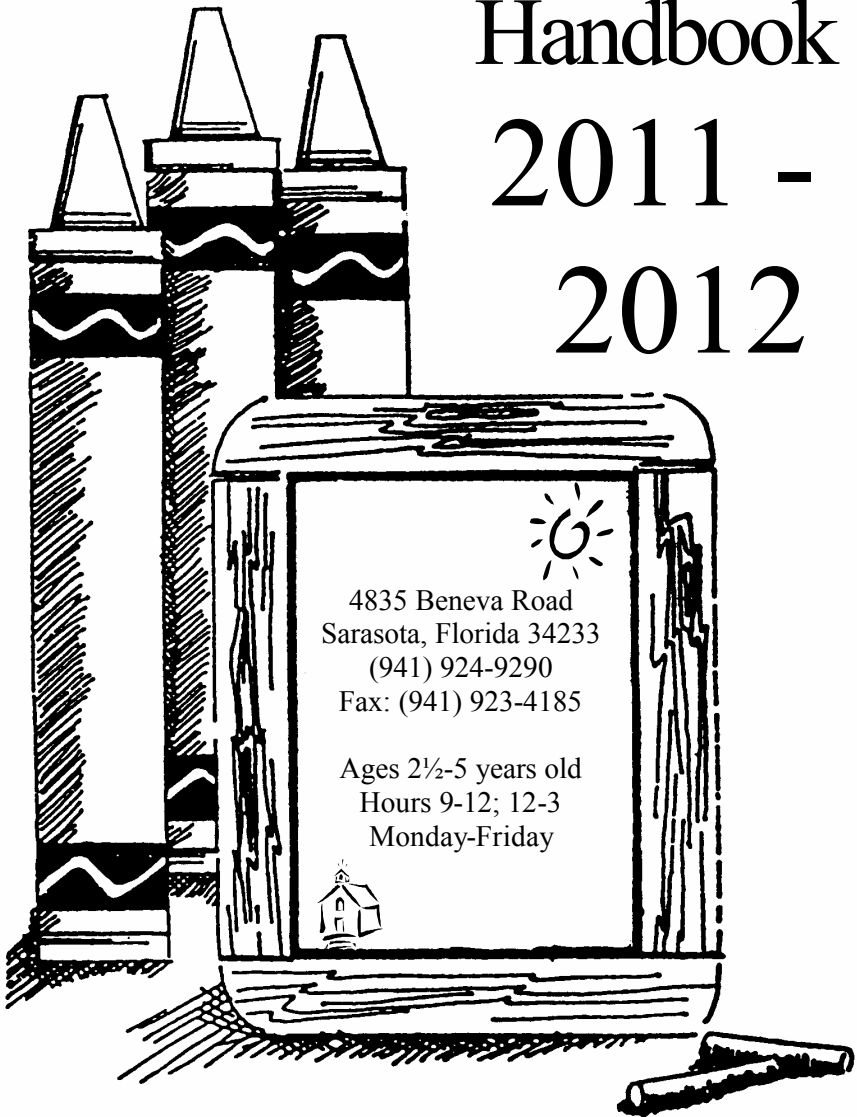


Little Disciples Preschool Handbook 2011 - 2012



“Look for the Stars” 5-Star Preschool

Cindy M. McDowell, Director
Visit us at our Web Site:
www.littledisciplespreschool.org

Welcome
to
*Little
Disciples
Preschool*

We invite you to join us as we introduce your child
to the wonderful world of education.

Ours is a learning, laughing, and loving approach
to preparing your child for life.

We look forward to your child being part of
yet another exciting year here at
Little Disciples Preschool.



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Little Disciples Preschool is licensed by the Sarasota County Health Department and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. Our license number is 0011.

