



Parent/Student Handbook

Welcome:

Welcome to Excel Christian Academy. A 5-STAR childcare facility eager to grow and learn your scholar. It is a privilege to have each of you as part of our ECA family. This handbook has been prepared to assist you in becoming familiar with our program. We believe that it is of utmost importance that our lines of communication are kept open and clear so that school and home may harmoniously cooperate to provide the best educational experience possible for every child. If we all understand and adhere to the rules and school policies, we can create the most beneficial child care experience possible.

We seek to provide a quality education in a Christian environment by teaching toward the total development of the student's mind, character and body for excellent academic performance and an exceedingly abundant life. This results in productive citizens, ready to lead their generation to Christ and make a positive impact on society.

Excel is committed to promoting the well-being of your child and your family. The following policies will serve as the basis of our operations and are subject to change or be revised as needed based on recommendations by the Chancellor and the Director. Should you have questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to call the office of Excel Christian Academy.

Our Mission:

Excel Christian Academy is an outreach ministry of Ebenezer United Church of Christ. ECA offers high quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood experiences for preschool and school age students.

Excel provides children and parents with a comprehensive education through rigorous academic programming within the context of a faith based center. The integration of both faith and academics ultimately leads to whole child development and the expansion of young minds.

The staff at Excel is comprised of educated, loving and devoted teachers that desire to assist all children with reaching their full potential. Our goal is to maintain a safe, healthy and cheerful environment where students will not only grow but thrive.

Excel Christian Academy provides child care services for fully toilet trained children ages 30 months-12 years (2 ½ -12 years of age). We thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve your family's child care needs and be a part of your child's early learning years. Please feel free to stop by or call at any time.

Goals:

Spiritual Growth: God is central in the classroom. Children are taught that they are special and loved and in turn must learn to love and forgive.

Emotional Growth: Children are encouraged to develop a healthy self-image and express their true feelings.

Social Growth: Through interaction, children are encouraged to be cooperative, considerate and helpful.

Intellectual Growth: All programs are designed to stimulate intellectual and creative abilities.

Physical Growth: Children are provided a variety of indoor and outdoor activities which allow for vigorous play and large muscle development.

Spiritual Development:

As a ministry of Ebenezer United Church of Christ, Excel seeks to reflect the highest Christian values and the best of care for children. Through our program, we offer the finest in early childhood education and direct attention to the Christian faith. Parents are the primary faith sharers with children and parents choose the religious traditions in which children are reared. Excel seeks to partner with families to assist children in establishing a strong and healthy relationship with God.

Young children are concrete learners and learn primarily through their experiences. Excel Christian Academy recognizes the importance of adults as models of acceptable behavior for children. Adults reflect their faith in God through their interactions with each child and through the words used. Children who see in their teachers such attitudes as thankfulness, sharing, patience, forgiveness, joy, fairness, and obedience tend to pattern their own ways of acting and reacting as they live each day. It is important to:

- Affirm each child's self-worth
- Explore the meaning of living together, valuing the rights of others in the classroom, in the community and in the world.
- See the world as good, marveling at God's creation, the dependability of night and day, changing seasons and teaching to care for plants, animals, and all living things.
- Name the children's actions so they begin to know what sharing, love, kindness, etc. mean and how they are demonstrated.

The primary value at Excel is that **every person is valued by God**. Through all programs and relationships, we seek to provide an environment where each child has opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth and their own unique gifts as a child of God.

Linked to this healthy self-concept is a positive feeling about God and about others. *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as you love yourself."* (Matthew 22:37-39)

Whether we use these words or not, our primary goal at Excel is to conduct ourselves and our classes so that children see these commandments lived out each day.

Organization:

Excel Christian Academy is a nonprofit corporation under the umbrella of the Ebenezer United Church of Christ. As such, ECA operates under a board of directors that is charged with the responsibility of assisting Excel in fulfilling its purpose. The Excel Christian Academy board of directors is charged with the following basic responsibilities:

- To determine the mission and purpose of ECA and to ensure that the program operates satisfactorily to accomplish these goals;
- To make policy;
- To set goals in cooperation with Excel's director and to plan for implementation and evaluation;
- To guide long range planning;
- To monitor finances;
- To advocate Excel Christian Academy in the church and in the community.

The board is not responsible for the day-to-day operations of Excel. This function is delegated to the ECA Director/Administrator. The Director of ECA ultimately has the final say or to seek counsel from the chancellor if the situation insists. Excel's Chancellor, the Senior Pastor of Ebenezer United Church of Christ oversees the entire program under the leadership of the Director/Administrator.

Teacher's Role:

It is the role of the teacher to facilitate a child's successful exploration of the environment by providing support, focused attention, physical proximity and verbal encouragement. Teachers recognize that children learn from trial and error, and that children's misconceptions reflect their developing thoughts. The teacher can accomplish these goals and facilitate children's involvement by asking questions, making suggestions or adding materials or ideas to a situation. Additionally, the classroom must be arranged in such a way that the child is encouraged to choose and explore areas of interest. A well-defined environment encourages children to interact with their surroundings, as well as their peers and adults. Teachers emphasize language that accompanies the children's development concepts.

