

# PARENT HANDBOOK



**PEARSON  
CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOL**

## **PEARSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

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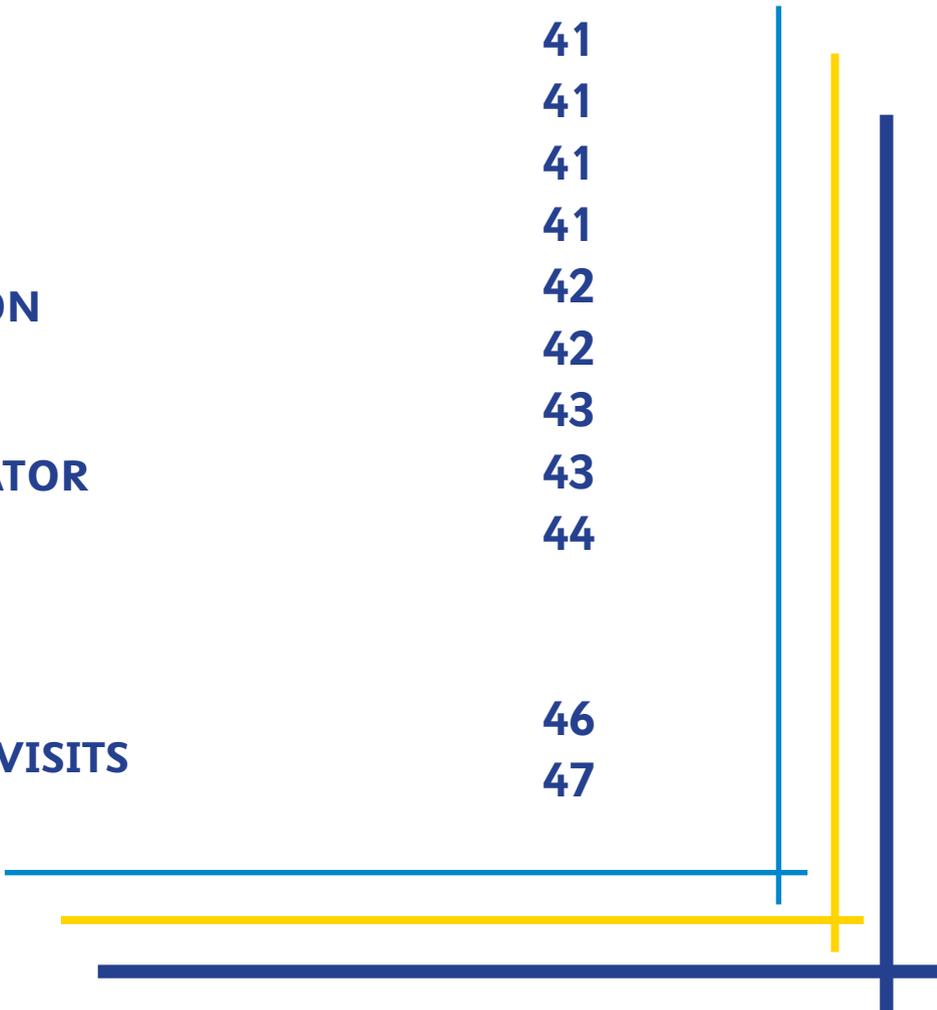
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## Introduction Letter From The Administrator

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

On behalf on the entire school staff, we take great pleasure in welcoming you and your child to Pearson Christian School. We believe God directed your steps here and we are looking forward to having you, your child's first and lasting teacher, as our partner in education. Our staff recognizes the importance of the preschool to basic primary years therefore strive to provide our students with a developmentally appropriate program that facilitates maximum learning for every student. As your child begins their educational journey, we are looking forward to working with your child and your family. God bless you.

Sincerely,

PCS Manager

## Why the Parents Handbook?

- It is an important resource for our school child care program.
- It is important to communicate all our policies and procedures but it also acts as an ongoing daily reference guide.
- It is the clear contract between the school and all parents.
- It is so important each parent read through the whole guide to ensure that you understand all our policies and procedures.
- It contains information that is specific to PCS learners.
- Lastly, the PCS Parent Handbook aims to answer frequently asked questions that parents of learners may have regarding the school, our curriculum and policies.

## Who we are

### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PEARSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Founded in 2017, Pearson Christian School is a Christian school serving the Tema West community of early learners. Our student population for now spans ages 0 through 8 in the main school. We are a Christ-centered school that seeks to nourish each child in the seven domains (spiritual, mental, social, natural, emotional, creative, and physical) using the activity-based philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori and the British curriculum for the primary years.

At Pearson Christian School we strive to create a loving learning community that realizes our mission of providing an authentic Montessori Christian education that embraces the diversity of our students, parents and teachers. Our school environment is prepared to nurture the individual needs of each child in a learning atmosphere that encourages students to be self-directed avid learners who are prepared for a diverse world.

To reach such great heights, we believe in the child developing and building a personal relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. That is the real solid foundation we believe every individual must have.

## **VISION**

**To provide Christ centered high quality education in a loving and caring environment, that nurtures and develops each individual to engage and impact the world according to God's principles.**

## **MISSION**

**PCS's mission is to be that foundational institution that spiritually and academically equips, challenges and inspires students to live and impact the world for Jesus Christ.**

## **PURPOSE**

**Providing a real solid foundation of education on Jesus Christ.**

## OUR SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The preschool child's rightful world and work is play. They need a safe and loving space to dream, imagine, create and experiment with self-expression. Pearson Christian School is just the place for that unique child. Our preschool program nurtures this through Bible storytelling, art, drama, music, dance and multicultural celebrations hence making the teaching of the core subjects less cumbersome for early learners.

We believe that each child is a unique gift from God and should be cherished and respected. We allow the children to gravitate to the activities and experiences that attract their attention and interests, thereby fostering independence and supporting diverse patterns of growth. Children are introduced to community-centered living. They are encouraged to work together, to make choices that benefit both the child and others, to respect themselves, others and the environment. We empower children by teaching conflict resolution skills that help them identify and express their own feelings and needs as well as listen and respond to the needs and feelings expressed by others.