Welcome

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to *Little Disciples Preschool*. We are proud of our ministry to the children and parents of this community. As a church, we offer a loving and nurturing atmosphere. Our preschool education is an important part of our ministry here at Beneva Christian Church. We have a Preschool Board which meets bi-monthly. This Board is made up of members of our church and preschool and is here to serve you. If you do not have a church home, we invite you to be a part of our Beneva family. If we can ever be of service to you, please call us at 924-8713.

We sincerely wish you and your child a wonderful experience at *Little Disciples Preschool*. We hope your year will be filled with many positive memories. Thank you for the opportunity and privilege to nurture your very special little one. Enjoy and value these years ... for they are gone all too soon.

Sincerely,

Beneva Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Little Disciples Preschool Board Members:

DIRECTOR, Cindy M. McDowell; CHAIRPERSON; Erin Sturm

Committee Members: Kathy Bearden, Barbara Clements, Bob King,
Elsie McDonald, Glenn & Jane Oneal.

Beneva Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

We Are . . .

- A church where people from different backgrounds can celebrate and live out their common belief in Jesus Christ;
- A church deeply rooted in the Biblical messages;
- A church committed to witnessing to all the world as servants of the living God;
- A church where the Lord's Supper is shared every Sunday; and
- A church where everyone is welcome to grow and serve.

If you would like to learn more about our church, please let us know. You and your family are always welcome.

Little Disciples Preschool's Philosophy

The word "Disciple" is used frequently in the New Testament. It means learner or follower, one who is accompanied by a teacher. We believe that all children are unique little people, *Little Disciples*, who should be allowed to develop at their own rate morally, physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually. With these goals in mind, we strive to develop healthy, happy children who will contribute to society as they grow. It is the goal of the staff of Little Disciples Preschool to provide your child with a positive learning experience designed to make their first adventures in a school setting memorable and enjoyable ones. To achieve this end, we will challenge your child's natural creativity and intellect. With this in mind, we will love and help your child to develop to their fullest potential.

Curriculum

The curriculum is based on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire System (ASQ), the Florida School Readiness Standards and the Creative Curriculum. It is focused on the total child. The environment provides a place for learning through interesting, stimulating, and challenging materials and activities. We will introduce each child to the joy of learning by helping them develop their self-esteem through a variety of positive daily experiences. Children will be exposed to phonetics, numbers and their concepts, colors, geometric shapes and exercises in social skills. We will also offer special units on the topics in which the children express interest. We strive to balance the formal learning experiences with outdoor play and free time to enable the children to develop their motor and social skills in an informal setting. Our ultimate goal is to have each child feel happy, confident, and proud of all they achieve.

NAEYC

NAEYC is the nation's most prestigious organization of early childhood educators. NAEYC created its accreditation program to set professional standards for early childhood education, and to help families identify high-quality child care and early education programs. Little Disciples Preschool was created based on the NAEYC standards and continues to uphold those standards to this day.

Look for the Stars

The Quality Rating Improvement System is a program for all early care providers that encourages and recognizes quality services and provides identifiable standards of quality using a 1-5 star rating system. Programs receiving state funding are required to participate. Little Disciples Preschool is a private, non-profit program who chose to participate. We are proud to have earned the highest rating achievable. We are a 5-Star Preschool.

Tuition And Fees

A non-refundable *Registration fee* is due upon enrollment each year.

2 days per week (T/R)	\$150.00/year
3 days per week (MWF) 3 yrs.	\$175.00/year
3 days per week (MWF) 4 yrs.	\$200.00/year
5 days per week (M-F)	\$225.00/year

Tuition is due on the first school day of each month. No exceptions or credit will be given for days missed due to illness, vacation, school holidays, job transfer, etc. **Your first tuition payment will be due no later than “Open House 2011” and will cover 1.5 months tuition.** All other months are due payable on the 1st of the month.