Professional Development Plan:

We believe the quality of staff is the most important determinant of a quality program. As child care professionals, education and learning in this rapidly growing field is essential. Developing a plan of action to continue that education is fundamental. As a part of the evaluation process, with the guidance of their direct supervisor, each employee creates a Professional Development Plan as a comprehensive approach to furthering their educational and training development. This plan allows employees to specify career goals, and

educational needs based training, using a continuum of depth of knowledge workshops both on-site and off-site and college level courses including but not limited to child development courses for degree seeking students.

Parent Participation:

Excel Christian Academy has an open-door policy and parents are invited to share their time and talents with the children whenever possible. Parents may be involved in a variety of ways: coming in to read; taking home housekeeping clothing and accessories to wash; helping with center maintenance, etc.

The ECA Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is composed of parent volunteers acting collectively to promote a supportive relationship between teachers, staff, and families through a variety of activities including: classroom and facility enhancements, teacher and staff appreciation, and parent outreach advocacy.

The teachers and Director are available to meet with parents on an as-needed basis. Parents are encouraged to spend a few minutes at the end of each day talking with their child's teacher and exchanging information.

Individual parent/teacher conferences are held throughout the year. Other conferences may be scheduled by appointment. Parents are encouraged to visit the classroom, participate in classroom activities and eat lunch with their child. Communication is the key to a happy relationship between you, your child and the center. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Parent/ECA Communications:

Please inform your child's teacher of anything special or different about your child's day via face to face or Bright wheel; such as, an early pick up for an appointment, an approved substitute picking up your child, etc. Staff members should be notified of any unusual or upsetting experiences that may affect behavior such as illness, or death in the family, a recent move, or a parent out of town. Writing this information down is encouraged to ensure the teacher fully understands the instructions completely.

Each teacher provides daily or weekly activity sheets for every child. Please check your child's book bag each evening for important reminders and events. This daily communication tool is greatly beneficial to staying connected with the activities occurring in your child's classroom in conjunction with Bright wheel.

Monthly menus, events, and classroom news are all posted on the classroom bulletin board and in Bright wheel. Please refer to the app often for updates. The teachers of Excel will provide weekly sheets with news about the classroom and happenings.

Attendance Policy:

It is imperative that students are here daily to learn. If a child is out Monday & Tuesday, the child will not be able to attend the remainder of the week. The tone for the week is set early on in the week and it becomes disruptive to have students out on a consistent basis and return in the middle of a week that has already started.

Excel Christian Academy Financial Information

Application/Registration Fee

(The payment of this **non-refundable** fee must accompany application and does not guarantee acceptance or placement).

Per child \$ 75.00

Full Day K2 & K3 Tuition 7:00am – 5:30pm (9 ½ hours of care for all students)

K2 1/2 Weekly Tuition \$235.00 (per child)

K3 Weekly Tuition \$200.00 (per child)

K4 Weekly Tuition \$195.00 (per child)

K5 Weekly Tuition \$ 185.00 (per child)

School age Weekly Tuition \$175.00 (per child)

Full Day K4, K5 Tuition 7:00am – 5:30pm (9 ½ hours of care time for all students)

Tuition is due on the Friday prior to the week of services or the first day of every month. Any tuition payment received after Friday (weekly payers) or the 5th of the month (monthly payers) will be charged a \$10.00 late fee. A student may be asked to withdraw from school if payments are in arrears.

Cash, credit (service charge fee) and/or money orders are the only forms of payment we accept. We will not accept personal checks.

Additional Non-Refundable Fees Required (Books & materials)

K2 1/2.....\$125.00

K3.....\$125.00

K4/5.....\$125.00

Multiple Program Discount**5-STAR NC PRE-K (4 & 5 years old)**

NC Pre-K is a government funded Pre-K Program, and is therefore free of charge to parents. Late pick up fees and field trip fees still apply.

Extended Care Fees for NC Pre-K**(NC PreK Instructional Hours: 8am-2:30pm)**

Before School: \$80 per child (7am-8am)
After School: \$100 per child (2:30pm-5:30pm)
Both Before and After School: \$140 per child

Late fee pick up: \$20.00 per minute, per child (after 3:00pm for NC PreK & after 5:30pm)

SUMMER SCHOOL AGE WEEKLY RATES (5-12 years old)

1 child \$175 weekly
2 children \$165 weekly, per child
3 children \$155 weekly, per child

Summer Field trip & Activity Fee: \$180, per child (one-time fee for summer enrollment)

Additional Fees:

Additional fees may be assessed for supplementary activities such as special field trips or excursions. Families will be informed of all additional activities as soon as plans are under consideration. Additionally, parental consent will be obtained in advance of any field trip not previously included in the school calendar.

Tuition Policy:

In order to secure and sustain enrollment tuition is charged continually and must be paid in full regardless of a child's attendance. Payment is due in advance of services rendered with no deductions or credits for a child's absence due to sickness, center's holiday closures, teacher workdays, closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control.

Tuition must be paid on a timely basis. All private pay fees are due in advance, on the Friday prior to the week of services to be rendered. Monthly parent fees associated with DSS child care vouchers are due on the first of each month. Unpaid accounts that fail to have zero balances will be charged \$20.00 weekly and child care services will be suspended until the account is paid in full. In order to secure enrollment, full tuition is charged each week regardless of a child's attendance. Cash, money orders and cashier checks are the only forms of payment accepted.