## **CURRICULUM - HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

**PCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, creed, or national origin. Applicants and their families should understand that Dr. Maria's Montessori's collaborated religious curriculum will and taught in each classroom.**

**Dr. Maria Montessori was a scientist and physician who pioneered early childhood learning and facilitated through her own designs, a way of educating children through purposeful play. Her curriculum includes all basic subjects: mathematics, language, writing, reading, science, history, geography, sensorial experiences, and life skills for children as young as age 3.**

**The Montessori method of instruction has been in place for over 100 years and continues to produce individuals who are capable of making decisions, learn to their fullest potential, question the world around them, and strive to overcome challenges.**

At PCS we operate under the guidance of five key fundamental principles:

### 1. Biblical Guidance

Even our youngest students experience significant spiritual growth at PCS. As the children progress through our program they develop a growing awareness of God's presence in their lives. Through opportunities like Bible studies and worship services students are able to understand their roles in God's Kingdom.

### 2. High Academic Standards

Our academic program is highly interactive allowing students to learn important concepts through activities that feel like play. Students are challenged with a vast and comprehensive curriculum in academic and non-academic subject areas. Students are expected to adhere to high standards of ethical and moral behavior based on Biblical principles and academic achievement; life-long guidelines are directly taught and modeled by staff.

Students are to demonstrate these values in their schoolwork as well as their interactions with peers and adults everywhere they find themselves.

### 3. Exclusivity

Students benefit from smaller class sizes and strong academic, social and intervention support programs. The largest class in PCS will hold only 12 students. The curriculum is further enhanced by some special subjects.

Students are exposed to introductory-level content in music, art, foreign language and more allowing them to discover individual talents and interests early on.

#### 4. Talented staff sustained by extensive professional development.

Our staff are poised to improve their individual performance with ongoing professional development goals, training, and evaluation tools. Staff carry out their responsibilities in full alignment with PCS's mission and with the highest level of integrity.

#### 5. Parent and Community involvement

Since parents and teachers are partners in the character building of the children we see them as valued members of the school community.

As such parental input is actively solicited during decision making in key areas and on issues. Parents are also given ample opportunities to support their children and the school through active involvement in school activities and committees. Our doors are therefore always widely open to our valued parents.

## **DYNAMIC GOVERNANCE**

**Pearson Christian School is organized by the principles of Dynamic Governance. Dynamic Governance (DG) uses systems thinking to create an organization that operates like an organism. An organism is infinitely intelligent, able to adapt and re-organize as needed with all the parts working toward the whole. Dynamic Governance uses the efficiency of a top-down hierarchy starting with the director, combined with the egalitarianism of consent decision-making, and the creativity and empowerment of grass-roots involvement. All individuals including learners within PCS have a method of allowing their ideas to be heard.**

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM - Yet to begin**

**Students in the PCS Student Support Program have a plan that is typically a combination of extra classroom support from an assistant or teacher, specialized one-on-one time with a student support advocate, and individualized classroom accommodations. The Student Support Team crafts a student support plan, communicates regularly with parents, oversees classroom accommodations, and acts as a liaison with any off-campus providers.**

If classroom accommodations and interventions implemented by the classroom teacher are not effective in solving academic or behavior issues, a classroom observation by and/or in collaboration with a Student Support advocate will be conducted to determine whether a student needs to have a student support plan. This can be requested by the classroom teacher or parent. This is for regular students who need help to catch up on academic studies with their peers.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

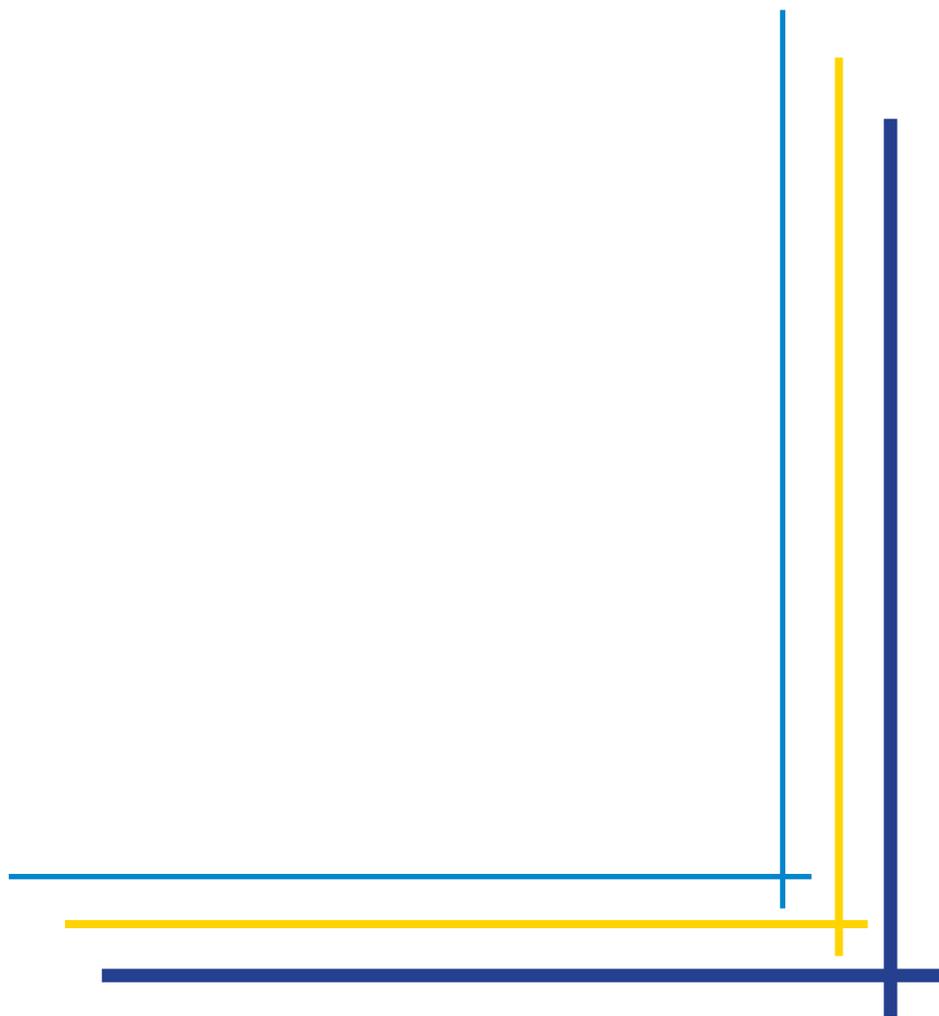
The PCS Board of Directors uses the Carver Policy Governance Model for its policies; Dynamic Governance is used for meeting facilitation and consent generation. Briefly, policy governance separates issues of an organization's purpose/mission (Ends) from all other organizational/administrative issues (Means). In other words, the Board is responsible for defining the PCS Mission (Ends).

