



STEP BY STEP CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Parent & Student Handbook

2017-2018 School Year

**Infants, Toddlers, Preschool,
Extended Care, & Summer Camp**



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Contents

Introduction to the School	1
The Step By Step Christian School Statement of Faith	1
Mission Statement & Purpose	1
Enrollment & Placement	1
Application Process	2
Enrollment	2
Re-enrollment of Current Students	3
Visitation	3
Open Door Policy	3
Parent Involvement	3
Parent Education	4
Programs	4
Preschool Goals	5
Accreditation	8
Enrollment Requirements & Fees	8
Hours & Days of Operation	9
Discipline, Challenging Behaviors, & Separation	9
Communication Policy & Confidentiality	11
Withdrawal	11
Licensing Compliance	11
Grievance Procedure	12
Financial Policies	13
Financial Responsibility	13
Absent Credits	13
Refunds	14
Childcare Subsidies	14
Acceptable Forms of Payment	15
Meal Charges	15
Fees	15
Breakfast Fee Policies	15
Lunch Fee Policies	15
General Information	16
Arrival and Departures	16
Custody Situations	17

Parent Code of Conduct	17
Adjustment	17
Missing Items	17
Questions / Concerns	17
Parental Notification / File Folders	18
Personal Belongings	18
Uniforms, Dress Code & Safety	18
Meal Policies	19
Nutrition Safety	20
Animals	20
Outdoor Play	21
Technology Policy	21
Transportation	22
Water Activities	22
Special Events & Photo Policies	23
Parties	23
Holiday Celebrations	23
Birthdays	24
Field Trips	24
Infants & Toddlers	24
Infant Playtime & Learning Time	25
Toddler Playtime & Learning Time	26
Breastfeeding, Feeding, and Meal Times	26
Infant Instruction Sheet	26
Safe Sleep	27
Diapering	27
Biting	28
Preschoolers	28
Open House & Special Programs	28
Toys from Home	28
Nap Time	29
Health Policies	29
Health Checks	29
Medical Emergency Procedures	29
Immunizations	30
Precautionary Screenings	30
Illness	30

Allergies & Special Needs Policies	31
Medication	32
Emergency Situations	32
Foul Weather Closures	32
Preparedness	32
Lock Downs	33
Emergency Release	33
Evacuation & Relocation	33



Introduction to the School

The Step By Step Christian School Statement of Faith

Step By Step Christian School is a private Christian educational facility with no direct ties to any particular church or denomination. As such, we endeavor to support families from all walks of the Christian faith as they train their children in the love and reverence of the Lord. We believe that:

- God is our creator
- The Bible is the true inspired word of God
- Jesus Christ is the divine son of God
- By accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we achieve salvation
- It is our role, as Christian educators and leaders, to teach the children by our lives, behaviors, and teachings:
 - To know God on a personal basis, and to be known by Him
 - To love God and to acknowledge His love for us
 - To serve God and be a steward of His creation
 - To know the Bible and be able to apply the Bible's lessons to life as a guide for both salvation and daily decision making

Mission Statement & Purpose

Step By Step Christian School helps parents prepare and equip their children for a lifetime of Christian service and leadership. We accomplish our mission by nurturing and supporting children by giving them the affection, care, and guidance they need. This program is designed to promote the child's spiritual, physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth by providing children with a happy, wholesome, and healthful schedule of individual and group activities.

Founded in 1982, the Step By Step Christian School has more than 30 years of experience providing care for the children of the Tomball community. Perhaps the greatest testament to the quality of our program is the numerous "second generation" students we enroll, the children of our alumni, who feel that Step By Step gave them the best possible start in life, and who are now choosing that same path for their own children. To learn more about our community or to find more local resources, visit <http://www.ci.tomball.tx.us/>.

Enrollment & Placement

Step By Step Christian School is a private Christian junior high, elementary, preschool and childcare, with many age-appropriate programs and activities designed to nurture all aspects of your child's growth: academic, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical. We look forward to helping your child grow and mature into the best person they can be, by providing the loving, supportive environment needed to facilitate this development.

Step By Step Christian School enrolls children from birth through school age. Children are placed

into classes based upon a variety of factors including, but not limited to, each child's age, development, and needs, as well as the age, development, and needs of the other children in the class. For this reason, Step By Step cannot guarantee your child's placement into a particular class, although every effort will be made to honor such requests. Enrollment is accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis, and children may be placed on a waiting list until space is available.

Application Process

The following items are needed to complete the application process:

- Application for Admission, including Family Information, Health Information, Physician's Statement, & Academic Profile
- Enrollment Record Short Form
- Enrollment Fee
- Copy of most recent report card or preschool progress report (if applicable)
- Test scores/ previous placement assessments
- Copy of student's social security card (for student's permanent record)
- Copy of student's birth certificate
- Copy of student's health insurance card
- Complete immunization records (state law requires that the school have a complete and accurate record of a student's immunization history, including all doses), or provide a notarized Affidavit Request for Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience
- Medical Records, including documentation of any special needs, physical conditions, etc.
- Food Allergy Emergency Care Plan signed by a health-care professional, if applicable
- Copy of custody papers, if student does not reside with both parents

Step By Step Christian School welcomes applications from students desiring a Christ-centered, challenging, academic program. Every family must submit a separate completed, signed application for each potential student and the enrollment fee must be paid. All required documents must be received in the Admissions Office prior to acceptance. The submission of an application does not constitute acceptance. Each student is evaluated on the following items: report cards or transcript, placement assessments, and the desire to succeed in a Christian atmosphere. Additional information and/or references are required for those children proposing to enroll in grades 4 and up. Students will be notified in a timely manner regarding their application.

Enrollment

Upon initial application, each family must complete enrollment paperwork which includes data about the child(ren), parents/guardians, and any others who will be able to pick up and/or make decisions for the child in the case of an emergency in which we are unable to contact the parents. In addition to the paperwork completed upon initial enrollment, an annual medical statement and vaccination records must be kept current on each child. Please also be sure to keep all phone numbers and contact information current on both the enrollment record and the emergency contact card. In the event of an emergency, we will use this information to contact the parents as soon as appropriate procedures allow, and may leave messages at any number provided. You may update this information by phone, fax, email, or in writing by leaving a note in the payment box.

By signing the enrollment form, parents are certifying the information contained within to be complete and factual, promising to fulfill all financial obligations, and committing to adhere to the policies and regulations of Step by Step including those outlined in the current *Step By Step Christian School Parent & Student Handbook*. They further accept that if tuition becomes delinquent, students may not be allowed to attend class. Please note **THAT PRESENTATION OF FALSE INFORMATION OR OMISSION OF PERTINENT INFORMATION ON THE APPLICATION WILL CONSTITUTE GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL FROM STEP BY STEP CHRISTIAN SCHOOL WITH NO REFUND OF TUITION OR FEES.**

Re-enrollment of Current Students

The school reviews the records to ensure the student achieved sufficient academic progress to qualify for advancement to the next level. The school also reviews the records to ensure the student behavior is appropriate for advancement to the next level. Any student making less than expected progress will require a meeting between the administrator and/or the classroom teacher and parents as a support system to bring the student to a greater level of success.

The school reviews the financial records to ensure there are no delinquent accounts. No student shall be re-enrolled with a delinquent account. Re-enrollment of the student is finalized upon the

- 1) receipt and approval by the school of the re-enrollment application for the next term
- 2) payment of the re-enrollment fee
- 3) resolution of any outstanding academic, financial, or behavioral matters

As part of the re-enrollment process, updated medical information and emergency contact information will be requested. Students may not attend classes without these forms on file in the school office.

Visitation

For more information about our school, or to find out how we can help provide the best for your child, please take a tour of our facility, which will let you see the classrooms, meet the teachers, and get a better sense of how we can meet the needs of your family.

Hours for visitors touring the center are from 8:30 am – 5:30 pm. All visitors need to come to the office first, and will be escorted through the school to ensure the safety of all our children.

Open Door Policy

Parents of children enrolled at Step By Step Christian School are welcome anytime, and may proceed directly to their child's class or playground to perform a "wellness check." Please be considerate of others in your child's class whether popping in for a visit or simply observing through the window.

Parent Involvement

We encourage parent involvement, especially on field trips, helping with class parties, attending special programs, and through school-wide events such as our annual Family Fun Night in the spring. These events give parents an important opportunity to get to know the

families of their child's friends, make connections throughout the school, and become more familiar and more comfortable with all those who interact with their child on a daily basis.

Step By Step believes that parent involvement is important. Parents are requested to participate in Parent Orientation before enrollment which allows time to tour the center and meet the staff. We also plan activities almost monthly that will allow you and your family the opportunity to visit with your child at school. We also provide a center evaluation to allow parents the opportunity to assist us in developing goals and activities. Monthly newsletters are sent to inform parents about what is going on at Step By Step. These newsletters will also provide you with parent education information. Topics can include nutrition, guidance, education topics, and helpful information about your child's growth and development.

We welcome parent suggestions through our office communication/payment box at any time and offer the parents the chance to express their opinions through periodically conducted surveys. Please keep an eye out for these as a way to help guide Step by Step for the next generation.