Enrollment Procedures:

Excel's Director will meet with potential parents to discuss the enrollment packet. This is a good time for parents to discuss any special needs that their child may have. This is also a good time to share comments and or questions about the child care experiences.

1. Come to tour the facility
2. Review the policies and procedures of Excel. Discuss parental responsibilities with the director.
3. Complete and return all paperwork (your child can not attend until all paperwork has been submitted).
 - Enrollment Application
 - Medical Information
 - Discipline Policy (signed)
 - Select a start date
 - Pay registration fee and first week of child care cost
 - Current Immunizations
 - Enrollment Agreement
 - Financial Agreement
 - Copy of Birth Certificate

Hours of Operation:

Excel Christian Academy is open from Monday thru Friday, 7am-5:30pm. All children must arrive **before** 8:30am in order to be admitted for the day. Any child arriving at/after 8:30am will be denied admission for the school day. Please make every effort to schedule appointments in the afternoon as to not disrupt our student's daily academic schedule.

Excel Christian Academy is open for 11 ½ hours a day, but a child cannot be here from open to close, it's not healthy. No child is to be left at ECA for more than 9 ½ hours a day. This is monitored daily and could result in suspension and/or termination of services.

Arrival and Departure:

A parent or authorized adult (18 or older) must bring the student into Excel each morning and sign them in. Children are health screened and given access to enter. Upon entry every student is to put his/her belongings in their cubby and wash their hands. When it is necessary for a child to deviate from his/her normal routine, a note from the parent should be presented to the child's teacher. In case of an emergency, parents may contact the office or other personnel for notification. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up a child, the person must be specified on a list given during enrollment and they must present identification when they arrive to pick up the child.

If an adult comes to pick up a child without parent permission and the adult is not listed as an emergency contact, Excel will not release the child until parents have been contacted.

Late Fees:

Late fees will be assessed for late entry in the morning. At 8:30am the doors will close and we will begin our day. You are no longer late at 8:31am, at 8:30am if the doors are closed, you are late. There will be a \$20.00 per minute fee applied to each account for tardiness and will need to be taken care of that morning if you wish for your child to stay at school. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in your child being sent home for the day. Repeat instances will result in your child being suspended from school.

Late entry is granted by 10:00am with a signed doctors note in hand.

It is important and necessary to drop off and pick your child up on time. A charge of \$20 per minute will be assessed beginning at 3:01pm (for NC PreK) and beginning at 5:31pm for pick up. Payment is expected in cash at the time of pick up or prior to your child's next day of attendance. This policy is to ensure that our staff is able to attend to their own family's needs as well as to offset the cost of additional work hours accrued by staff who must remain because of late arrivals. Please respect our staff and pick your child up on time.

Late payment for tuition fees will consist of a \$20.00 charge applied weekly for very week payment is late. Tuition payments are due Friday before the upcoming week.

Toileting:

Excel Christian Academy only provides care for fully toilet trained students. All students must be toilet trained (in regular underwear at home and at school) and independent and self-sufficient in meeting all of their personal hygiene needs without assistance. If 2 or more accidents occur within a week, the child will be sent home for a week to brush up on successful toileting.

August –May Dress Code:

Excel abides by a school uniform policy during the academic year and a dress code policy during the summer. Please do not dress your child in clothing that they cannot manipulate without assistance, such as suspenders, one-piece leotard underclothing and tight belts. This can be frustrating and often leads to bathroom accidents. All shoes should cover and protect the feet and allow for safety while running and playing. Only closed toe shoes are allowed, no sandals, open toe or sling back shoes are allowed. Please refer to the uniform and dress code policies.

See the attached Uniform Policy (Appendix A) and Dress Code Policy (Appendix B) for more details.

June-August Summer Dress Code:

During the summer months Excel abides by a more relaxed dress code policy to ensure students are comfortable and able to fully engage in summer activities.

Please NO:

Sandals

Flip Flops

Crocs (must be worn with socks)

Dresses & Skirts must have shorts underneath

Short shorts

Reminders:

- Students are to come to school prepared to learn, i.e. book bags, folder, pencils, glasses, blanket. If any of these items are missing, the child cannot stay and will be sent home.
- School age students in attendance on teacher workdays, school breaks, and school closures are to bring educational materials, i.e. books, laptops, tablets, educational workbooks, to work on while in attendance. If school agers are not prepared to learn for the first half of the day that they are in attendance, they will be sent home.
- Bring a complete change of dress code approved clothes labeled with your child's name.
- Read parent information, daily reports, newsletters, etc. on a regular basis (it will help keep you aware of upcoming events, fees, policies and procedures).
- Send appropriate footwear for outside play daily (NO flip flops as they can be dangerous, because kids are often running and climbing while outside and these types of shoes can be dangerous when participating in vigorous activities).
- Remember to update your contact information as well as your child's medical and immunization record as often as needed. If you are uncertain if your child's records are outdated, do not hesitate to ask the director.
- If your child has a fever of 99.6 please keep her/him home for the day. We ask that you do this so that we may keep the staff and children at our center healthy and happy. Communicable diseases spread easily among this age population.