The Board also develops policies that define healthy boundaries between the functions of the Board and the Manager and provide guidance for the Manager's duties. Therefore, the Manager is exclusively responsible for all matters involved in the operation and management of the school (Means). Most importantly, policy governance creates alignment between the Board, the Manager and the school's 'Owners' who are defined as staff, students, families and other members of the PCS community. A copy of all the current Board policies is kept in the school office for review. To assure accomplishment of the PCS mission and purpose, the Board continuously evaluates its written policies and rigorously monitors their reasonable implementation by the Director.

The Board meets once each term at the school and meetings are open for attendance by PCS community members. Meeting times will be communicated during the term.

# The Board Members

Now forming!!!



## THE STAFF

### Manager:

The Manager is responsible for helping to craft and guide the development of Pearson Christian School's vision, maintaining its mission as a Christian innovative and holistic learning environment while leading the effort towards designing a replicable national educational model. Manages the Annual Campaign, business sponsorships and helps with fundraising and grant writing. Coordinates professional development opportunities and the faculty meeting and training calendar.

### Administrator:

The Administrator is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the school, including both logistical and educational aspects. Parents with questions, concerns, ideas and comments are always welcome to communicate directly with the Administrator. The Administrator also welcomes new parents and guides them through the admissions process and does the necessary marketing for the school.

### Curriculum Director:

Supports staff and students with curriculum design and implementation.

**Business Manager:**

Assists the Administrator in day-to-day financial operations of the school. The Business Manager handles accounts receivable and accounts payable and is responsible for communicating with parents regarding the status of their accounts with the school.

**Administrative Assistant:**

Assists the Administrator with daily administrative needs and offers Educate Database support for parents and staff. Serves as the school's Health & Safety Coordinator by organizing safety training for staff, communicates with parents and staff about community health issues, and serves as a caregiver for children who are unwell.

**Director of Counseling:**

Works part time with students, teachers, and parents to support the social/emotional needs of our community.

**Media Team:**

Maintains the school website and social media accounts and executes PCS marketing tasks.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The GES best practice requires that all schools provide services for learners with special needs who are three to five years of age. Children with special needs are served through a continuum of program options in the least restrictive environment appropriate for the child.

Specialized instruction and intervention services are provided for each child in accordance with a team developed and Individualized Education Program (IEP). This comes at an extra cost as private teachers are employed to sit with them and help them in the day. (Check our fee schedule on the website). Related services include speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and provided when appropriate by our partners, Multikids Academy.

Eligibility for our Special Education Preschool Program requires that children:

- Are three to five years of age.
- Demonstrate a disability or exhibit significant developmental delay.

Students with special needs demonstrate documented deficits in one or more of the following areas: communication, motor, social-emotional/behavioral functioning, cognitive, adaptive behavior, hearing or vision

as determined by a multidisciplinary team through a multi-factored evaluation and diagnosis.

Research overwhelmingly supports the benefits of an inclusive setting for students with special needs. Students with Special Needs benefit from exposure to peer models. Children with special needs learn through observation and the practice and modeling the behavior of their peers. As children with special needs observe and interact, their peers are providing a model of age appropriate skills in social, behavior, play, speech, language and motor development.

- Peers have opportunities to interact with children with a variety of special needs. Children learn compassion, tolerance, empathy and to accept and celebrate differences and similarities among the children in the classroom.
- PCS preschool teachers provide services for both regular education and special education students. The teachers are trained to be responsive to the individual abilities and interests of all children. Differing levels of ability and development are expected, appreciated and considered when designing appropriate learning activities for student with special needs and peer role models.

- **Class sizes are small with low learner-to-teacher ratios. Our classrooms are staffed with a minimum of one teacher and one assistant. Dependent upon the needs of the students in the classroom, additional assistants may be added to support students. The additional assistant engages the child, one-on-one and provides support for the necessary interventions needed in the day.**
- **Most preschool staff is knowledgeable about PCS kindergarten expectations, standards and curriculum. The Montessori Curriculum and Development Standards used in all of our preschool classrooms are aligned to the kindergarten learning standards.**

**All learning opportunities are designed to help children enter kindergarten ready to learn.**

- **Please Note: If your student with special needs wears diapers or pull-ups, please place enough additional diapers and wipes daily in the bag. We wish to support your potty-training efforts. We will place your child on the toilet according to a schedule and/or remind the child to use the toilet. Please note that for sanitary and health reasons, if your child is wearing underwear and continually has accidents at school, we **MUST** keep using the diapers or pullups until the child is able to remain accident free for the duration of the school day.**

## The School Day

### HOURS OF OPERATION

School is open: 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM

After School Care Program: 3:45 PM to 6:00 PM (for a fee)

(Two and three-day attendance plans are offered for special needs learners.)

The School Office is open from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM all terms.