There are several volunteer positions available to parents throughout the school year, and responsibilities can vary from reading to the children on a weekly basis, creating costumes and/or props for programs, to being Room Parent. Volunteers who are regularly present at the school may need to complete paperwork and fulfill other requirements as set forth by the DFPS.

Parent Education

Parent bulletin boards with class schedules, lesson plans, announcements, newsletters, and parenting articles will be displayed in each classroom and beside the classroom door. Be sure to read these daily. A Resource Center is available for parents in the preschool hallway. If we don't have what you need, be sure to let an SBS staff member know and we will do our best to get the information to you.

Programs

For information about the elementary and junior high school programs, please see the elementary parent handbook.

- **Full Time Program** **Birth to School Age** **5:45 am to 6:45 pm**
Our full time program includes both preschool and extended care in one. It is available from 5:45 AM to 6:45 PM, Monday through Friday, and provides an outstanding financial value. For those enrolled in the full time program, we provide a robust preschool curriculum, nutritious meals and snacks prepared on site, and lots of fun. We also have part time programs available for those at least 2 years of age, after school care, and a summer program with a wide variety of activities to entertain all ages. *Includes two snacks and a hot lunch. Includes breakfast for those children under 3 years of age.*
- **Preschool Only** **Three & Four Year Olds** **8:30-12:00**
Our preschool only program allows children to experience our full preschool curriculum. An excellent choice for those parents seeking to provide their child with a head start on their education, this program is a favorite among families with a stay-at-home parent, work-at-home parent, or those with a flexible work schedule. Drop-off occurs between 8

and 8:30 am and pick up is at 12:00 (noon). Each child will receive a morning snack at approximately 9:30 am. This program is offered to those children who will be at least 3 years of age on September 1st of the school year, and is available 2 days (Tuesday & Thursday), 3 days (Monday, Wednesday, & Friday), or 5 days (M-F) a week. *Includes a morning snack.*

● **School Day Program Two, Three, & Four Year Olds** **8:30-3:00**

The MDO program also includes the full preschool curriculum and extended care until 3:00. A good match for those parents seeking to make sure their child is ready for kindergarten; this program is a favorite among families with a child enrolled in elementary school, a stay-at-home parent, work-at-home parent, or those with a flexible work schedule. Drop-off occurs between 8 and 8:30 am and pick up is at 3:00 pm. In addition to our robust morning program, these children receive morning snack (approximately 9:30 am), a nutritious hot lunch (approximately 12:00 noon), and a rest period (nap time is approximately 12:45-2:45 pm). This program is offered to those children who will be at least 2 years of age on September 1st of the school year, and is available 2 days (Tuesday & Thursday), 3 days (Monday, Wednesday, & Friday), or 5 days (M-F) a week. *Includes a morning snack and a hot lunch.*

● **Summer Camp All Children** **5:45 am to 6:45 pm**

Our Summer Camp program offers a wide range of age-appropriate activities in a less structured environment. Red Cross swimming lessons are offered in June, weekly field trips away from the center, and a wide variety of special activities start in July. Each class has a monthly calendar of activities that include dress up days, show and tell days, art, music, cooking and party days. Parents of children in full time care may choose any hours between opening (5:45 am) and closing (6:45 pm). In addition to our robust morning program, these children stay for a nutritious hot lunch (available at an additional cost) and nap time (for those who have not completed kindergarten or older children who still need a mid-day rest). This program is offered to children of all ages. *Includes two snacks.*

Preschool Goals

Your child will be learning language skills, expressing his or her ideas clearly, finding ways to solve problems, negotiating a play scheme with other children, learning to make comparisons, predicting outcomes, expressing his or her feelings, and discovering new things. The teacher's role will be to observe and document your child's developmental abilities and to plan choices in play areas throughout the room that will encourage your child to practice old skills and try new ones.

In every child's development, there are windows of opportunity during which it is easiest for a child to learn certain concepts. It is our goal at Step By Step Christian School to train our students in the following areas, at an age appropriate level, taking full advantage of these learning windows:

Citizenship & Personal Development:

- Follow school & classroom rules
- Develop appropriate independent & group behavior
- Respect rights, property & feelings of others
- Complete assigned tasks

- Maintain clean environment
- Use time constructively
- Observe safety rules
- Be responsible for care of materials

Reading & Language Arts Readiness:

- Acquire vocabulary related to concepts being presented
- Focus attention on speaker without interruption
- Communicate in complete sentences
- Respond to storytelling or oral reading by telling what the story is about, recalling facts & details, & relating the sequence of events
- Repeat poems
- Present finger plays
- Recognize and name shapes & colors
- Learn the phonetic sound of the letters
- Be introduced to beginning sounds
- Blending of letter sounds
- Become aware of speech sounds and patterns through rhymes, poems, songs, & finger plays
- Learn basic language concepts such as Same & Different, Opposites, Go-Togethers, What's Missing?, Rhyming, Sequencing, & Categorizing
- Print preferred name

Mathematical Concepts & Readiness:

- Count orally to 40 and above
- Recognize numbers to ten and above
- Orally identify the number of objects in a group
- Match objects with a one-one correspondence
- Use manipulative objects to reinforce concepts
- Recognize the empty set concept of zero
- Understand the concept of more and less
- Use vocabulary to compare objects (taller/shorter, heavier/lighter, long, longer, longest, etc.)
- Repeat a simple patterns

Social Studies:

- Know terms related to direction & location such as up & down, near & far, & above & below
- Demonstrate awareness of self in terms of name, age & gender
- Learn to make choices and decisions
- Study holidays & special events
- Discuss ways people can help each other
- Know and discuss rules of safety at home & school
- Learn social skills appropriate to group behavior
- Know and observe rules of the home, classroom & school
- Discuss the family unit
- Learn proper social relationships (sharing, respect, good manners)
- Build a feeling of self-confidence as a result of learning skills and earning praise
- Develop socially by relating to others
- Learn about community helpers
- Study types of transportation

Health:

- Hand washing
- Oral Hygiene
- Eating Healthy
- Safety
- Familiarity with the doctor's office and basic well-child practices (immunizations, hearing & vision testing, etc.)
- Correct & sanitary bathroom procedures

Science:

- Name the seasons
- Study the five senses (smell, touch, taste, sight, & sound)
- Identify body parts
- Observe cooking techniques (portions of ingredients, mixing, spreading, & cooking)
- Observe magnets
- Learn about animals, their families, & their habitats
- Observe weather daily
- Study things that sink & float
- Distinguish between solids & liquids

Music:

- Sing songs for fun
- Learn chapel songs
- Hear music for quiet listening
- Hear music that tells a story
- Respond to music through moving and playing (dancing, simple rhythm games, melody instruments)

Physical Skills:

- Acquire fundamental movement skills (walking, running, hopping, skipping, galloping, bending & stretching, jumping, etc.)
- Acquire manipulative skills (working with bean bags, large balls, long ropes, etc.)
- Participate in co-operative games
- Develop & practice good sportsmanship
- Acquire skills relating to games & sports (starting, stopping, dodging, throwing, catching, kicking, fair play, taking turns)
- Learn rules for safe play
- Develop gross motor skills (creeping, crawling, rolling, & balancing)
- Develop eye-hand & eye-foot coordination

Art:

- Participate and enjoy art activities
- Care for art materials
- Provide opportunities to discover line, color, shape, & texture by seeing & feeling objects
- Use scissors
- Use of crayons, markers, & paints
- Playdough sculptures
- Build self-esteem through successful completion of both arts and crafts

Christian Training:

- To know God & be known by Him
- To love God and be loved by Him
- To serve God & His creation
- Begin each day in His presence
- Have prayer as part of daily activity
- Daily non-denominational Bible stories
- Apply the Bible's lessons to life, using it as a tool to tell right from wrong

Accreditation

Step By Step is committed to being on the forefront of accreditation so we can continually raise our standards for the care and education of your child. Accreditation is an essential quality initiative for early education and child care. A Texas Rising Star is a provider who has achieved a state certification for their program. This is a voluntary process where a child care provider can choose to have an outside entity come in and evaluate their program. This evaluation uses a standard set of criteria that exceeds the minimum standards required by child care licensing. Child care providers who choose to become accredited as a Texas Rising Star are evaluated periodically to ensure they continue to meet accreditation standards. There are three levels of certification: 2 star, 3 star, and 4 star. Each star reflects a higher level of quality that has been achieved by the provider. A four star provider has meet the highest quality accreditation. The TRS criteria looks at the overall operation of the facility and the experiences provided for children while in care. The criterion includes the following requirements:

- Compliance with DFPS licensing
- Qualifications for directors and caregivers in licensed child care centers.
- Staff orientation for new employees
- Staff training for licensed child care centers.
- Written program goals and objectives for curriculum and activities
- Positive caregiver/child interactions
- Appropriate indoor and outdoor environments and materials
- Focus on providing a healthy and safe environment
- Offer nutritious meals and snacks and practice age appropriate meal time routines
- Encourage parent involvement

For more information, visit www.texasrisingstar.org

Enrollment Requirements & Fees

Step By Step Christian School will accept children in the childcare/afterschool program from birth through school age up to a maximum of 227. Upon initial enrollment, each family must complete enrollment paperwork which includes data about the child(ren), parents/guardians, and any others who will be able to pick up and/or make decisions for the child in the case of an emergency in which we are unable to contact the parents. In addition to the paperwork completed upon initial enrollment, an annual medical statement and vaccination records must be kept current on each child. Please also be sure to keep all phone numbers and contact information current on both the enrollment record and the emergency contact card. In the event of an emergency, we will use this information to contact the parents as soon as appropriate procedures allow and leave messages if necessary.