Withdrawal/Termination from Program:

A fourteen (14) day written notice must be given to the Director of Excel when withdrawing a child from ECA. When a child is withdrawn with less than 14 days' notice, an additional charge of two weeks of services, beyond the notified withdrawal date, will be added to your account.

ECA has the right to refuse childcare service or terminate childcare services at any given time. The number one goal is to ensure a healthy and safe environment for students, parents, and staff. If at any time the health or safety of the environment is compromised, provisions will be made at the administrator's discretion.

Holidays:

Excel is closed in observance of the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Fourth of July
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Break
Easter Monday	Christmas Break Week
Memorial Day	New Year's Eve
Veteran's Day	Juneteenth (June 19 th)

Inclement Weather:

If weather conditions threaten to become hazardous for families and staff members Excel may exercise the right to delay or close. When the school must be closed, delay opening or release early due to inclement weather, announcements will be made on Brightwheel App, ECA's Facebook page, WFMY News 2 and WGHP Fox 8. Delays will be based off of the 7:00am opening time of ECA. (Ex. If ECA operates on a 2-hour delay, the opening time would be 9:00am). You may also sign up at www.wfmynews2.com to receive e-mail and text message alerts informing you when the school is deferring from its normal schedule. Please note, Excel does not adhere to the same inclement weather schedule as the Alamance Burlington School System. However, if ABSS closes early due to inclement weather, we will not provide transportation for our after school program.

Transportation/Field Trip Policy:

Children ages three to twelve years will engage in field trips and extracurricular activities that are enjoyable and enhance learning experiences. There is always adequate adult supervision and additional security measures in place when we travel offsite. Parents are invited and encouraged to participate and will always be given advance notice of any school outing.

Written permission must always be received from parents before children leave the premises or take a field trip. Vehicle safety, seat restraints, and other important procedures will be followed to keep children safe while on a trip. Please refer to the field trip checklist for more information.

If a child has a chaperone for a field trip, the chaperone is required to take the child with them once the field trip is over. This is in an effort to cut down on meltdowns. Please sign your child out with his/her teacher.

Emergency Procedures:

In the event of an emergency, the emergency alarm will sound. Teachers and staff members will obtain the attendance and student information sheets and direct students out the nearest exit to predetermined locations that are a safe distance away from the emergency. Attendance

will be taken and reported to the director and others on the emergency staff team. No one will re-enter the building until it has been determined that an emergency no longer exists or until instructed by emergency officials. If the building is deemed unsafe, parents will be contacted and instructed as to where they may pick up their children.

In the event of an individual emergency parents/guardians or emergency contacts will be phoned. If the staff determines that it is best to call 911 for assistance, this call will be made first and parents will be notified immediately following.

The Emergency Care and Emergency Evacuation Plan is included for further information.

First Aid:

The Division of Child Development and Early Education regulations limit the type of first aid the staff of Excel may provide. Staff members may only use soap, water, and band aides/bandages. We are not allowed to use any other type of medication. Furthermore, we are not allowed to remove splinters, ticks, or any other objects that may become embedded in a child. If such occurs, a parent or guardian will be contacted and advised of the incident.

Medications:

We do not provide or allow medications for temporary conditions or short term illnesses. Excel Christian Academy will only provide medication for life threatening conditions such as asthma or severe allergic reactions. A permission to administer medication form must be submitted for each long term prescription. Medication must be in its original container with the child's name, date, and dosage, the name of the medication and the name of the prescribing doctor. Written permission and directions from a medical professional placed on either the physician's letterhead or a medical script must accompany each long term prescription and permission to administer form.

Behavior Management/Discipline Policy:

Understanding that each child is loved by God, made in His image, and redeemed for His service, Excel views discipline as a process of developing appropriate behaviors. We begin our behavior management by providing an interesting and engaging learning environment for our students, with plenty of opportunities for children to choose what interests them. A challenging environment that allows experimenting, learning, physical activity, and quiet times prevents boredom and promotes good behavior.

Guidelines for behavior at Excel Christian Academy have been developed based on the health and safety guidelines set forth by the state of North Carolina. Children need to be reassured that people who love them will guide, protect and set limits that will keep them safe. By helping children learn that behaviors which hurt or that are unfair to others are inappropriate, we hope to foster positive behavior patterns that can be built on in later years.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children describes discipline as a way of teaching children to respect themselves and others and to show respect. Excel Christian Academy follows these guidance techniques:

Redirection
Natural Consequences
Logical Consequences
Assisting children in working through problems

Additionally, Excel Christian Academy uses indirect guidance techniques such as these:

- We give advance warnings: “You have five more minutes to play before it’s time to clean up.”
- We give choices: “You may paint with the other children or you may read a book in a quiet corner.”
- We have regular routine: “We always wash our hands before lunch. After lunch is a story time.”
- We avoid nagging: We tell the child what we expect just once, follow it by asking the child if he/she remembers what we asked, and then offer to help the child do what was asked.
- We’re consistent: We do things the same way each day so the children know what to expect and learn to trust and feel safe in their environment.