During holidays the office is open from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Please plan to transition your child to the school gate at least 5 minutes before their day is scheduled to start. Circle Time which is an essential part of the day prepares each learner spiritually and physically as part for the curriculum and is scheduled for the very beginning of each day.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT**

**Children from ages 6 months to 5 years eligible for enrollment for the Preschool. Currently, there are also limited available spaces for lower primary enrollment in Grades 1 to 3.**

## **MODE OF ENROLLMENT**

**After initial inquiry and receipt of information regarding school fees and philosophy, parent and child must set up an appointment to visit the school through the school's website or physically. Please note that due to COVID 19 restrictions, school visits are only done when school is closed. The Administrator will lead both parent and child around the school. The child is encouraged to explore the classroom and engage in any activity of their choice.**

**Upon enrollment and initial payment of all fees at the bank to the school's account, the parent receives the link to the registration forms and this handbook.**

**All forms must be filled with all necessary documents attached sent online. The handbook must be downloaded and kept as a soft copy or a print out. Please note that the Consent Form (must be signed by parents and submitted. Feeding and transportation fees are to be paid in the school office. There are other forms that will be handed over to parents**

for signing when necessary. These include **Press and Photo Release Exemption, Medication Prescription form, Students Not Returning Declaration and Certificate of Immunisation Exemption.**

**On the first day a child attends school, the office must have received beforehand through the website:**

- **A completed Preschool application**
- **A completed set of enrollment paperwork**
- **Passport photos**
- **A health assessment by a licensed physician**
- **A record of immunization or a completed exemption form**
- **Allergies and any important health information must be stated clearly.**
- **A signed consent form from each child's parent that they have received our handbook and clearly understood our policies.**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**We are required to have each of these forms in our files in order to maintain our license to operate. GES law prohibits students with incomplete files after 30 days to attend class until we have received their missing paperwork. We appreciate your cooperation.**

## ARRIVAL

Mornings can be busy times and they set the tone for our day. Help your child have a successful start to their day by doing the following when you and your child arrive at school:

- Greet the teacher on duty at the gate.

Communicate any important information they should know about your child's morning or changes to their schedule.

- Help your child organize their belongings in their bag.

- Check to be sure that your child has all of their required daily items (see the following page) and that their water bottle and lunch box is labeled with their name and the date.

- Remind your child to wash their hands before beginning work or play.

- Sign your child in on the provided roster. Teachers on duty will check their temperature and have them go through other protocols before going to class. Please plan to bring your child to school by 7:45 AM.

In order for your child to gain the most from their experience at PCS, we ask that you respect our 8:00 AM start time to the best of your ability.

Please note that no PCS learner will be admitted into the school after 8:30 AM.

The teachers have carefully planned the flow of the day, and your child will miss key learning opportunities if they are consistently late.

**Separation:** Separation from a parent or caregiver into the preschool classroom is an important accomplishment for every preschooler. Though you may wish to remain with a child who is having difficulty separating, trust that your child's teachers are well trained to handle such occurrences.

Please note that your child is learning important skills, and that tears are often solely for the parent's benefit. You can help your child most by conveying happiness and confidence in their well-being, stating your expected departure (sneaking out can be terrifying for the child - as it will seem you have vanished), and then leaving. Your child's teacher will be available if you need to hand an emotional child to them for some one-on-one time before they transition to begin their day.

## **DAILY ITEMS PROVIDED BY PARENTS FOR PRESCHOOL LEARNERS**

**Sheets:** All children need a labeled bottom sheet to cover their sleeping mat for rest time (a crib sheet fits the mat well). If your child in the nursery 1 class still naps, send in a top cover and a small pillow.

We'll return these items each day in their bags home to wash them. If a child does not come to school with clean linen, the school will temporarily provide it. The parent will be expected to wash and return the school's linen, as well as provide a fresh set of their own for their child.

**Clothing:** All learners are to be dressed neatly in their prescribed school uniforms daily. Also send in a labeled extra change of clothes that are appropriate for the season in case of accidents. We do play outside every day, so please dress your child for the weather. Make sure your child is wearing easy wearing shoes for easy wearing and movement. Flip-flops, clogs, cowboy boots, and slick-bottomed shoes often cause children to fall when running outside, and limit their play. If a child becomes wet or soiled, their clothing will be washed and placed in their bags when or if the teacher has the opportunity. This is however not mandatory so parents should not make a big case if teachers are not able to do this.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Occasionally, learners will engage in sand play we would like to plead with parents to bear with us when learners come home with sand lodged in their clothes.

**Hair Styling:** In a bid to raise responsible and neat looking learners, the school mandates that boys should have simple and nicely cut hair styles with or without slits. We do not encourage girl hair styles for boys because of a potential loss or mix up of identity. Boys must be and look like boys and girls must be girls.

Girls should have simple hair braids without the frills and thrills of multi coloured ribbons. Simple hairstyles like cornroll and short rasta is encourage whereas we discourage weaveons and wig attachments for little girls. Girls must also regularly freshen their hairstyles to avoid messed up hair. Wearing a hairdo for a long time often results in itchy and stinky hair which is also very distractive in class. We really would like to raise ladies and gentlemen.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

As part of the Montessori curriculum, learners are taught to become independent from ages 2 to 4. Learners are taught to be independent of dressing, feeding and using the washroom themselves. We would like to encourage parents and guardians to support our quest to achieve this in all learners. It is worth noting that some children are quicker learners than others but for our curriculum it is a major assessment task to prove maturity, independence and understanding. As Montessori practitioners, we teach learners to button up, tuck in and fold clothes, brush/comb hair, wear socks and shoes. Please help their efforts at home to be able to do these tasks. We teach lacing and tying of shoe laces from 3 years knowing very well it takes some time to master it. Shoes without laces will greatly help young learners achieve their independence quickly as it saves them from the cumbersome nature of lacing.

After learners have been taught these tasks, teachers will only support them to dress themselves properly. Apart from learners with special needs, teachers will not dress regular children who have been taught how to dress up.

**Lunch Boxes:** According to law, all lunch boxes must be labeled with your child's name and the current date. We have masking tape and a permanent marker on hand for this. Please pack a morning snack/ or sign up for the school's breakfast and an extra snack if your child participates in the afterschool program.