A child enrolling for preschool or childcare classes will be required to pay an enrollment & supply fee at the time of enrollment. This is a semester fee and will be due each fall, spring, & summer the child is enrolled. This fee includes all school supplies needed for the semester, including curriculum materials. **All enrollment/supply fees are non-refundable.** The summer semester enrollment includes the purchase of a school t-shirt for field trips. Each child is required to wear this shirt when participating in an event that takes place off the school grounds.

If attendance is not immediate, a deposit is required to hold the child's space. Childcare

deposits will be applied to the first week's tuition. Pre-school Only or School Day deposits will be applied to May tuition.

Parents must provide a medical statement ensuring their eligibility to enroll and immunization record for the child before attendance can begin, as well as complete all registration paperwork. Please sign and return the Parent Handbook acknowledgement form at the time of enrollment, as well.

Hours & Days of Operation

The center is open from 5:45 a.m. until 6:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. Late pick-up fees will be charged for all children left after closing, and the charge will continue to rise on an incremental basis. It is essential to contact us as soon as possible if you will be late picking up your child.

We will be CLOSED for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Easter Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday, and Christmas Eve & Day. If any of these holidays fall on the weekend, we will be closed on the nearest weekday so that our teachers and staff may enjoy a holiday with their families.

On one of the last Fridays of the summer program, Step By Step Christian School will have a Teacher In-Service Day, and will be closed. This work day will allow our teachers to receive training, attend staff meetings, and prepare their classrooms for the 1st day of school. Thank you for making other arrangements for your child and giving your teacher this time to prepare for the new school year!

Additionally, Step By Step Christian School publishes an annual calendar which includes preschool holidays, such as Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, Martin Luther King Day, and Spring Break. On these days, childcare is available, but we are not teaching our regular preschool curriculum. Children attending Preschool Only, School Day, or elementary school extended care programs may attend all day on these school breaks for an additional fee. We provide care during Teacher In-Service days or after Early Release days for those in our elementary school extended care programs, as well. An additional fee may apply.

Discipline, Challenging Behaviors, & Separation

All children will be disciplined in a positive, loving and Christian way to encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Parents will be informed of any unusual occurrence affecting the child. Parent/Teacher conferences are available upon request during regular teaching conference periods.

Children are learning to be part of a social group. Juggling his or her own needs with that of the group's is sometimes difficult for the young child. For this reason, preschool and toddler teachers view guidance as a time to help your child learn new social skills. It is a teaching time and a time to remain positive and supportive of the child. The techniques teachers will use for challenging behaviors include redirecting your child, offering him or her words to use in solving problems, and a chance to try again, as well as modifying the environment or routine to better meet your child's needs. Only after several techniques have been tried and/or if safety is an issue will your child be removed from the group and placed in another area of the room or in the preschool office until he or she is ready to return to the activity. Children whose behavior puts themselves or others at risk for physical harm may be held gently. At no time will physical

punishment be used to correct the child. As a parent we want you involved in this process. Parent conferences with the teacher/director are encouraged and will be scheduled at the request of the parent or staff. You will receive communication concerning the progress of your child through daily reports, email information, or personal communication.

All discipline must meet the standards set by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standard Rules for Licensed Child-Care Centers (746.2801-746.2805).

A. Discipline must be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child:
2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
3. Directed towards teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

B. A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
2. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statement.
2. Redirecting behavior using positive statements
3. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

C. There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are **prohibited**:

1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
2. Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument
5. Putting any thing in or on a child's mouth
6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
7. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
8. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed
9. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Occasionally, we request that parents participate in a parent conference which allows an opportunity for discuss your child's developmental milestones and progress. You or the teacher can ask for additional conferences at any time. As important events occur in your child's life or in your family, please share these with the teachers. These might include the death of a pet, moving to a new house, the illness of a grandparent, or even the separation of parents. Informed teachers will be better able to support your child and tell you how your child is responding to these events.

Step By Step makes all efforts to make sure your child is thriving in a stimulating, structured environment specific for his needs. Our program is designed to meet the needs of children of average development and behavior. In response to ongoing or high risk challenging

behaviors, Step By Step may implement any or all of the following steps: classroom observations • documenting incidents • a focus on teaching social-emotional skills • implementing environmental modifications • engaging in discussions with parents and • referring families to seek outside support services or help from specialists. Step by Step reserves the right to dis-enroll any child who fails to thrive in our program, we cannot safely provide care for, or whose needs, behavior, or actions might result in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, learning processes, and supervision of the other children.

Step By Step's discipline policies are intended to limit exclusionary practices, such as suspension from care and disenrollment, which are to be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety concern that cannot be reduced or eliminated with reasonable modifications.

Communication Policy & Confidentiality

Step By Step values parent ideas and input. We also value our time in the classroom with your child. For this reason we respectfully ask parents to schedule a private meeting to discuss issues and concerns that may arise in the course of a child's enrollment rather than discussing concerns in the presence of children or in the classroom. We want to give you our undivided attention and this is not possible when the teachers are responsible for children. Conferences may be requested as deemed necessary. Step By Step's staff strives to provide many avenues of communication with all parents. Please feel free to utilize voice messages, email and written notes as methods of communicating with your child's teacher. Be aware classroom teachers spend most of their time working directly with children. Messages will be returned as promptly as possible.

Please know that information you share with your child's teacher is confidential and will only be shared when appropriate. Each child is a unique individual with specific needs. The teachers are trained to observe and plan for each individual child. Our environment will be supportive of each child's growth and each parent's own development as a parent. Therefore, every adult visiting our school will be asked to respect the needs of the individual and the ability of the Step By Step staff to plan an appropriate program for that child. It is not appropriate to discuss the children or incidences in the school with anyone other than your child's teacher or the school director, including other parents at Step By Step. Step By Step's teachers & staff are interested in answering your questions or discussing your concerns, but we will not allow this to take place in the presence of the children or other adults or while supervising children. Your child's teacher will refer you to the office to schedule a private meeting with you to discuss any concerns you have about the classroom.

Withdrawal

For student-initiated dis-enrollment, Step By Step Christian School requires a written two week notice prior to withdrawal. Parents withdrawing without proper written notice will need to pay two weeks of tuition in lieu of notice. Parents of children withdrawing for the summer should pay fall registration before their withdrawal to ensure their child(ren)'s placement into a fall class.

Licensing Compliance

In an effort to help maintain the quality of childcare in our state, the Texas Department of

Family and Protective Services have developed guidelines for all childcare centers. These guidelines, called the Minimum Standards, as well as our latest licensing report, are available for all current or prospective parents to review in our office. For more information on our school, or any school, please see the DFPS website at www.dfps.state.tx.us or contact the local licensing office at 713-767-2592. In addition to these resources, the DFPS maintains a child abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400, which can be used to report any suspected abuse of children. All records on file at Step By Step are subject to audit by our licensing representative to ensure compliance with applicable government standards and may also be subject to review by other authorities as required by law.

Step By Step's policies and procedures are reviewed annually and updated if needed. Occasionally, DFPS will require a change to our policies or procedures. In order to maintain compliance, the policies listed in this handbook may be changed at any time without notice. Such revisions will be issued in writing and dispensed through your child's file folder in his/her classroom. Please sign and return acknowledgement of the policy changes as soon as possible.

Step By Step Christian School staff are required by Texas State law and licensing requirements to undergo annual training to help raise awareness of and understand the prevention of child abuse, exploitation, and neglect and are required to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. If parents feel they need assistance with these or any other parenting issues, we encourage you to get help. To obtain information on help on and resources available to parents, please call the National Parent Helpline at 1-855-4 A Parent (1-855-427-2736) or visit their website at www.NationalParentHelpline.org or for specific information on how the Texas Department of Families and Protective Services can help to prevent abuse neglect, and exploitation, visit www.helpandhope.org.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called. Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises, child hygiene issues, and uncared for medical concerns.

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty. Step By Step Christian School is a Gang Free Zone under this law.

Grievance Procedure

Open communications between you and your child's caregiver are essential in providing a good program for your child. The teachers and director are available each day to answer questions, respond to your concerns, and listen to your ideas. Any time you are dissatisfied with the service received at the school, you are encouraged to discuss the problem promptly with the teacher and/or childcare director. If you are dissatisfied with the staff's efforts to resolve the problem, you should follow the steps in our grievance procedure. The steps for resolving a grievance are:

1. Discuss the issue with the teacher
2. Discuss the issue with the childcare director

3. Discuss the issue with Head of Schools
4. Discuss the issue with the center's owner

The following items are available for review for parents in the preschool office or on the parent info board in the main hallway: Current menu Daily Schedules Documentation of liability insurance Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Inspection Fire Marshal's Inspection Report Health Department Sanitation Inspection Report Most recent Licensing Inspection Report Copy of the Minimum Standards

Important Numbers: Local TDPRS Licensing Office: 713-767-2592 Child Abuse Hotline: 1800-252-5400 TDPRS Website: dfps.state.tx.us Poison Control Center: 1800-222-1222 Permit # 165366

Financial Policies

Tuition charges are for places reserved for your child in the center, not for periods of actual attendance. A child will be dropped from enrollment after fees are two weeks delinquent. The child WILL NOT be readmitted until fees are paid in full.