We also use direct guidance techniques:

- We use affirmatives: “We use walking feet indoors” rather than “Don’t run!” or “Use your words to tell us you’re angry” rather than “Don’t hit!”
- We get the child’s attention by crouching down to his/her level, making eye contact, speaking quietly, and asking the child to repeat the directions.
- We try very hard to be fair. We examine our expectations to make sure they are developmentally appropriate, and we do not make rules simply because an activity is too noisy or messy.
- We avoid arguments by following through with solutions that address the problem, but also offer the child a way to exit gracefully from the problem: “You may choose a quiet place to calm down or I can choose one for you.”

We, as a staff, pray for the children and families in our program. We use prayer with the children, asking God for His guidance in all of our daily activities. One-on-one prayer is used with children during difficult times, asking God to open our hearts to His will.

If a child is unable to demonstrate self-controlling behavior, a brief time-out results for the child to regain control. Time-out occurs only when other measures fail, and is used as an opportunity for the child to re-group, not as a punishment.

At Excel, the discipline goal is educating and redirecting children. It emphasizes cooperation. In contrast, punishment has as its goal hurting, shaming, or scaring children. Punishment is an inappropriate form of discipline and has no place in our school.

By law, program philosophy and policy, the following forms of discipline are forbidden: hitting, spanking, shaking, scolding, shaming, isolating, labeling (words such as: bad, naughty, etc.), or any other negative reaction to the child's behavior. All forms of corporal (physical) punishment are strictly forbidden.

Some negative behavior is best ignored since its goal is often to get attention. This technique is effective for some of the disruptive things children do and it minimizes mimicking activity by other children.

If a child is unable to gain control and requires more individual attention than can be given within child-staff ratios, we may need to contact a parent. A child that consistently requires one-on-one attention may have to leave the center temporarily for safety's sake. Repeated uncontrollable behavior can lead to suspension or discontinuation of learning center services.

Excel is not a substitute for parents. If parents and children are having problems at home, those problems and solutions are to be taken care of in the family. We cannot discipline your child for you at school (for example, withholding playtime).

Behavior Action Plan Steps:

- Redirection, documentation, note/Brightwheel notification
- Redirection, documented behavior, call home
- Redirection, documented behavior, call parent for immediate pick up

If behaviors persist, referrals will be made to ABSS behavioral specialists for further evaluation and possible termination of childcare services.

Abuse/Neglect:

Excel Christian Academy desires that each child feels safe and secure both in the child care center and at home. If at any time, someone feels that abuse or neglect is a concern that needs to be addressed, Excel will follow the proper procedures to ensure the health and safety of all children. By law, staff members of Excel are considered mandated reporters of suspected child abuse, therefore all observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect will be immediately reported.

Abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. Abuse may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, or discipline, or when a child is abandoned.

Anyone who suspects a child has been abused or neglected must notify the proper authorities. Again, this is a requirement regardless of where the abuse may have occurred. All reports will

be made in good faith and will be reported to any of the following: Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services, Division of Child Development or Local Law Enforcement.

Grievance Policy/Conflict Resolution:

When differences occur within our Christian family, God expects us to act and react in a manner which is pleasing to Him. Excel has adopted the directions of the Holy Scripture as outlined in Matthew 18 as the method for dealing with our differences. We would appreciate cooperation from all parents regarding this procedure:

First, one should go directly to the person with whom he/she has a difference, whether it is a teacher, the administrator, another parent, board member, or pastor. The issue should be clarified in a non-accusatory manner and an attempt made to reach a resolution. It is not proper or acceptable to discuss the issue with persons not directly involved, as Matthew 18 directs.

Second, if conversation with the person directly does not bring resolution, the concern should be discussed with the administrator, who may arrange a meeting of all persons involved to discuss the issue. They may also ask one of the associate pastors or a member of the board of directors to provide counsel at such a meeting.

Third, if conversation with the administrator does not bring a resolve, the administrator will arrange a meeting with the Senior Pastor, who will pursue the matter, as he deems appropriate. Many problems can be avoided by going directly to the person(s) involved when questions arise.

Care of Sick Children:

Excel is a place for healthy children. Unfortunately, we do not have the staff or facilities to care for children who are too ill to fully participate in regular activities or cannot play outdoors. We ask that you not bring your child to school if he or she has any of the conditions listed in the Healthy Environment for All document found in Appendix C of this handbook.

If a child has had diarrhea 2 times in a day, has vomited, or has a temperature at or above 99.6 degrees, excessive coughing, sneezing or running noses that disrupts their day due to not covering and wiping incorrectly, the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be contacted to pick the child up from child care. Parents must arrive within one hour of receiving the call or our child care nurse will be contacted to remove the child from care and relocate to the Alamance County Health Department until an authorized adult arrives. A child must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

See the attached Healthy Environment for All (Appendix C) for more details.

Sanitation Protocol:

For the safety of all children, cleaning occurs throughout each day. Excel employs a custodian that is responsible for meeting all sanitation requirements. Sheets are washed weekly or when soiled and floors, tables and toys are cleaned several times a day as needed. The kitchen is cleaned after every use, and the bathrooms are cleaned as needed throughout the day. See attached cleaning schedule (Appendix D) and janitorial duties and responsibilities for further details.