**Food Containers:** Use plastic with stainless steel inside only for storing food or drinks in lunch boxes. No glass, please. We are required to throw away all unlabeled and/or unclaimed containers at the end of each day.

**Water:** You must send in a water bottle labeled with your child's name and the current date. It will be kept in your child's classroom for your child to drink from throughout the day. This water bottle must be taken home, washed and refilled with a clean water every day.

## CHANGE IN PICKUP PERSON

Please notify your child's teacher or teacher on duty if someone other than you will be picking up your child. Make sure that a list of people who can pick up your child (in addition to legal parents and guardians) is on file in the school office. If someone who is not on the list will be picking up your child, they will only be allowed to do so if you have notified the teacher and/or teacher on duty in advance.

Anyone else picking up learners must provide a photo ID. PCS teachers and staff are not responsible for the care of your child once you have signed them out from school.

## SIGNING OUT

It is important to sign your child in and out each day. Because your child remains the responsibility of the PCS staff as long as they are on campus, please do not sign your child out until you are prepared to leave with them (we allow for up to 10 minutes of closing time after you have signed out your child). If you would like for your child to stay and play on our campus between 4:00 and 5:00 while the other children are outside - even if you are present - they must continue to be signed in, and after school fees will be assessed.

**Adults present on campus should model appropriate preschool classroom behaviors and be mindful of the impact that visiting adults can have on the behaviour and emotional security of other children. Please refer any social/emotional or behaviour concerns you witness directly to the staff present.**

**There is a grace period (45 minutes after the 3:00 PM school end time) if your child is picked up then. The school closes at 6:00 PM sharp. There is a fee of 40 Ghana cedis (per child, per occurrence) charged to anyone who picks up his or her child after 4:00 PM. A total fee for the term is 400 cedis if you sign up for late pick up.**

## The School Year

### 2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Please see the 2021-2022 School Calendar on the PCS website: [www.pearsonchristianschool.com/calendar](http://www.pearsonchristianschool.com/calendar)

### CELEBRATIONS and COMMUNITY EVENTS

Pearson Christian School embraces diversity. We therefore study everything we can mostly about Ghana, our culture and other world's cultures and families from many different countries. We especially observe the holidays of the Christian religion in various ways during the school year, and seek to affirm the values found in these traditions. Your child may come home singing a song in another language, or having eaten a certain holiday food or celebrated a custom unfamiliar to many of us.

In this way, our learners learn to appreciate and celebrate diversity, perceive the greatness of God's creation, the human being and nurture the understanding that various human cultures complement one another.

We also enrich our own Pearson Christian School story with monthly Events designed to build meaningful connections between families, staff,

and children outside of the classroom. Some community events include Career Day, clean ups, and Carols service. Facilitated through Parent Council, these events are announced when the sponsoring classes have secured the venue and may change from year to year.

## **PCS ANNUAL EVENTS**

**Community Work Day:** Community Work Day is a means to nurture both community building and the physical plant of our school. It's an opportunity for us to set a positive, community-oriented example for our children. This event is usually set in August before school begins to help get the school ready for the first day of school.

**New Parents Conference:** this is intended to welcome new parents to the family and give them the platform for questions and suggestions that are needful.

**Grandparent's Day:** Grandparents and other special elders are invited to join us on campus for light snacks. They enjoy performances and have the opportunity to visit their grandchild's class for a portion of the day.

**Staff Appreciation:** At the end of each year in December, the Parent Council will organize a way to thank the staff for their commitment to our children. Each classroom gives a special gift from the children.

**God Gave Us Talents Show (GGUTS)!: In the middle of our school year, PCS turns its focus to the arts, working with visiting artists and the talented PCS staff to create an original performance featuring singing, instruments, dancing, acting, poetry, and visual arts from all learners. Special awards will be given to deserving learners.**

**Graduation: Preschoolers perform a poem or song for their gathered guests and all children are presented with a certificate of achievement.**

**Fundraising Events: The school plans to use fundraisers to help close the gap between tuition and the actual cost of operating the school, fund classroom budgets for special purchases, and support other non-profit organizations in the community, especially our yearly donations to the less privileged.**

**Book Fair: Our termly book exhibitions will be held during each term's progress/open day.**

**Regarding Alcohol at School Events: Being a Bible believing Christian School, PCS does not allow alcoholic drinks at any school event, particularly adult fundraisers.**

## **IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING**

**Pearson Christian School is pleased to organize regular in-service training for teachers and the administration of the school. Teacher training days are critical to serving the mission of the school:**

- 1. Training: Well-planned, relevant training recharges and inspires teachers to be their best. Trainings help teachers learn how to use time with students efficiently and effectively, while giving teachers an opportunity to rekindle their creative juices and to remember their sacred purpose. Teachers learn strategies and techniques that have direct application in the classroom so they can deliver the highest quality of education.**
- 2. Collaborative Planning: Faculty and training days provide teachers time together to collaborate with the Manager on school policy, events, communication, and general management of the school. Collaboration creates a positive school culture through an empowered faculty.**

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATION**

Parents are expected to receive, read, and respond to all communication from the school. Information and communication will be sent to both parents. Teachers cannot act as a mediator between parents.

## **DATABASE and PARENT PORTAL**

The School Database is an integral communication tool at PCS. The database is a great place to find class roster information, school calendars, and a copy of your child's Reports. You can use it to sign up for any event, or just find out what birthdays are coming up in your child's class. Please check to make sure your own address, phone numbers, and email addresses are correct. If you are new to PCS and do not have your username or login information, or are not able to access the database for any reason, please contact the administrator in the office.

## **PCS EMAIL**

Much of the communication within your classroom and from the administration will be done by email, including informative newsletters from your child's teacher and weekly reminders with upcoming community events. Please let your child's teacher, class parent and the office know if you need to use another form of communication.

## PHONE CALLS

We do not interrupt class activities for phone calls. If you need to get a message to your child's teacher during the school day, (to communicate a change in pick up, for example) please call the office. A staff member will deliver your message. After regular office hours, after school staff will answer phones when possible. Each class uses a different email address.