	<u>Aug/Sept.</u>	<u>Oct-Apr</u>	<u>May</u>
2 days per week (T/R)	\$352.50	\$235.00	\$117.50
3 days per week (M/W/F)	\$480.00	\$320.00	\$160.00
5 days per week (M-F)	\$630.00	\$420.00	\$210.00

A fee of \$10.00 will be charged for any payments received after the tenth day of the month. A \$25.00 charge will be applied to all returned checks. Another method of payment may be arranged with the approval of the Preschool Board. A 5% tuition discount will be applied towards the total school term if received in one payment at “Open House.”

Extended Care

Extended Care is offered Monday through Friday, from 12:00 noon until 3:00 p.m. Children may be picked up anytime during these hours. Children must bring their own meal in a labeled lunchbox. Using a small freezer pack in the lunch box will keep your child’s food cold all day. Lunchtime is held in the Lunch Room; after which the children may enjoy their time in the Learning Center, on the Outdoor Classroom or Playground. The children are to be picked up no later than 3:00 p.m. The cost of Extended Care is \$6.00 per hour. A billing statement will be sent home at the end of each month.

Extended Care Late Fees: Parents who have not picked up their child by 3:00 p.m. will be assessed a late charge of \$25.00 for each five minutes thereafter. Payment is to be made at the time the child is picked up. Continued abuse of this policy may result in the loss of Extended Care privileges.

Early Care

Located in our Learning Center, the doors open at 8:00am with entry available through 8:15am. The charge for Early Care is based on per week usage: 1 day per week @ \$10.00, 2 days per week @ \$9.00 per day, 3 - 5 days per week @ \$8.00 per day.

The Board reserves the right to change any of the above rates upon a 30 day written notice.

Staff

All our Staff members are fingerprinted and thoroughly screened through **Florida Dept. of Children & Families**. All Lead Teachers are required to hold a degree in the field of Education. In addition to taking 45 hours of study in Early Child Care, all staff members must take a minimum of twelve credit hours annually in courses relating to early childhood development. All staff are members of the Early Childhood Association of Sarasota and the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Each staff member is also certified in Pediatric CPR, Heartsaver CPR, and First Aid.

Discipline Policy

The ultimate goal is for each child to achieve self-discipline. Ideally, the child who is involved in meaningful work will not show any behavioral problems. The words “discipline and “teach” are related. Teaching children what they are ready to learn at each stage of development will result in self-disciplined individuals.

We first talk to the child about the behavior and explain how they are disturbing the rest of the class. We point out that they are not being helpful to themselves or others. Next, we will meet with the parents to establish methods of positive reinforcement. Persistent behavioral concerns will result in a parent conference with the Preschool Director. In the event of continued adverse behavior, *Little Disciples Preschool* reserves the right to deny further enrollment.

Requirements For Admittance

Our school is available to children ages two-and-a-half to five years of age. While we are hopeful that children have completed potty-training and are able to take care of their own bathroom needs, it is not a requirement for entrance. We will work together to achieve potty-trained status. Each child must have an enrollment form with emergency information on file. A copy of your child’s birth certificate must also be submitted upon registration. Please be sure to advise the school regarding address, phone, pick-up people, doctor changes.... throughout the year.

Forms Required By **Florida Dept. of Health**:

Two **Florida Dept. of Health** forms will be required upon enrollment: a health report and an immunization form showing current and up-to-date immunizations. It is especially important to note any known allergies. *Little Disciples Preschool* requires that all students enrolled be immunized. Absolutely NO exceptions or exemptions allowed.

Arrival Times

Doors open and families are greeted each day beginning at 8:50 a.m. We close our doors at 9:15am so the first activities of the day are not interrupted. The doors remain locked throughout the school day to ensure your child's safety. To gain entrance throughout the school day, please ring the doorbell.

Departure Times

Dismissal for the morning session is at 12:00 p.m. All children need to be picked up promptly. Extended Care children may be picked up anytime before 3:00 p.m. Written permission is required for all children picked up by anyone other than their parents.

Drop-Off And Pick-Up Procedures

This is a school zone, please observe a 10 mph limit.