By enrolling at Step By Step, you are agreeing to the payment terms and are fully responsible for any and all fees incurred in the process of caring for your child or collecting payment, including returned check fees.

Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of the month and is late if not paid by the 8th. Semi-monthly tuition is due on the 1st and the 15th and late if not paid within a week of the due date. Weekly tuition is due on Monday and late if not paid by Wednesday. A \$25.00 late fee will be applied for past due balances. August is the only month in which tuition fees are pro-rated. All other months will be charged at the full regular rate. Children attending part-time, NCI, and extended care programs are NOT eligible for the Credit for Non-Attendance.

The center is open Monday through Friday from 5:45 AM to 6:45 PM. Late pick-up fees will be charged for all children left after closing (6:45p.m.) as follows: 6:50 p.m. - \$10.00; 7:00 p.m. - \$20.00; 7:15 p.m. - \$30.00. The charge will continue to rise at the rate of \$10.00 per quarter hour.

Financial Responsibility

The primary parent is the parent who takes responsibility for the financial charges incurred on the child's behalf. By signing the enrollment agreement, the primary parent is agreeing to the payment terms and takes full responsibility for any and all fees incurred on behalf of the child while enrolled. Step By Step Christian School does refer delinquent accounts to a collection agency, and, if referral to a collection agency becomes necessary, the primary parent will be subject to aggressive collection action including, but not limited to, credit reporting, attorney referral, and litigation.

Absent Credits

For full time students (Pre-K and younger), Step By Step Christian School will give half credit

for a week (M-F) in which the child does not attend at all. To ensure this credit has been given, please give written notice to the office.

This notice should be given in advance for scheduled absences, such as vacations, to ensure your child's space is reserved. For unscheduled week-long absences, such as those for illness or emergency, please call the office to explain, and submit written notice upon the child's return. Credit for non-attendance may not be applied without a completed and verified request letter.

Refunds

Step By Step does not refund enrollment or supply fees. In the event of overpayment of tuition, we will refund tuition paid in excess of the time attended or the two week paid tuition in lieu of notice.

Childcare Subsidies

Step By Step Christian School participates in the Texas Workforce Solutions childcare subsidy program, also called NCI. This program is a support service for parents who work, attend school, or participate in job training that allows families to access high quality educational opportunities for their children. Visit www.wrksolutions.com for more details and to learn how to apply. Those eligible for child care assistance include children under the age of 13 (children with disabilities up to the age of 19):

- whose parents are receiving or transitioning off public assistance
- who are receiving or needing protective services
- or whose families are low-income.

Workforce Solutions and Texas state law work together to:

- determine the length of time a parent may be in education activities and receive child care services
- establish the parent's share of cost
- establish the provider's maximum reimbursement rate
- and establish attendance policies

Parents who participate in this program enter into a contract with Workforce Solutions with very specific requirements, including attendance reporting. Each parent will be issued a swipe card for electronically reporting attendance by Workforce Solutions. As stated in the initial agreement with Workforce Solutions, recording attendance is **not optional for parents and is the parent's responsibility**. Workforce Solutions may terminate care based on "missed swipes" alone.

Attendance must be recorded for every day the child is enrolled at Step by Step, including marking attendance for any days the child is absent or ill. Workforce does allow parents to record past attendance up to five days. Saturday, Sunday, and holidays do count in the five days. This service is to help when a child is absent due to illness. It is essential to report a lost, damaged, or stolen card immediately. For assistance with the cards, please call 713-243-6667 to request a new one. Up to 3 additional cardholders can be assigned on each family's case. If for any reason Step By Step is not paid by Workforce Solutions, the parent will be responsible for the full tuition. Step By Step expects parents to live by the same values we teach our students, and as such will not tolerate fraudulent attendance reporting. Care may be terminated for repeated instances of misrepresented attendance, and we will report all

instances of misrepresented attendance fraud to Workforce Solutions.

Monthly parent fees can be paid on a semi-monthly basis. The first installment (at least ½ of the monthly fee) is due on the 1st and is late if not paid by the 8th. The second installment is due on the 15th of the month and is late after the 23rd. If you pay past the 8th and 23rd a late fee will be added to your account. Care may be terminated for non-payment of parent fees or other charges.

Please note that Workforce Solutions pays childcare tuition only. Parents remain responsible for all additional fees including but not limited to: activity fees, enrollment fees, late fees, late pick-up fees, field trip fees, and meal charges. In order to avoid termination of childcare financial aid, please comply with both Step By Step's and the Workforce Solutions' standards.

Acceptable Forms of Payment

Step By Step Christian School accepts personal checks, as well as cash, cashier's checks, money orders, and credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover). While we do accept cash, no change is kept on hand, therefore payments must be exact or the overage will be credited to your account. Checks should be made payable to Step By Step Christian School, Step By Step, or SBS, and must be accompanied by appropriate identification information. For your convenience, we have placed a section on our enrollment paperwork that will allow us to keep the required information on file in the office. Please complete this information upon enrollment. In the event a check is returned to us for any reason, there will be a fee. Step By Step Christian School reserves the right to require all future payments to be made by credit card or cash, cashier's checks, money orders.

Meal Charges

Fees

While some programs include meals at no additional charge (see programs for more information), all children will be offered breakfast and lunch daily, as well as a morning and afternoon snack (additional charges may apply). For students in programs during which meals are not included in tuition, a parent may elect to purchase meals individually, or enroll in a meal subscription program for a reduced price. Meal subscriptions are ideal for children who choose to eat a school provided meal most days year-round.

Breakfast Fee Policies

Breakfast is served daily from 7:00 to 7:20AM and will be billed to your account. **All breakfasts for children 3 and up will incur a charge, regardless of whether the school or the parent provides the food.** If your child eats breakfast at school, you will be charged.

Lunch Fee Policies

Lunch is served between 11:15 and 12:30, depending upon your child's class schedule. Children whose program includes lunch are welcome to bring a lunch from home to enjoy, and those who do so will not incur an additional fee, nor will they receive a discount.

General Information

Arrival and Departures

You must bring your child into the building and escort him/her to his/her class. We cannot be responsible until the child is placed in the room with his teacher and has been signed in on the class roster by the parent. Infants and toddlers should be removed from their car seats/carriers and placed into a bed if sleeping. It is required by our licensing agency that parents sign their child in and out each day. Please sign your name or initials as well as the time in or out. Do not allow your child to do this for you, as this is an official document that must be maintained for legal compliance with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

When picking up your child, you may go directly to his class or the playground. Always be sure the teacher knows the child is leaving, and that you have signed him/her out on the class roster. Once you have picked up your child, it is your responsibility to keep him/her with you. Do not allow your child to roam around the building unattended, or to run ahead of you out the door and into the parking lot.

Parents needing to bring or pick up children during naptime (approximately 12:00 – 3:00 pm) should come to the office, in order not to disturb the other children.

Only authorized adults will be allowed to pick up your child. *All persons (including the parents) should be prepared to show a picture ID when picking up a child, and we will not release a child to a sibling/babysitter under 18 years of age without a special consent form on file in the office.* No teacher or staff member will release any child unless they personally know the person picking up, or they have been properly identified and authorized. Step By Step cannot release any child to a taxi service or ride-sharing program such as Uber.

Step by Step allows parents to differentiate between two types of alternative contacts for each child. An **Emergency Contact** may **pick up my child, authorize medical treatment, etc. in the event a parent cannot be reached.** An **Authorized Pick Up** is **only allowed to pick my child up from school, but may not make medical decisions for my child.** As required by state law, each child must have at least one designated alternative emergency contact/authorized pick up person on file.

Please do not leave your car running unattended when you come in the building. For the safety of all the children Step By Step Christian School, please do not leave other children or valuables (such as a purse) unattended in the car. Always secure your valuables and lock your vehicle before entering the building. If you, or a designated pick-up person, cannot enter the building because of a physical infirmity or an inability to leave another child unattended in the vehicle, please feel free to call the office for curbside assistance (as available).

Please also be considerate of other parents when using the parking area. Blocking several spots does not ensure you a quick exit; it simply ensures us all a traffic jam. The spots under the carport are reserved for parents who can “Kiss & Go.” If you need to speak with a teacher, leave instructions, make a payment, or do anything requiring more than a few moments, please park your car in a conventional space to come into the building.

Custody Situations

Step By Step Christian School prefers NOT to get involved with custody disputes. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. In the event of a dispute, Step By Step will follow a court order exactly as written. *PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS to the child.* With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents' information. A copy of a child's birth certificate is requested at the time of enrollment. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on our property, the police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility, our students, or our staff, Step By Step Christian School has the right to terminate care.

Parent Code of Conduct

Please understand, young children are present in our building and Step By Step is a Christian school. Some adult language and/or behaviors are not appropriate for young children. As such, we prohibit swearing or cursing as well as disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior on our property, and ask all visitors to our campus to honor our efforts to create a Godly place for children to receive an education.