Physical Activity Policy:

Our commitment to quality continues both indoors and outdoors. We utilize our outdoor learning environment, our gym space and other park and recreation facilities to enhance the concept of "continuous play". Interconnected components provide a variety of challenging events to stimulate active, creative and social play.

Excel provides children with a physical environment that promotes active play. Safe, sufficient and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor space and equipment encourage all children to be physically active, including children with disabilities. Sufficient equipment is provided to avoid competition and long waits. Staff members always supervise children on playground equipment, during active play and other physical activities. They also continuously lead and participate in active play (e.g., games and activities) while outdoors and at other times devoted to physical activity. Additionally, staff receive ongoing professional development regarding developmentally appropriate indoor/outdoor active play and education activities for children. These resources and instruction are then offered to families via workshops, newsletters and memos as an encouragement for parents to live active lives.

Students are provided with at least 60 minutes of structured activity and at least 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity daily. Program practices are inclusive and offer access for children with disabilities to participate in physical activities with nondisabled peers. All children are provided outdoor time at least twice daily, weather and air quality permitting; therefore, please dress your child in clothing appropriate for the day's weather.

Staff members do not withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., not being permitted to play with the rest of the class or being kept from play time), except when a child's behavior is dangerous to himself or others nor do staff members ever use physical activity or exercise as punishment, e.g., doing push-ups or running laps. Play time or other opportunities for physical activity are never withheld as a measure to enforce the completion of learning activities or academic work. Excel uses appropriate alternate strategies as consequences for negative or undesirable behaviors and physical activity is often used as reinforcement, reward and celebration for group achievement. Teachers provide short physical activity breaks between learning activities, as appropriate and incorporate these activities into daily routines whenever possible, such as transition time.

Screen Time Policy:

Screen time is limited to less than thirty minutes over the course of a day and consists only of quality educational activities that are connected to learning goals and standards or programs that actively engage child movement. Screen time includes television, desk top and laptop computers, iPads, Kindles and any other digital electronic device. Excel does not allow screen time during meals or snacks and does not use screen time to reward children. Additionally, Excel limits extended periods of inactivity, excluding rest time, and therefore seated time is always restricted to less than fifteen minutes at any given period throughout the day.

Nutrition Policy:

Excel Christian Academy chooses to either prepare meals on site or cater breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for each child. We follow the nutritional guidelines set by the USDA. Breakfast consists of healthy grains (cereal, waffles, oatmeal, etc), vegetables, fruits, and milk. Lunch consists of a meat/protein, vegetable, fruit, milk and bread. Snacks consists of a combination of healthy grains or fruits/vegetables with milk, juice or water. Please indicate upon enrollment if your child has a medically documented food allergy. We must have this information in writing from a medical professional and we are mandated to post this in each classroom as per licensing requirements.

Nutrition education is offered at least once per week as part of a planned comprehensive health education program designed to provide children with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health. Nutrition education activities, both designed and informal, are consistent with nutritional guidelines and emphasize the appealing aspects of healthy eating. They promote nutrient-rich foods, healthy food preparation methods, good nutrition practices and include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant participatory activities, e.g., cooking, taste-testing and farm visits. Additionally, these activities are included in other content areas, such as language and literacy development, mathematics, science and music. Nutrition concepts are integrated into daily routines whenever possible, such as mealtimes and education on child nutrition is offered to families on an ongoing basis.

Excel seeks to build awareness among teachers, food service personnel and parents about the importance of nutrition, physical activity, decreased screen time and positive body image to academic success and lifelong wellness. Therefore, we collaborate with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent health messages to children and their families and we provide relevant nutrition training and nutrition education materials at least twice a year to teachers, assistant teachers, parents and other staff members, as appropriate.

Peanut Products Policy:

There will come a time that we may have students with severe peanut allergies. Because of this extreme danger, we want you to be peanut-aware. Excel strives to be a peanut free

facility; therefore, you should not bring anything made with peanut products to school. Please check labels! Many foods are processed using the same equipment as those containing peanuts, and this must be stated on the label. Peanut allergies can be deadly; therefore, we ask that each family please take this seriously!

Outside Food:

We do not allow children to bring outside food, water bottles, candy or gum to school. As explained, we pride ourselves in providing well balanced, nutritionally sound meals at appropriately designated intervals throughout the day. Therefore, we do not allow students to bring their lunch from home or bring items to supplement their meals while at school. Special consideration will be given to those who have documented medical food allergies. For more information on required documentation, please refer to the nutrition policy. Otherwise, please have your child finish any outside food before entering the school building and away from the classroom. Additionally, on occasion we will celebrate a special event or holiday. In such instances parents will be informed and provided with a list of suggested items to donate. Please remember that all food must be commercially prepared in order to be distributed to students. No homemade or baked goods are allowed to be served our children.

Birthdays:

We enjoy celebrating birthdays with your child. Our absolutely favorite birthday “treat” is a book for the classroom. You can inscribe it with your child’s name and picture and even wrap it for your child to open during class. We can read the book to the class during group time. This helps us promote a love of books and literacy. We recommend that invitations to birthday parties held away from school are mailed to student’s homes or discretely given to student's parents to avoid hurt feelings. If you wish to have a small celebration for your child at school that involves food, please note the following:

- Celebrations are only held after rest time at 2:30-3:00pm
- Parties must include all children enrolled in the class
- All food must be commercially prepared (no homemade items)
- Healthy snacks/treats are strongly encouraged. Apple slices, cheese cubes, crackers, veggie chips, etc. No sodas or punch. Only 100% juice may be served.