## PCS WEBSITE

[www.pearsonchristianschool.com](http://www.pearsonchristianschool.com)

The PCS website is a great source of overall information about the school, including an updated school calendar, community news, and links to the PCS Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp pages. As an informed parent, please stay familiar with our web contents.

## PUBLICATIONS

- **Daily Reports:** Your ward's teacher will send you daily reports by email to keep you informed on details of your child's day in school.
- **Reminders:** The school administrator will send reminders when necessary to emails and WhatsApp platforms.
- **Classroom Newsletter:** Your classroom teacher will send you monthly e-newsletters to keep you informed on details specific to your child's class. You have been added to these email lists, please contact the office if you are not receiving any of them or would like to update your email.

## **OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- **A bulletin board outside the office displays information about our Mission.**
- **Each classroom has its own bulletin board for news specific to its students and parents.**

## **PARENT SEMINAR/MEETINGS**

**New Parents Conference:** Parents are required to attend the new parents conference usually held in late August or early September, just prior to the start of school. It is required that one parent from each family attend this parents meeting. If for some circumstance this is not possible, please let your classroom teacher and the office know.

**Other Parent Meetings:** On an as needed basis during the year the school may organize a parent meeting to communicate important information to the group as a whole. Though these meetings are not mandatory, attendance by at least one parent is strongly encouraged.

## **APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS**

**Appointments with teachers may be scheduled throughout the year, as necessary. Many teachers cannot be available for impromptu meetings/discussions at arrival times (other than a quick message), as they are preparing for class and greeting their students upon arrival. Others may not be available at departure times, especially when they have faculty meetings and other meetings to attend after classes are dismissed. Please ask your child's teacher about his/her available times so that he/she can be truly present, and not distracted, when speaking with you.**

## **APPOINTMENTS WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR**

**Parents and community members are welcome to drop by the office, with or without an appointment, to talk with the school administrator, whether it be to share a concern, an idea, a compliment or a FYI.**

## Community Participation

### VOLUNTEERING

PCS is a Christian holistic, community-centered educational environment. In keeping with this emphasis, parents and guardians are expected to become an integral part of the classroom and the school community by volunteering for a wide variety of school-related activities. Parents who are highly involved report greater satisfaction in the school and higher levels of success for their children. Your child can only receive the full experience if, as a family, you are participating in the community and volunteering. Some families volunteer 100 hours or more, while some just do what they can. We understand that parents who work long hours and/or have multiple children are more challenged to volunteer.

The Volunteer Program at PCS offers many ways to get involved. This system offers greater flexibility and more opportunities to get credit for the many ways parents already volunteer in our school community. There are two ways to volunteer: in the classroom and school-wide. Ideally, every family will have an opportunity to volunteer both ways. Your child's teacher or class parent will keep you informed about volunteer needs in the classroom. Opportunities to volunteer in the community will be ongoing throughout the year and will include

ground/landscaping maintenance, facilities improvements, fundraising committees, special events planning and participation, and various administrative tasks.

Weekly Reminder emails and other communication from the admin team will alert you to upcoming volunteer needs. Below is the minimum suggested amount that each adult member of each family should be involved in community activities:

- Attend at least 1 school-wide event
- 3-4 hours of classroom volunteering
- Volunteering a minimum of 2 hours at a minimum of one event
- 3-4 hours volunteering within the greater community

We invite and encourage parents to participate with their child's class in our numerous school celebrations and special events. In all situations, the teacher is responsible for classroom activity and is authorized to make decisions and direct classroom activities based on her/his professional judgment.

## **PARENT, GUARDIAN AND GUEST VISITS**

Any parent may visit their child at school at any time unless restrained by court order. Please inform the teacher before a visit that is intended to be more than a quick stop in. Guests must check in at the office first and keep their masks on during the visit.

## ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

The PCS Annual Campaign Committee consists of volunteers who are dedicated to providing resources that make it possible for our school community to realize its mission. PCS tries to keep tuition low enough to encourage economic diversity at the school. Like most private schools, the PCS tuition does not cover all the operating expenses of the school. The true cost of educating your child is much higher.

The Annual Campaign Committee asks parents to contribute generously to close the gap between the total cost of educating your child and operating expenses. Your donations to the Annual Campaign provide the funds necessary to further nurture the discovery, enjoyment and development of the unique gifts of each student. It is our hope that every PCS family will make an intentional commitment to the campaign for the benefit of all our wonderful children and gifted teachers. When all parents donate to the campaign, PCS is then able to successfully leverage funding from outside foundations, doubling the benefits. Most ceremonies like graduation, carols services and our annual Christmas donations to orphanages are dependent on funds raised from the annual campaign. Your generosity will enrich your child's learning experience and gratify your heart.

## PARENTS COUNCIL

The mission of Pearson Christian School Parent Council is to play an integral role in the school community by supporting the events and rituals that shape the heart of the PCS culture: connection to self, the community, the natural world and to the spiritual. As participants in the governance of the school, Parent Council representatives attend termly meetings, liaise with classroom teachers, act as a resource for parents, support parents with questions or concerns about school policy, procedure and channels of communication, and help organize other school events.

Parents who have a strong interest and a desire to play an active role in strengthening our school community are selected to become representatives for the following school year. If a parent is interested in joining Parent Council, they may speak with their current class representative, their class teacher or the head of Parent Council.

## Tuition & Fees

### FEES POLICY

**Fees paid is not refundable!**

**All new students MUST have their admission and the term's fees paid in full prior to enrolment. Fees for continuing students are payable termly and must be paid in full at the start of term.**

**The penalty for late payment is a 10% levy on the fees. Dishonored cheques will attract a 10% penalty of the face value of the cheque.**

**A full term's fees are payable irrespective of the actual date of admission, re-entry or withdrawal.**

**Learners whose fees are not paid by the end of the third week of reopening will not be allowed into the school premises except when fees are paid in full.**

**Where students will be absent for a full term or up to a full academic year and parents wish places kept, fees must be paid in full for the period of absence. Otherwise, pupils will be considered as new entrants and admitted when a vacancy occurs, on payment of a new admission fee. Places cannot be held for periods of over one year.**

Three months written notice is required prior to withdrawal. If no such notice is given, a term's fee must be paid in lieu thereof. Exception to this rule may be made at the discretion of the Manager, if withdrawal is made necessary by the unforeseen transfer of parents.