Step By Step must follow particular rules as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property.

Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated per Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Step By Step has the right to terminate care in the event of inappropriate, disruptive or otherwise unacceptable behavior from a parent or guardian.

Adjustment

Your child's adjustment to a new environment will often take a little time. Be patient and reassuring to him. **On an average, it takes a child about two weeks to feel happy and comfortable in a new setting. If your child is crying when you leave, tell him goodbye in a firm but loving manner. Then leave quickly, allowing the teacher to comfort him.** Please feel free to call back in about 30 minutes to see how your child is doing. We will be happy to give you a report.

Missing Items

In the event that a young child brings home an item from school without the teacher's knowledge, we ask you to return the item in a non-accusatory manner. Removing class material is often a preschooler's way to bring home a part of his school work, and at this age, is not considered stealing. Please return the items and talk to your child about the importance of keeping items where they belong so other kids may also use and learn from them.

Questions / Concerns

If you are concerned with or have questions about your child's adjustment or any other aspect of our program, please feel free to discuss the situation with the director or assistant director. You may also make an appointment to talk with your child's teacher, so that she may give you the attention your concerns deserve.

Parental Notification / File Folders

Each child is given a file folder to contain all of their artwork, paperwork, newsletters, and notes from the office or their teachers. All official notification from Step By Step, including receipts, newsletters, field trip schedules, etc. will be sent home in this file folder. **Please check your child's file folder every day** for important news relating to upcoming events for your child.

Personal Belongings

Please provide an extra set of weather appropriate clothing for your child to keep in his/her bucket at school. All ages of children can become victim to spills, puddles, or splashes and may need to change clothes for their own comfort. A spare jacket or sweater to keep in the classroom also comes in handy for those unexpectedly cool mornings in the fall and spring.

Preschool children are not yet responsible for their own belongings, so please put your child's first and last name on all blankets, hats, sweater, coats, lunch kits, back packs, or any other personal item. This will help in returning lost or "strayed" belongings to their owner. Please do not allow children to bring valuable or breakable items to school. A lost and found will be maintained and may be checked for missing items.

Step By Step does provide an area for the stowing of car seats during the day. As many car seats appear very similar, please be sure all car seats are labeled with the child's first & last name.

Uniforms, Dress Code & Safety

On Chapel Day (currently Tuesday), all children three and up are required to wear a dress uniform. Chapel uniforms, which consist of a monogrammed **red polo shirt for boys with navy shorts or pants** or a monogrammed **red polo shirt-dress for girls** (with modesty shorts) are required for every child three & up on Tuesdays. Children have the option of wearing a uniform every day if they so choose.

Uniforms will be purchased through Parker School Uniform in Spring. Parents may also order them online at www.parkersu.com.

Parker School Uniforms, 3425 F M 2920 #700, SPRING, Texas 77388, (281) 528-6203

On non-chapel days, children are encouraged to dress in comfortable playwear. They should not wear their best clothes to school. Please try to send them in clothes they can manage: help will be given in the bathroom if necessary, but we encourage independence. Shoes should be flexible and firmly secured on the foot at both the toe and heel, for safety. Please no flip-flops, slides, cowboy boots, or cleats. Girls should wear shorts under dresses and skirts to maintain modesty while playing on the playground.

As a Christian school, we strive to maintain an environment that glorifies our Lord and is pleasing in His sight. Please avoid clothing that contains inappropriate references such as obscenities or implied obscenities, drugs, alcohol, &/or tobacco products. Additionally, please avoid any Halloween clothing items (see Holidays section for more details).

Step By Step Christian School has a zero-tolerance policy towards weapons of any sort. Guns (real or toy), knives (including pocket knives), and other weapons are not allowed. On the first offense, we will confiscate the inappropriate item and return it to the parent at pick-up time. Subsequent violations will have more serious consequences.

Meal Policies

Step By Step provides nutritious, hot meals prepared on site. Our menus are custom crafted to meet the healthful needs of growing children, as well as to be appetizing and appealing to youngsters. Our menus vary by term (school year or summer), and offer a multi-week rotation with a wide variety of foods with different colors and textures and include whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables as well as less processed items. We provide entrees, vegetables and sides for the main meal, and fruits, dairy products, and other snacks in the morning and afternoon that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans established by the USDA. Milk is served with breakfast and lunch and water is served at every meal. For your child's safety, liquids or foods hotter than 110°F are kept out of the reach of children.

We serve breakfast, two snacks and a hot lunch daily. During the school year, all preschool-aged children (excluding those in a morning-only program) will be served both snacks and lunch at no additional charge. Times vary according to your child's age & class schedule. Breakfast is included in the regular tuition rate infants & toddlers, but is available for older children at an additional fee.

During the summer, a hot meal program is available for an additional fee (for children 3 and up), or a parent may choose to send a sack lunch. Certain field trips will require the children bring a sack lunch. These lunches should be packed in a gallon Ziploc style bag, marked with their first name and last initial, and have only disposable containers and utensils, if needed.

Breakfast is served daily from 7:00 to 7:30 am and will be charged to your account. Individual breakfasts are billed at the current price as described on the menu, regardless of whether the school or the parent provides the food. For those who need breakfast on a daily basis, a breakfast subscription allows your child to eat every day for a much lower weekly rate per child. For those children on the breakfast subscription service, this fixed rate will be halved for weeks of non-attendance, if the Credit for Non-Attendance Request Form has been completed and turned in. Please note that if your child eats breakfast at school, you will be charged.

If your child needs a special diet, different from the scheduled menu, please provide food accordingly. Please send written instructions as to your child's special dietary needs.

All parent provided meals & snacks should be nutritious and healthful, in order to meet the daily needs of growing children. Please send a "ready to eat lunch" each day in containers that maintain appropriate temperatures needed for safe consumption of food. They should not require refrigeration or heating, and may be sent in a sack or lunch kit. We do not save uneaten food, so please send only what your child can eat at a meal. Step By Step is not responsible for the nutritional value of lunches brought from home. In order to promote healthy eating habits, sweets such as cookies and desserts will be reserved until your child has consumed the majority of their lunch unless otherwise directed by parent. Please encourage your child to eat healthy all day! Healthy eating is a priority at Step By Step. **Please avoid the following items: carbonated and/or caffeinated beverages (sodas, energy drinks, etc), food that must be refrigerated or heated, candy, and "fast" food (takeout from McDonald's, etc.).** In order to promote good nutrition, the milk, fresh fruits, and vegetables

served as part of the scheduled meal are available to those who pack a lunch during meals and snack.

It is the policy of Step By Step that food is not used as form of behavior modification, reward or punishment. All food products served at Step By Step meet the nutritional values of USDA and Texas Department of Agriculture. Menus are prepared based on both USDA and Texas Department of Family and Protective Services guidelines. Nutrition Education is critical for a child's healthy development. Our parent resource center has information available regarding how to pack a healthy lunch, food allergies, and additional nutritional information. Web sites that might assist you with healthy lunches include:

<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov>
www.Kraftrecipies.com
www.schoolFamily.com
www.about.com.Nutrition
www.metroparent.com
www.foodnetwork.healtyeats.com

Nutrition Safety

Step By Step must have a written food allergy emergency plan for each child with a known food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional. Please see the Allergies and Special Needs section for more details. As part of the required orientation for all staff, food allergies are included as a safety topic, which includes training to identify foods that may cause a possible reaction. Children with food allergies are identified in the classroom and in the food preparation area. Treatment for food reactions is included in training and staff orientation. Additional resources for further information include:

Food allergies in children

www.healthychildren.org

Choking Prevention

www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationSafety/Choking

Animals

Please be aware that wild, feral, service and domestic animals may be present on the school grounds without specific prior notice. Feral or wild animals that are not a risk and do not represent a hazard, cause property damage, or create a public nuisance, and that do not require human intervention, may inhabit the campus grounds without interference.

No person may do anything to attract feral or wild animals to campus, nor may any person feed or set out food or water for feral or wild animals on campus or engage in any other human intervention without express permission from the administration. Human intervention includes, but is not limited to, attracting animals, feeding, watering, building of shelters for animals, and providing medication.

Feral or wild animals that are a potential risk, represent a hazard, cause property damage, create a nuisance, or otherwise pose a potential threat to the health or safety of humans may

also be present on campus. As we become aware of them, Step By Step will remove or dispose of these threats.

With the exception of service animals or service animals in training, domestic animals may not enter any campus building, including all storage facilities; enclosed or delineated outdoor athletic or recreational facility; or officially reserved or scheduled outdoor events on campus without express permission of the school administration.

All domestic animals, including service animals, must be under control while on campus grounds, and restrained by a leash or other appropriate device that does not exceed six feet in length and that is under control by a responsible adult. At no time is an animal permitted to wander off leash or be let out of control by the handler or to be left in the care of a student. Fecal matter deposited by any animal brought onto campus must be removed immediately and disposed of properly by the owner or handler. The burden is on the animal handler to arrange for removal of fecal matter if he or she is personally unable to perform the task.