Excel Christian Academy Uniform Policy

(For the academic year)

DRESS CODE

(Boys)

Long/Short sleeved collared **white** polo or oxford shirt

Casual **Navy Blue** slacks or knee length shorts

Navy Blue Sweater

Navy Blue, Black or White socks

All Black, Closed toe, comfortable shoes

Solid Navy Blue tie (on Wednesdays)

DRESS CODE

(Girls)

Long/Short sleeved collared **white** polo or oxford blouse

Navy Blue skort, skirt or jumper (NO pants)

Navy Blue or **White** Sweater

Navy Blue, Black or White socks, tights or pantyhose

All Black, Closed toe, comfortable shoes

*Girls are only allowed to wear small, studded earrings, no hoops or dangles. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings during school hours and activities. All other jewelry, of any type, is against dress code policy. *

Excel Christian Academy Dress Code Policy

(For dress down days and summer camp)

"... Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God..." Romans 12:1

- Any fashion, clothing accessory, or hairstyle that distracts from the spiritual atmosphere or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. This includes, but may not be limited to bare midriffs, short shorts, brief swim wear, short dresses, or immodestly tight apparel.
- The standard for acceptable length of shorts will be the student's fingertips when the arms are fully extended downward. Shorts should have at least a 5-inch inseam. (Midthigh shorts have a 5' inseam, Bermuda shorts have an 8' inseam). The Director will determine (on a case-by-case basis) which is the more modest.
- Shirts designed as underclothing may not be worn as outer garments. See-through clothing, or clothing that exposes any body part that should be covered, may not be worn. Spaghetti-straps are not permitted. All straps on tank tops should be the width of an adult's first and middle finger when placed side by side.
- Clothing and other accessories advertising pictures or writing of poor taste may not be worn.
- All pants should be worn at the waist (no sagging) and undergarments should not be visible.
- Closed toe footwear must be worn and securely fastened to the feet at all times. Sling back sandals are not permitted. Special permission is given to bring flip flops for swimming field trips, however children must come dressed in closed toe shoes.
- Only one-piece bathing suits are permitted for girls, with no exceptions. Males may wear appropriate length swim trunks. Net liners are required in all swim trunks. No cotton is allowed in the pool, therefore a pair of basketball shorts will not substitute for swim trunks and girls will not be allowed to wear a shirt over their swim suit.

Appendix C

Care of Sick Children:

Excel is a place for healthy children. Unfortunately, we do not have the staff or facilities to care for children who are too ill to fully participate in regular activities or cannot play

outdoors. We ask that you not bring your child to school if he or she has any of the conditions listed in the Healthy Environment for All document found in Appendix C of this handbook.

If a child has had diarrhea 2 times in a day, has vomited, or has a temperature at or above 99.6 degrees, the parent/guardian or emergency contact will be contacted to pick the child up from child care. Parents must arrive within one hour of receiving the call or our child care nurse will be contacted to remove the child from care and relocate to the Alamance County Health Department until an authorized adult arrives. A child must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

EXCEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
Healthy Environment for All

Excel Christian Academy is a place for well children. A sick child is not happy in school and may infect others. Please do not bring your child if s/he has any of the following symptoms:

- ☞ A temperature of 99.6 degrees or higher
- ☞ Severe diarrhea or frequent watery stools
- ☞ Vomiting
- ☞ Drainage from one or both eyes
- ☞ Drainage from nose (thick or green in color)
- ☞ Excessive coughing
- ☞ Unable to maintain a lowered temperature without medication

Children may not return to school until they are non-symptomatic, fever free, without medication for 24 hours and can fully participate in the day's activities. If your child has a contagious disease such as Covid, RSV, chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, flu, impetigo, head lice, sinus infection etc., please make alternative arrangements for care for as long a period as needed to ensure your child's well-being and the well-being of others. In most cases, this is 48 hours after initial treatment begins. Please notify the school of any contagious illness so that other parents may be informed.

You will be contacted to pick up your child if s/he becomes ill during the day. Ill children must be picked up within one hour of notification. By helping observe these health standards, you will protect your child as well as the other students.

Appendix D

EXCEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Cleaning Schedule

To keep germs from spreading, Excel Christian Academy both cleans, removing dirt you can see, using a soap and water solution and sanitizes, removing most germs you can't see, using a bleach and water solution. In addition, we also disinfect using a stronger bleach water solution.

Clean and Sanitize after each use:

- Eating Tables
- Counter Tops

Clean and Sanitize daily or when grossly soiled

- Toilets
- Sinks
- Kitchen and Bathroom floors
- Laundry

Clean and Sanitize weekly

- Cubbies
- Cots
- Doorknobs
- Walls
- Refrigerator
- Trash Cans

- Vacuum, mop and sweep daily
- Shampoo carpets bi-monthly
- Strip & wax floors quarterly

EXCEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Emergency Evacuation Plan

In an effort to keep your child safe, the staff of Excel Christian Academy has participated in Emergency Preparedness and Response training. We have incorporated age appropriate emergency skills into our curriculum to teach your child proper conduct in case of an emergency.