Fees are not refundable in the event of a pupil being expelled, or leaving due to other circumstances.

The Board and Directors reserve the right to raise the fees during the course of the school year.

#### **Bank Deposits:**

The School's Cashier does not accept cash payments of school fees. All cash payments, both in cedis and foreign currencies, should be made directly to the School bank accounts. Pay-in-slips for bank deposits should clearly state the student's name and must be presented to the Cashier for a receipt.

#### **Transfers:**

Parents who make local or foreign bank transfers into the school's account should forward a copy of the transfer advice to the Cashier of the School for a receipt to be issued to them. Transfer advice must state the student's name. All bank transfer charges must be paid by the parents.

**Cheque Payments:**

All payments by cheque or bank draft drawn on both local and foreign banks should be made to the school's bank account. The cheque should be made out to "PEARSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL". If a cheque sent for collection attracts extra charges, the school will ask the parent to pay them.

**Bank Account**

Details of account:

**PEARSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

**FIRST ATLANTIC BANK - ASHAIMAN BRANCH**

**ACCT. NO. 1438521101018**

**TIMELY PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES**

One of the crucial components of operating Pearson Christian School is that we receive tuition and fee payments in a timely manner. With this in mind: PCS requires all parents to pay their outstanding balances before we will send student records and transcripts to other schools (for transferring students and graduating students). PCS requires all outstanding balances be paid before a child is guaranteed a spot in a class for the upcoming school year.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS INCLUSION**

We have adopted the inclusion of learners with special needs to our classroom. Admission however is limited to preschool, which is 3 to 5 years. Parents will have to pay an additional monthly extra bill comprising of fees for teachers for the individualized education program (IEP) they will be engaged in. This is after parents have agreed to have a full diagnosis and possible therapy sessions for their wards. Our partner school is **MULTIKIDS ACADEMY**, located at East Legon.

## **AFTER SCHOOL FEES**

It is important to pick up your child After School each day at 3:00 PM. If you fail to pick your child, you will be charged After School fees until 6:00 PM. There is a fee grace period during transition times (45 minutes after 3:00 PM) if your child is picked up then. The school will close at 6:00 PM sharp. There is a fee of 30.00 cedis (per child, per occurrence) charged to anyone picking his or her child up after 3:45 PM and 400.00 cedis per term if you sign up for our After School program. This cost will change over time.

## **DISCOUNT ON SCHOOL FEES**

There is no discount on school fees as regards the number of children enrolled from the same family. However, parents may be on the look out from the floating discounts (usually 10%) on early payment of fees.

## Other School Policies

### 1. NUTRITION AND FEEDING GUIDELINES

We feel strongly that good food both benefit your child's health and also positively influence their energy while at school. The school provides two hot and nutritious meals at a fee (10:00 AM and 1:00 PM respectively). However, parents may choose to bring in their own meals which is allowed. Please only send in food that has nutritive value and does not contain sugar as a primary ingredient (when in doubt, check the labels; you might be surprised). Inappropriate foods include sweets, very sugary cookies and soda drinks, etc. It is important to us that every child eats nutritious meals while in our care. The PCS kitchen is committed to serving whole, unrefined, natural foods as much as possible.

Information about allergies and dietary restrictions for learners must be posted on the classroom boards.

**Heat-Ups:** We are not set up to warm children's lunches. Please provide good food warmers for your children to ensure a hot or warm meal at least.

**Fruits:** Occasionally, the school kitchen serves fruits to learners.

## 2. HEALTH POLICIES

**Medical Reports:** A record of immunizations and a physical examination within the past 12 months must be completed and on file at the school within the first 30 days of each child's first day of attendance. Records should also include results of any screenings, prescribed medications, descriptions of any impairments and current or chronic health conditions. The Ghana Education Service law requires that the child not attend school until the forms are complete. All children are required to either be immunized or to have a medical or religious exemption on file in the school office. Non-immunized students might be prohibited from attending school if an outbreak occurs for which they have not been immunized.

**Administration of Medicine:** A Social Welfare law in Ghana requires that all sick children remain home and take all medications till their ailment period is over. When it is very crucial, parents must fill out and sign a medication prescription form in order for a staff member to give medicine to a child. This form must give date, dosage as stated on the original bottle, and time of administration. If it is a prescribed drug, the doctor's prescription must be affixed to the medicine and staff will, at all times, follow the doctor's prescription—even if the parent is requesting something different. Your child's name must be indelibly written on the medicine. The medications must be locked up while in school and taken home at the end of the day.

**Health Rules for Attendance:** Children should be kept home from school if they are feverish, have diarrhea, are vomiting, have dark mucous nasal discharge, or if they show signs of becoming sick (listlessness/drowsiness, productive cough, extreme sore throat, ear pain, eyes that are red, burning, itching, or producing discharge).

We realize that it is difficult for working parents to keep their children home, but exclusion will help prevent contagion and promote the health and safety of your own child. Please notify the school if your child has a highly communicable disease or condition, so that all other parents can be alerted. If your child becomes ill during the school day, every effort will be made to make them comfortable, away from the other children. A parent will be called to come and pick them up.

**Hand Washing:** Hand washing greatly cuts down on the transfer of germs and bacteria. We ask that all children and adults wash their hands with soap immediately upon entering school in the morning and from outside play. We also wash our hands before and after eating, before and after water play, after working with Play Dough and other sensorial materials, and after toileting, nose blowing, finger sucking, or touching any contaminated objects and surfaces.

**Toilet Training:** All children who are 3 years and registered for the Nursery 2 class must be toilet trained. Teachers will observe new children to ensure they are developmentally ready to care for their toileting needs independently. If frequent accidents occur, teachers will work with parents to develop a plan to best meet the needs of individual children and their community.