Animals must have appropriate behavior while on campus. If there is anything about the condition, health, or behavior of any animal on campus that is deemed by school officials to be a direct threat to the health or safety of any member of the campus community or to any other animal, if the owner cannot control the animal, if the animal is disruptive, or if the animal is not housebroken, then that animal may be removed from campus in any manner deemed necessary by school officials. Such action may be taken regardless of whether the animal posing a threat would otherwise be permitted on campus under this Policy.

All animals brought on campus grounds must be fully inoculated in accordance with Harris County regulations, if such inoculation is required by Harris County, with the burden of proof on the owner or handler.

From time to time, classes at Step By Step Christian School may have classroom pets that meet the requirements set by DFPS, or we may have special activities or presentations that include the use of live animals. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a pet is present or when an animal will be present at the school.

Outdoor Play

Young children need regular opportunities for outdoor play. Step By Step schedules a minimum of outdoor play two times each day for all children. Children must come to school healthy enough to be able to participate in outside play. We are unable to provide separate supervision arrangements for children who are unable to play outside due to temperature, wind, etc. Non-walking children will be outside only when the ground is dry and the temperature is above 40 degrees. Walking children will go outside if the temperature is about 30 degrees; however, teachers may decide to take children outside at lower temperatures on dry, sunny, windless days. Parents should provide appropriate clothing, including hats and gloves. The length of time spent outdoors will be determined by the weather conditions, i.e. if it's very hot or very cold children will only stay outside for 10 - 20 minutes.

Technology Policy

Visual media is not allowed in Infant and Toddler classrooms. Screen time in Preschool classrooms is related to the curriculum and usage is limited.

Transportation

As your child rides the Step By Step Christian School van or activity bus on field trips or to and from school each day, his safety, as well as the safety of everyone in the van, is our greatest concern. Each student is responsible for following all safety rules each and every day. We cannot transport any child that puts him or others at risk. To this end, each child must agree to follow these rules:

- No shouting. Talk only to people in your row. All conversation must be kind and appropriate.
- No taunting or teasing others on the van.
- No throwing anything.
- No eating or drinking.
- Do not open/unpack backpacks, lunches, etc. The spilled contents from any of these could easily become a safety hazard.
- Students may not touch or bother other students or their belongings.
- Do not talk to the driver, unless it is an emergency. (Someone is hurt, vomiting, or in danger.)
- Students must comply with all safety requirements and laws, including the use of an age appropriate booster seat if required.
- Seatbelts must remain buckled until the van stops, and the van driver instructs the children to remove their belts.
- The students are to enter and exit the van in an orderly and disciplined manner.
- The driver/teacher may set additional rules or make other requests to the students depending on driving conditions etc. All students are required to comply with these requests.

Each of these incidents distracts the driver, and this could be very serious. A student who violates any of the above rules will be given a written warning that must be signed and returned to the office. Any student that receives three warnings will have a two-day suspension from riding privileges. If the student's actions result in the driver having to stop the van to correct the situation, the student will have his/her riding privileges automatically suspended for two days. Continued disruption on the van will result in permanent suspension.

Additionally, please note that it is the parent's responsibility to notify Step By Step if your child will not be on the van or at the school for a scheduled pick-up for any reason. Please call us no less than 15 minutes before dismissal times. Failure to notify may result in a fee being charged to your account. We will notify a parent as soon as possible regarding any child who is not present for a scheduled pick-up.

Water Activities

Occasionally, the lesson plan calls for indoor water activities such as water tables, learning to hand wash dishes, or bubble making. These activities will be closely monitored to ensure the safety of all children.

For children under 2, outdoor water activities will be limited to sprinkler play or wading pools. Older children may be given Red Cross Swim lessons during the summer months as well as having scheduled free times. When children are swimming, a certified lifeguard will be on duty

at all times, as well as Step By Step Christian School staff to supervise the children while there. We will be giving a swim test before children will be allowed in the deep end. As required by our licensing agency, the swimming pool will have a fence around it so that there is no unsupervised access to the pool. The swimming pool will: have at least two lifesaving devices; drain gates that are in place and in good repair that cannot be removed without using tools; not have chemicals that are accessible to the children; not have unlocked machinery rooms; and be built and maintained in accordance with the standards of the Harris County Public Health Department and any other applicable state and local regulations.

Special Events & Photo Policies

Throughout the school year, Step by Step will host a wide variety of special events and programs including Spirit Nights, Family Fun Nights, School Skating Parties, Open Houses, field trips, class parties, and more. The dates are listed on your school calendar and newsletters, and reminders will be sent out just prior to the events. It takes participation from all of our students and their families to make these events a success, and we thank you for the ongoing support you show to our school.

Please note that Step By Step will make photos and/or recordings of daily school activities, special events, and class activities, as may other guests who attend the events. By enrolling in Step By Step and/or allowing participation in such events, you are giving permission for photographs and or recordings of your child(ren) to be uploaded as images on our website, on social media by Step By Step or by other guests, or to be used in training or in promotional and marketing materials for the school, etc.

Parties

We will have five class parties during the year: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines, and Easter, and End of the Year. These dates are listed on your school calendar. We would encourage you to bring nutritional snacks for these parties and help us to make them a big success. Parents, grandparents, and siblings are welcome to attend and celebrate these holidays with us. Our class parties usually start with a short presentation by the children, and then conclude with a shared meal, pot luck style. As required by TRS guidelines, all foods brought to be shared must be either commercially prepared or prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials.

Holiday Celebrations

As a Christian school, we will emphasize the religious purpose of all holidays throughout the year, telling about the birth of Christ rather than Santa, God's love for us at Valentines over boy/girlfriends, and the Resurrection rather than the Easter bunny.

Please note: we do not celebrate Halloween at Step By Step Christian School. We realize some of our families do celebrate this holiday, while others celebrate an alternative, such as Fall Festival, and still others do not honor this day at all. In an effort to respect all of our families, we will be telling the children that Halloween is something that belongs at home and not at Step By Step.

We ask that you respect our position, as well, by not allowing your child to wear or bring any items depicting Halloween to our school. This includes goblins, ghosts, devils, witches, jack-o-lanterns, black cats, sorcery, bats, vampires, monsters, etc. Children who are sent to school in inappropriate clothing will be given the choice between changing clothes or simply turning their own shirt inside out.

Fall items, such as pumpkins without faces, are fine, as long as it is not a Halloween item. (If you are in doubt, ask this question: “Would I wear this after November 1st?” If the answer is no, then leave it at home in your closet while you’re at Step By Step.)

Birthdays

Your child is welcome to celebrate his/her birthday with his class at school. Just let the teacher know at least one day in advance if you would like to provide a cake or something special. You may provide the teacher with a disposable camera as well, and she will be glad to take pictures of your child’s special day. We discourage gift giving at school, as the other children often do not understand. Parents wishing to bring party favors or private birthday party invitations may do so only if they bring enough for the whole class.

Field Trips

A few times during the school year, the older preschool classes may go on a school-planned field trip. These are preferably learning oriented trips, and parents are given prior notice for these events. Parents are welcome to attend with their child; however, they may not bring “tag-a-long” children (those NOT in the class having the field trip). Parents who chaperone or choose to accompany their children on the field trip need to respect that this is a planned group activity. The parents and their children are expected to follow the schedule and instructions of the field trip leader, remain with the group, and refrain from participating in any activity that the group is not participating in, such as shopping, buying snacks the other children are not getting, or wandering off alone.

Our summer calendar often includes a number of “fun” oriented field trips, as well. These will be included on the classes’ summer calendar, and notices with departure and return time will be posted in the office. Please be sure to send your child in their summer field trip shirt on these days, to help ensure their safety while away from campus.

Before going on any activity away from the school, the teacher will stress to the children what precautions each child must take to stay safe while out and about (keeping on his or her seatbelt, staying with the group, etc.). Any child reprimanded for serious safety problems cannot be allowed to attend the next field trip, for his/her own safety.

Infants & Toddlers

Finding care for your infant or toddler can be a particularly daunting process. Because these little ones cannot yet express their desires, needs, or physical discomforts, it is essential to have a stable environment with dependable, loving, and reliable caregivers. Infants can’t tell you if something hurts, so being sensitive to a child who’s “not quite him/herself” may be the

best warning sign of an impending illness or other significant event.

The most important aspect of parent communication is conversation between the parent and caregiver. During drop-off, please be sure to let the teacher know how your child's night and morning were, when they last ate and/or were changed, and any other special instructions about your baby's needs. At pick-up time, please be sure to ask your child's teacher about their day, their mood, and if anything unusual happened. A daily log is kept on all children under 18 months of age, which includes diaper changes, feeding times, types, and amounts, nap times, and other general information about your baby's day, but these written logs cannot replace the bond between parent and caregiver as we work together to provide the best possible environment for your baby.