With your child's safety in mind, we would like to make you aware that we have developed an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for our child care facility. This detailed plan is comprehensive and involves our local emergency agencies. We are confident that we can do what it takes to protect all of the children in our care in the event that they must be evacuated in place (remain in a protected part of our facility until advised that it is safe to leave) or evacuated off site to a safe area away from our facility.

An In-Place Evacuation could occur if:

1. A tornado or other weather-related emergency made it too dangerous to leave the safety of our facility;
2. There was a toxic chemical spill outside of the facility;
3. There was the threat of a violent incident (such as a person or persons in the vicinity acting out of control,) that made it unsafe for children to leave; or
4. The facility was directed to shelter in place by local emergency personnel. If children in our facility are to evacuate in place:
 1. We are prepared to provide supervision, food, water, and shelter.
 2. ***Do not attempt to pick up your child until it is safe to do so.***
 3. Children will not be released until local emergency officials assure us that it is safe to do so.
 4. We will provide information as soon as possible, through phone calls, text message or email.

An Off-Site Evacuation could occur if:

1. A hurricane or weather-related emergency made it too dangerous to stay in our facility;
2. There was a bomb threat
3. There were imminent threats of safety in the area (e.g. flooding, terrorism); or
4. The facility was directed to evacuate by local emergency personnel. If the children in our facility are to evacuate off-site:
 1. Children will be safely transported to a secure facility, designated by Emergency Management Personnel or our Emergency Plan.
 2. Information will be provided to parents by:
 - i. WFMY News 2
 - ii. WGHP Fox 8
 - iii. Excel Christian Academy receptionist and voicemail
 3. Children will be released to a parent, or a legal guardian. A photo id will be required.

The safety of our children and staff members is our highest priority. Please reassure your child that in the event of an emergency, their teachers will take good care of them.

Appendix F

EXCEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Field Trip Procedures

Procedures

1. Travel and activity authorization forms and emergency contact information, including a medical release, signed by parents are kept on file in the classroom, and in the office. Teachers are required to have a folder with copies of forms in their possession for the duration of the trip.
2. Teachers are to prepare students for the educational objectives of a trip.
3. Parents may opt for a student not to go on a field trip but must provide care for the child on the scheduled day of the trip.
4. Students must leave Excel with an identification tag or shirt that contains the school's identifying information.
5. Students must use the buddy system throughout the trip.
6. Prior to leaving for a trip the teacher must complete a Roster Check form and check the students attending the trip.
7. Before leaving Excel, the teacher must take the students by the welcome center to have a staff member double check and verify student count. The individual must initial the form and record the date, time and number of students.
8. The teacher must do another Roster Check on the vehicle and twice during the trip.
9. Immediately upon arrival at the destination, the teacher must call the school to report the arrival.
10. Before leaving the destination to return to Excel, the teacher must call the school to report departure.
11. Upon arrival at Excel, the teacher must take the students by the welcome center to have a staff member double check and verify student count. The individual must initial the form and record the date, time and number of students.
12. The Roster Check is to be given to the director to be filed in the office.

EXCEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Sample Daily Schedule

7:00-7:30	Arrival/Free Choice Center Activities
7:30-8:00	Arrival/Bathroom & Water Break /Free Choice Center Activities
8:00-8:20	Music & Movement/Morning Exercises & Yoga Stretches
8:20-8:30	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
8:30-8:50	Morning Devotion
8:50-9:00	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
9:00-9:30	Breakfast/Breakfast Clean-Up (Transitional Activity)
9:30-9:40	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
9:40--10:00	Group Time/Learning Activities/Early Literacy
10:00-10:30	Theme & Curriculum Based Learning Activities
10:30-10:40	Bathroom & Water Break
10:40-11:05	Free Choice Center Activities
11:05-11:50	Indoor/Outdoor Gross Motor Activities
11:50-12:00	Bathroom & Water Break
12:00-12:30	Lunch/Lunch Clean-Up (Transitional Activity)
12:30-12:40	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
12:40-2:40	Nap/Rest Break
2:40-2:50	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
2:50-3:05	Snack/Snack Clean-Up (Transitional Activity)
3:05-3:15	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
3:15-3:45	Group Time/Learning Activities/Early Literacy
3:45-4:15	Free Choice Center Activities
4:15-4:30	Bathroom & Water Break (Transitional Activity)
4:30-5:15	Indoor/Outdoor Gross Motor Activities
5:15-5:30	Board Games/Table Top Toys/ Cleanup/Departure

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EXCEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
Statement of Receipt of Policies and Procedures

- I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Excel Christian Academy Student/Parent Handbook.
- I read and understand this document and have no questions.
- I am in agreement and will follow the guidelines of the policy and procedures. I furthermore understand that not abiding by the policies and procedures set forth by Excel Christian Academy in the student/parent handbook can result in termination of services.
- I am in receipt of the NC Child Care Law and Rules

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Signature

Director's Signature



*We must make it our
job to create, with
reverence and
gratitude, a space that
is worthy of a
miracle.”*

– Anita Rui Olds