Park in the parking lot, turn off your vehicle and lock it. Do not leave unattended children in vehicles. Walk your child/children into the education building and to their classroom. Do not park in the circular driveway or in the handicapped spaces. Please contact the office if you need assistance at any time.

Pick-up time is 12:00 noon. Parents are to remain outside in the courtyard. The teachers will bring the students outside to their designated pick up site. After 12:10 pm, any remaining students will be placed in our Extended Care program

School Schedule (holidays & closings)

Little Disciples Preschool will closely operate on the same schedule as Sarasota County Public School system. (Note: Our Preschool year begins two weeks after the opening of the public school year.) *Little Disciples Preschool* will be closed when the Sarasota County Public Schools are closed for teacher work days. We will be closed for all major holidays (including Christmas recess and Spring break). When the public schools are closed due to "severe" weather, *Little Disciples Preschool* will be closed. Tune to SNN Channel 6 for all area school closings. Changes/revisions of the Sarasota County School Year Calendar may effect our calendar year. Parents will be contacted regarding any changes that may be necessary.

We will also be closed one Friday in September or November (TBA) as our staff attends either the ECA Conference or the NAEYC Conference. A calendar for the school year will be provided in your student folder and again in our school directory, printed in early October.

Absence

If your child is ill and/or will not be in school, please call the office. In order for your child to return to the classroom, they must be free of fever for 24 hours. Notice will be given to all parents concerning any outbreak of childhood or Communicable diseases here at school.

Snacks

A snack basket will be sent home with your child the day before it is due. This is done on a rotating basis. Please provide a healthy snack for the number of children in your child's class. For health and safety reasons, we must insist that snack foods arrive in **original**, and **unopened** packages. Water will be provided as our snack-time refreshment. A snack calendar will be sent home as a reminder of the day(s) your child will be responsible for snack throughout the month. Food allergies (when applicable) are posted outside classrooms and will never prevent a child from participating in our program.

Written Permission

A permission slip is required for the following:

1. All field trips.
2. For a child to leave school with someone other than their parent.
3. Dispensing of any medication to a child by staff member.
4. Evaluative screenings by outside sources.

Field Trips

During the year, our classes may take part in various community field trips. Parents will be asked to provide transportation or supervision. For safety reasons, we do not allow siblings on field trips. A permission slip will be required for your child to be able to attend. We require your child to wear their school T-shirt and tennis shoes on all field trips.

Dress Code

Children should wear play clothes that are comfortable and will not restrict them from participation in any activities. We require all children to wear socks in sneakers/tennis shoes daily. One-piece outfits should not be worn. Flip-flops, sandals, and cowboy boots are not allowed. .

Please dress children for actual weather conditions. We will go outside everyday (weather permitting) and are required to have children wear jackets in cooler temperatures. Dress your child appropriately.

Accidents

Emergency medical treatment will be administered by our staff or by a paramedic. You will be contacted if your child has a serious accident while in school. If we cannot reach you, we will call the person listed on the enrollment form. A written signed report will be on file in the office for minor accidents and a copy will be sent home to the parents.

Communication

Our main line of communication with parents is through daily interaction at drop-off and again at pick-up, as well as through the use of notes and newsletters, office letters and teacher letters. All messages will be sent home with your child. The Preschool Office sends home letters bi-monthly to keep you informed of all preschool activities. Beneva Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) also provides a monthly Good News with an informational *Little Disciples Preschool* article. Visit their website at: lifeatbeneva.org. A copy of our Grievance Procedures is included in the Student Folder provided at Open House (or upon enrollment). It is our hope that the lines of communication remain open, positive and meaningful for all parties concerned.

Screenings And Evaluations

Vision and hearing are major factors in a child's development. They can affect school achievement, personality, and adjustments to life. Vision and hearing screening tests are given to all children ages 3.5 and older and you will receive the results of these tests. During the year, your child's teacher will formally assess each child's progress. You will receive copies of these evaluations mid-year during Parent/Teacher conferences and again at the end of the school year. Parents are always welcome to call the preschool to schedule a conference with a staff member anytime there are concerns or questions.