Infants and young children can be particularly sensitive to diet, environment, and surroundings. In an effort to maintain as much stability between the center and home as possible, **parents are asked to furnish diapers, baby food, bottles and all liquids (breast milk, formula, baby water, or juice)** to be drunk from a bottle. Each baby should have a completed written Infant Instruction Sheet, which include your preferences for your baby's care, including feedings, changing, a sleeping schedule, etc. These must be updated and signed at least every thirty days or more often as needed. **All items (including bottles, pacifiers, clothing, hygiene items, etc.) must be labeled with the child's first name and last initial.**

Infant Playtime & Learning Time

Infants will be provided with daily opportunities for play and interaction with other infants as well as the caregivers. Playtime for infants is also learning time and will include:

- daily opportunities for outdoor play as weather permits;
- opportunities to explore outside the crib or other confining equipment multiple times each day; opportunities for reaching, grasping, pulling up, creeping, crawling, and walking in a safe, clean, uncluttered area; opportunities for visual stimulation through nonverbal communication (examples of age-appropriate equipment include large pictures of faces and familiar objects, simple, soft, washable books and toys, unbreakable mirrors or mobiles (while outside of a crib) visible from the baby's position, and brightly colored crib sheets);
- opportunities for auditory stimulation (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include verbal communication, soothing music, and musical or sounding toys);
- opportunities for sensory stimulation (examples of age-appropriate equipment include surfaces, fabrics, textured toys, washable dolls, and toy animals);
- opportunities for small-muscle development (examples of age-appropriate equipment include busy boxes, rattles, teething toys, grasping toys, shaking or squeezing toys, or cloth toys);
- and opportunities for large-muscle development (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include blankets or quilts for floor time, stationary jumpers, activity centers, push and pull toys, a variety of light-weight balls, and pillows or supportive equipment for those learning to sit up).

Each non-mobile child will have several opportunities each day for "tummy time," which pediatricians recommend to promote healthy physical skill development. Please note that all infants who are taking steps should be provided with shoes to protect the baby's feet, particularly during outside play time. Caps, mittens, and warm clothing must be worn during the cooler seasons for the daily outdoor playtime.

Toddler Playtime & Learning Time

Toddlers will be provided with daily opportunities for interaction with other children, as well as individual attention given to each child by the teacher, including playing, talking, and cuddling. Toddlers will be given:

- daily morning and afternoon opportunities for outdoor play when weather permits; opportunities for thinking skills and sensory development (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include shape/item sorting toys, stacking or nesting toys, puzzles, washable board books, washable blocks, and snapping and take-apart toys);
- opportunities for small-muscle development (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include large-size washable crayons and markers, variety of paper and art materials, table for art, large paintbrushes, non-toxic play-dough, large-sized washable toy transportation vehicles, toy animals, and toy people);
- opportunities for large-muscle development (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include low-climbing structures, small riding toys, toys for pushing or pulling, a variety of light-weight balls for indoor and outdoor play, and rhythm instruments);
- opportunities for active play both indoors and outdoors. (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include music, songs, simple games and dramatic or imaginary play that encourage movement such as dancing, running, climbing, stretching, walking and marching);
- opportunities for language development (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include washable soft animals or puppets, simple picture books, and pictures of familiar items and places);
- opportunities for social/emotional development (examples of age-appropriate equipment or activities include dress-up clothes and accessories, housekeeping equipment, unbreakable mirrors, washable dolls with accessories, items for practicing buttoning, zipping, lacing and snapping, and baskets, tubs, and tote bags for carrying and toting);
- opportunities to develop self-help skills such as toileting, hand washing, and self-feeding.

Breastfeeding, Feeding, and Meal Times

Step By Step provides a comfortable, private place with a glider for mothers to breastfeed their child if they choose to do so. Parents may also provide breast milk for their child to be served while in our care. Human milk is the best source of milk for infants. Additionally, breastfeeding supports optimal health and development. Step by Step provides mothers with a private place to sit and breastfeed her child to help support this practice. Other things available to mothers include a pillow to support her infant in her lap and promote easier feeding, a stepstool for her to prop her feet and prevent back strain, water or other liquid to help her stay hydrated, and a place to store personal belongings. A compilation of breastfeeding education and support resources in our community is available from the office upon request.

Infant Instruction Sheet

For infants, each parent is asked to complete an Infant Instruction Sheet. Please indicate times and number of bottles, instructions for prepping them, as well as their contents (breast milk or type of formula or juice, tap water or bottled, etc.), and how to handle “leftovers” after feeding times. Toddlers are gradually transitioned to regular meal/snack times and work on becoming part of a daily classroom routine. Once a child begins to eat table food, please indicate on the school menu which foods you would like given to your child from the school kitchen. These instructions must be signed and dated, and updated monthly.

Safe Sleep

Each infant will be assigned an individual crib for his/her use, which will allow the child to maintain his or her own pattern of sleeping and waking periods. Parents may provide a poster of photographs for display behind the crib if so desired. To help ensure the safety of the babies in our care, Step by Step does not allow any “soft” bedding such as stuffed toys, blankets, quilts, pillows, bumper pads, and comforters for any child sleeping in a crib. Infants will be placed in a face-up sleeping position unless the child’s parent presents written documentation from a health-care professional stating that a different sleeping position is medically required for the infant. Infants who fall asleep while being held, or while in a swing, bouncer, or other non-sleeping apparatus, will be moved to a crib immediately and placed on their back to sleep.

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at Step By Step Christian School will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

- 1) Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant’s health care professional.
- 2) Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full size cribs and for non-full size cribs.
- 3) For infants who are younger than 12 months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts, or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys/animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing.
- 4) We will not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation.
- 5) Step By Step will ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. If an infant needs extra warmth, we will use sleep clothing such as sleepers or footed pajamas or sleep sacks as an alternative to blankets. We will place only one infant in a crib to sleep.
- 6) Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must *not be attached* to a stuffed animal or the infant’s clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk.
- 7) If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), we will move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant’s health-care professional in accordance with §746.2426 and §747.2326.
- 8) Our child care program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers).
- 9) Our staff are trained to actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound.
- 10) If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant’s back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position.
- 11) Awake infants will have supervised “tummy time” several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally. Step By Step cannot swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant’s health-care professional.

Diapering

If you would like your child to be powdered or to have an ointment applied at changing time, please indicate specific information on the Infant Instruction Sheet or provide written

instructions. Each substance must be in its original tube, jar, or bottle and be clearly labeled with the child's first name and last initial.

Biting

Biting is a common, yet very serious, issue in early child development. Children sometimes bite other children. Although not all children bite, biting is considered a normal stage in development and not an act of aggression. The best way to deal with biting is consistency between providers and parents. Biting could occur for multiple reasons. Proper communication may help determine why a child is biting.

Some common reasons why children may bite are:

1. Teething: Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something momentarily stops the pain
2. Sensory Exploration: Toddlers are very good at using all of their senses to learn about the world. The "oral mode" an important style of learning for infants, continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just their playmates
3. Cause and Effect: Children are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response that received attention from adults
4. Self-Assertion: This is probably the most common reason children bite. It's one way to express frustration when they don't yet have the language skills to do so.

Consistent with our confidentiality policy, parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents of the biter are informed and work together with the teachers to hopefully prevent further biting incidents. Step By Step will work with parents when biting becomes a problem. We will make every effort to resolve the issue as soon as possible. However, if a child bites more than five times in a week or for several weeks in a row, a conference with the director will be necessary to discuss the problem. If this problem with biting cannot be brought under control, it may be necessary for you to find another place to care for your child.

Preschoolers

Open House & Special Programs

In the spring, we will have an Open House so you can see just how much your child has learned. You will be invited to come and observe a short circle time and work with your child in the classroom.

Additionally, there will be special times throughout the year when you will have an opportunity to watch special presentations and programs by your child's class. The children spend an enormous amount of time and effort learning their parts in these programs. Please schedule the performances on your calendars and do everything possible to make sure the child attends.

Toys from Home

Certain days have been set aside for the children to bring things from home for Show 'N Tell. Please allow your child to bring things only on designated days. All toys brought at other times

will be placed in a collection area by the teacher and kept there until you pick it up. The school does not assume responsibility for any toys brought from home. Please do not bring video tapes/DVD's to school. We have an adequate selection available here, and we cannot show any video that has not been carefully screened for appropriate content.

Nap Time

Each child is assigned a child-sized pillow, blanket, and cot/mat for nap time by Step By Step Christian School. We launder and disinfect our school-provided- items weekly. **Your child may bring a small soft sleeping toy or a personal blanket or pillow, but it must fit in their bucket.** You will need to take it home to launder, as Step By Step Christian School cannot launder personal items.

Health Policies

Step By Step Christian School provides a program designed to meet the developmental needs of an average child in good health. We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate those children with special needs in our care, however we reserve the right to refuse enrollment or dis-enroll those children who fail to thrive in our program, or whose needs, behavior, or actions interfere with the safety or learning processes of the other children in the classroom.

Health Checks

Step By Step's teachers and caregivers are trained to do a health check of each child each morning or at their time of arrival. This is a visual assessment of a child to identify potential concerns about a child's health, including signs or symptoms of illness and injury. The caregivers are asked to greet the child and look for the following: breathing difficulties, severe coughing, and discharge from the nose or eyes, changes in skin color, bruising or swelling, cuts, sores or rashes. If a child feels unusually warm or cold or clammy, the caregiver will ask the front desk to check the child's temperature.

Any changes in health will be noted on the activity sheet if the child is an infant or toddler. If the caregiver feels the parent should be contacted, the front desk will be notified and the parent contacted. Older children's health concerns will be noted in the notebook in the office and the parent contacted as appropriate.

Medical Emergency Procedures

Step By Step Christian School does not have any on-site medical facilities, nor do we have a nurse or other medical personnel. Our staff has been trained in Infant, Child, and Adult CPR and First Aid, and, in the event of an emergency, will assess the situation, call 911 for medical, police, or firefighting assistance, and then attempt to contact all parents as soon as possible. We are located 1.5 miles from Tomball Regional Medical Center, an approximate 5 minute drive, where children would likely be taken in a life or death emergency; however, all final decisions regarding transportation to a specific hospital, treatment protocols, etc. would be determined by the recommendations of the emergency personnel on the scene.

In the event we are unable to reach you, we will leave messages at the phone numbers provided, and call the emergency contacts on your child's enrollment forms. Please do not provide a phone number if you do not wish for us to leave a message at that number.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled or admitted to child-care centers must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Education. This requirement applies to all children in care from birth through 17 years of age.

Except as otherwise provided by law, all immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission and maintained while in attendance. Exemptions for immunization requirements must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services rules in 25 TAC §97.62 (relating to Exclusions from Compliance).

Those parents who choose to exclude their child(ren) from the immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, must complete and return an official notarized affidavit form developed and issued by the Department of State Health Services. This affidavit is valid for 2 years, and must then be renewed. In short, it states that medical diagnosis and treatment conflict with the tenets and practices of a recognized religious organization, of which the parents adhere to or are members.

Precautionary Screenings

Texas state law requires that students of various ages be screened for certain medical conditions, such as hearing and vision testing, scoliosis screenings, etc. Parents will be notified prior to the start of the screenings. A nominal fee for each screening may be charged to the family's account if the screening takes place at school. If you wish your child to be excluded from these screenings, you must provide written documentation from your physician that the screening has been done in the last calendar year. Step By Step must receive this documentation prior to the scheduled screening date. If the Regional Texas Department of State Health Services or local health authorities recommend additional screenings for students or employees, Step By Step will follow those recommendations and guidelines. We are not currently under any recommendations for screenings or vaccine preventable illnesses for staff and faculty.

Illness

If your child is ill, please keep him/her home from school. It is our goal to keep all the children and staff at our school as healthy as possible. To this end, an ill child or adult must not be admitted and/or will be sent home if one or more of the following exists:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the facility activities, including outdoor play times.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care that the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
3. The child has had any of the following problems: oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater; armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the facility's activities; OR symptoms or signs of possible severe illness (such as lethargy, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting illness, [two or more episodes

in 24 hours], rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior change, inexplicable rash, or other unusual signs) until medical evaluation indicates that the child can be included in the facility's activities.

4. The child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, until medical evaluation determines that the child is no longer communicable and is able to participate in the facility's activities.
5. **A child who has experienced any of these symptoms or who is sent home due to illness or must be free of symptoms (without symptom-reducing-medications) for 24 hours before returning to the center, or have a physician statement for re-admittance. NO EXCEPTION IS MADE TO THIS POLICY.**
6. **A child who is sent home due to infestation may return no sooner than 24 hours later to be rechecked post-treatment. Children with pediculosis (lice) must be completely free of lice, eggs, and/or nits before they can return. All children excluded for infestations will be re-checked before re-admittance and periodically rechecked. Children who suffer repeated infestations may be required to be treated by a health care professional before re-admittance.**

If your child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact you at the numbers provided for immediate pick-up. We cannot provide care for ill children.

Allergies & Special Needs Policies

It is your responsibility to inform the office in writing of any special needs your child has, including, but not limited to: all allergies; injuries; hospitalizations; major illnesses; developmental delays; medical, emotional, and/or learning diagnosis; and medications. In particular please make note of any conditions, medications, sensitivities, or history which might impact treatment provided by emergency medical personnel. Additionally, please discuss with the caregiver in your child's class the specific details of your child's needs, making sure to clarify any details and/or answer any questions. To ensure continuous quality of care and the safety of your child, Step By Step may post health and/or other special needs or special situational information regarding your child in the classroom(s) or other appropriate locations (kitchen, laundry room, office, etc.).

Parents of children who have a known digestive intolerance are free to supply alternative products, such as soy or almond milk in place of the dairy milk the school serves. Digestive intolerances do not require a medical diagnosis by a health-care professional nor do they necessitate a written food allergy emergency plan.

Step By Step must have a written food allergy emergency plan for each child with a known food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional. The child's health care professional and parent must sign and date the plan. We must have an annually updated copy of the plan in your child's file. A food allergy emergency plan is an individualized plan prepared by the child's health care professional that includes: (1) a list of each food the child is allergic to; (2) possible symptoms if exposed to a food on the list; and (3) the steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction.

If your child has a severe allergy (is subject to anaphylactic shock or other extreme, life-threatening physiological reactions to foods, insect bites, odors, or other common substances), we would advise against enrollment, and reserve the right to refuse enrollment. Our school is a communal environment in which children often "wear" or share their food, toys, and belongings, and if mere contact is enough to incite a life threatening reaction, we cannot

ensure the safety of a child with such severe allergies. Additionally, Step by Step is approximately five minutes from the nearest emergency room, meaning that even with an epinephrine injection, the delay to receiving proper medical attention could put these children at further risk. Parental discretion is therefore strongly advised.

Medication

Medication will be dispensed at 8:00 am, 12:00 noon, and 4:00 pm. Each administration will be done by office personnel (excluding those used in the nursery), and will be documented with the time, date, dosage, and name of the dispensing personnel.

All medications must be in the original pharmaceutical container with the original label and dispensing instructions. It must be dated, & labeled with the child's name, and stored in the designated medication locations. Parents must complete an authorization for dispensation, which includes name of medication, dosing instructions (which match the printed instructions on the medication container or written variation from a medical health-care professional), beginning and end date, and a parent guardian signature. Expired medications will be thrown away. Medication will not be administered unless these conditions are met.

Students may not keep any medication in their backpacks, cubbies, or on their person. Doing so may be cause for disciplinary action. Infants (children under 18 months) may have medications in their diaper bags, but these cannot be used without an appropriately completed medicine permission slip. Medications include, but are not limited to: prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, inhalers, breathing treatments, ointments, creams, and lotions, including sunscreen, lip balms, and insect repellent. Any item labeled "KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN" must be given to the teacher or secured in the office.

If you choose, you may bring sunscreen and/or bug spray for your child. Please label the items, complete a medication form in the office, and let the teacher know how much and how often they should be applied. Out of respect for the many allergies and sensitivities children can display, Step By Step does not supply these items, and can only allow a child to use a product brought by their own parents/caregivers.

Emergency Situations

Foul Weather Closures

During inclement weather, Step By Step will make all efforts to remain open and provide care for child of parents who are first responders. In the event that it is necessary to close for any reason, we will announce it on our website, contact local media (especially KSBJ) as well as place notices on the doors of the school with all relevant information.

Tuition will not be prorated or discounted due to emergency closures, however late fees may be waived at the director's discretion, and any full-time child who misses a full week (M-F) will be eligible for an Absent Credit (see Financial Policies for more details).

Preparedness

In response to growing concerns for the safety of our children, Step By Step Christian School would like to reassure our parents about our school's preparedness and response systems.

Our school's crisis plan has been developed in connection with local public safety agencies, including law enforcement and fire, health, and local emergency preparedness agencies. It includes preparation for emergencies such as fires, tornadoes, and chemical accidents, as well as assaults and other potentially harmful activities. Our children regularly practice both evacuation drills as well as "shelter-in-place" drills. Each classroom is equipped with at least 2 exits, including windows. Our staff is trained in how to respond to many different types of threats, and our priority in all situations will be maintaining the safety of the children in our care.

Lock Downs

Step By Step has a process in place for controlling access and egress to the school. All persons who do not have authority to be in the school are denied access to the facility in case of a "Lock Down". In the event a Lock Down becomes necessary, all entrances to the school will be secured, and children will be released when we have established and can maintain a safe, secure, and foolproof way to account for all children.

Emergency Release

We have a plan for discharging students following an evacuation, lock down, or other crisis situation, but we need your assistance to make it work. Please do not "grab your child" and go. You **MUST** check your child out with a school administrator or designated emergency personnel, to ensure that emergency workers (firefighters, etc.) are not putting themselves at risk to continue searching for your child.

*Remember that during a crisis you may not be able to get to the school to pick up your child(ren). Please make sure you have at least one secondary contact person on file and their contact information is current. Anybody coming to pick up a child **MUST** be prepared to show a valid picture I.D. We ask that all parents provide cell phone numbers, as well as land phone lines, in case either is needed.*

Evacuation & Relocation

In case of serious emergencies during operating hours such as earthquakes, fire, storms, loss of power/water, parents will be notified of all relevant information as soon as possible. If we should need to evacuate the building, the children will be relocated to (1st) St. Anne's Catholic Church, located next door, or (2nd) River of Praise Church, located at 13215 Boudreaux Dr., Tomball, TX 77375. After 12 hours, children may be taken to the home of a staff member for extended care. This information will be posted on both our website and the doors of our facility. We will continue to offer care to all children until parents or emergency contacts arrive or other procedures become appropriate.