Chapel Time

"Chapel Moments" will be held on a regular basis in the Sanctuary by the Pastor or a church member. Parents and siblings are always welcome.

Musical Moments

Music can be found in the classrooms daily. "Musical Moments" are presented on a regular basis as an opportunity to further explore and experience the wonders of music.

Calendars

Calendars are sent home each month to inform parents of the classroom curriculum and special activities each month.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution. They will be held on a regular basis.

Movement Class by Stretch-n-Grow

Children enjoy many physical activities throughout their day here at preschool and one of our long-standing, popular programs is Movement. Our instructor provides music and dance, creative expression and pre-gymnastics in a safe and fun environment. Dress in non-restrictive clothing, wearing socks and tennis shoes to get the most out of this program.

Special Programs

During the year, we will have several programs where the children will perform for an audience. We will also provide parent/teacher meetings and family functions throughout the year. Additional Special Programs may include speakers, outside instructors with special talents and our own staff members sharing their gifts and talents.

Special Events

During the year, some of the holiday celebrations and special events may require additional help. Please make other arrangements for younger siblings. We look forward to including everyone throughout the course of the year.

Personal Belongings

Please encourage your child to keep treasured belongings at home. We would like for them to work with the provided materials when at school because their use is related to our planned learning activities. Show and Share privileges will be decided by each teacher individually.

Book Orders

Each month we send home book orders from Scholastic Book Club. These are books geared for your preschooler at a terrific value. Order as often as you wish throughout the year. Return your order with a check made payable to Scholastic by the deadline given, and within two weeks your books will arrive. All orders result in free books for the school and points that accumulate towards purchases of educational equipment.

Parent Visits

Parents are always welcome! If you wish to visit in the room, please notify the Preschool Director one day in advance. This procedure prevents too many visitors from being in the classroom at one time. Please leave other children at home, as they will distract the children in the class.

Volunteer Program

A volunteer sign-up sheet is sent out at the beginning of the year. Please note ways in which you can be available and/or of assistance. This information will be given to your child's teacher for future reference.

Additionally, we are very proud of our **Parent Volunteer** program. During the first month of school, a **Parent Volunteer** packet will be sent home. We hope to encourage parents to consider being a valuable part of our school year.

Parents are the young child's first and most important teacher. This early learning from parents sets the pace for the child's learning throughout life. Your involvement in the school program provides an opportunity for you to 1. Observe your child in social interactions with peers; 2. Learn ways of handling children's behavior; and 3. Reinforce school experiences at home. You are helping your child and yourself as you improve your parenting skills. We hope you will choose to become involved in some way.

Enrichment Program

At the beginning of each year, we send out a "wish list" for items to enhance our school day. Those making donations are placed on our Honor Roll and are recognized at Christmas and Graduation.

Resource Persons

This is a specific opportunity for a parent to present their special talents, interests, and skills. This would involve presenting a 15-20 minute program in the classroom. Parents could also make arrangements to bring in a resource person. Possible topics might include: crafts, hobbies, skills and talents (music, art, drama, etc...), professions, caring for a baby, storytelling (reading), yarn spinning, puppets, sports and outdoor activities, travel, different cultures, and other programs of interest suitable for preschool children.

Please contact the Preschool Director if you, or someone you know, might be interested.



Opportunities At

Beneva Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Sundays

- 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- 10:45 a.m. Morning Worship (nursery provided)
 - Adult Sunday School

Wednesdays

- 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Fridays

- 3:00 p.m. Food Pantry

Prayer requests are always welcome and prayer request cards are available in both the church and preschool offices. Our Elders and Happy Hearts groups will pray for your concerns.

Read your Good News newsletter, or call the church office (#924-8713) for more information about these (and more) church groups.