**Recording and Reporting Accidents:** All injuries involving bumps to the head, bleeding, broken bones, and/or requiring medical treatment are recorded in an incident log. An incident report is also filled out, and parents are informed of the injury/accident. The report is signed by the PCS staff member completing it and by the parent and kept in the child's student file. Copies are given to the parent and director, and one is sent to the state division.

**Emergencies:** Every PCS teachers will receive First Aid and CPR training, which is routinely updated. In the event of an emergency concerning your child, the school will first contact you, the parent, and then, if necessary, the backup emergency contacts. If the emergency requires immediate medical care, we will call for an ambulance while we are contacting you. Throughout the year, please notify the school office of any phone number changes for you or your emergency contacts (including work and cell phone numbers).

## EXCLUSION CRITERIA

<b>Condition</b>	<b>If Child has been Diagnosed:</b>	<b>Return to School</b>
Chicken Pox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude the child from school</li> <li>• Notify all parents regarding possible outbreak</li> <li>• Contact the nearest Public Health Centre if needed to find out the other preventive measures</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures</li> </ul>	Approximately 6 - 7 days after the rash begins or after blisters have scabbed over.
Diarrhoea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude the child from school</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures</li> </ul>	When child is diarrhoea free for 24 hours.
Mumps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude the child from school</li> <li>• Notify all parents regarding possible outbreak</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures</li> </ul>	When done with medication.
Head Lice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude child from and treat</li> </ul>	24 hours after treatment and there are no nits or lice.

Ringworm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude child from school if lesions cannot be covered</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures</li> </ul>	When the sore lesion dies or starts to shrink.
Sore (Strep) throat caused by bacteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude child with eye drainage and itching</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures</li> </ul>	24 hours after antibiotics have begun.
Red eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude child from school if the child has a discharge from the eye</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures</li> </ul>	24 hours after first dose of medication and symptoms are mild.
Fever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude child from all activities and notify parents if temperature exceeds 37°C.</li> </ul>	After child has been fever free for 24 hours without medication.
Vomiting	Temporarily exclude the child if the child has had more than two episodes of vomiting.	After child has not vomited for a 12 hours period.
Measles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporarily exclude child from school if child has high fever and is unable to participate in activities</li> <li>• All parents will be notified.</li> <li>• Carefully follow handwashing and cleaning procedures.</li> </ul>	After child has finished medication and rashes have reduced.

### 3. POOR WEATHER CONDITIONS

Generally, we are open on all days, but if weather conditions are truly hazardous perhaps due to a storm, then we will close. We will announce by sending alerts through our online school database and phone calls. Please read the following so you know what to expect when school is closed or delayed due to inclement weather. The first place we post a closing or delayed opening is through our school database alert messages. All families are automatically enrolled into our alert notification system. Please notify the office if you do not wish to receive alert notifications.

Typically, when the weather is bad, teachers are not able to proceed with their regular lesson plans, because of the high level of absenteeism. If your child can attend later in the day, this is helpful to the teacher and the rest of the class. If it becomes necessary to close school early, we will send a phone message first, putting this at the very beginning. This will be followed by a broadcast email and database alert to all parents. We always try to make the best decision for the safety of our community members, our teachers and our families. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

#### **4. POLICY FOR EXITING PRESCHOOL PARENTS**

If you are a current preschool parent and you need to withdraw your child from Pearson Christian School, you must give PCS one month of advance notice in writing. This will give us time to fill the spot you open up when your child leaves, thereby limiting the loss of income to the school. The one-month notice begins the day it is received in the school office. You will be charged tuition during this one-month period, so it is to your advantage to be proactive so you aren't charged tuition when your child is no longer enrolled.

#### **5. LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found items will be kept at the school office for a limited time. Items not claimed will be donated to charity at various times throughout the year.

#### **6. CELL PHONE USE**

To ensure a wholesome educational environment for all PCS learners and a productive work environment for all PCS staff, please follow these community guidelines for cell phone use while on campus:

- Remind your children that PCS learners are not allowed to use cell phones while on campus.
- Do not call teachers during working hours. They will not pick up the call as it is against the school's ethics.

- Take and make cell phone calls outside school buildings.
- Use cell phones away from open campus building doors and windows; ringtones and voices travel.
- Ensure that your phone will not ring or vibrate loudly during meetings, events, gatherings, etc.
- When possible, please offer to return incoming cell phone calls after you leave the PCS campus.

## 7. PRESS/PHOTO RELEASES

Occasionally, the school administration would wish to do a story and take a few pictures of PCS children involving one of our field trips or an activity at school. We also use photos and articles about student activities and accomplishments on the school website, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and PCS publications. You will be asked to sign a press release/photo release form, which will be one of the initial forms you will be given upon your child's admission to PCS. If you choose to not sign the form, or if after signing it you change your mind, your desire will be honoured. In that case, your child's picture may still appear on materials that have already been designed and printed, but his/her image will no longer be used on new materials.

## 8. MEDIA USE POLICY

We strive to create a learning environment that nurtures children's social development and fosters a rich imagination. In doing so, it is important to recognize the impact that technology and media plays in children's development. Children's social behavior is influenced by examples viewed on television programs, movies, and video games. Children who view content containing violence and negative social behaviors are more likely to resolve conflict in a similar manner. Children who view media content that models positive social behavior are more likely to engage in peaceful and effective conflict resolution.

Media viewing also greatly impacts children's imaginative play. As media use increases and marketing towards young children becomes more aggressive, we are seeing a concerning decrease in the number of children engaging in rich imaginative play. Imaginative play has become restricted to narrow scripts that children adopt from television and movies. They adhere too closely to these scripts and find it difficult to accommodate new characters, events, and behaviors that deviate from the movie or television program they are imitating. Princesses that must eat while fluttering their eyelids and almost always need rescuing. Heroes who are incapable of solving problems without resorting to violence.

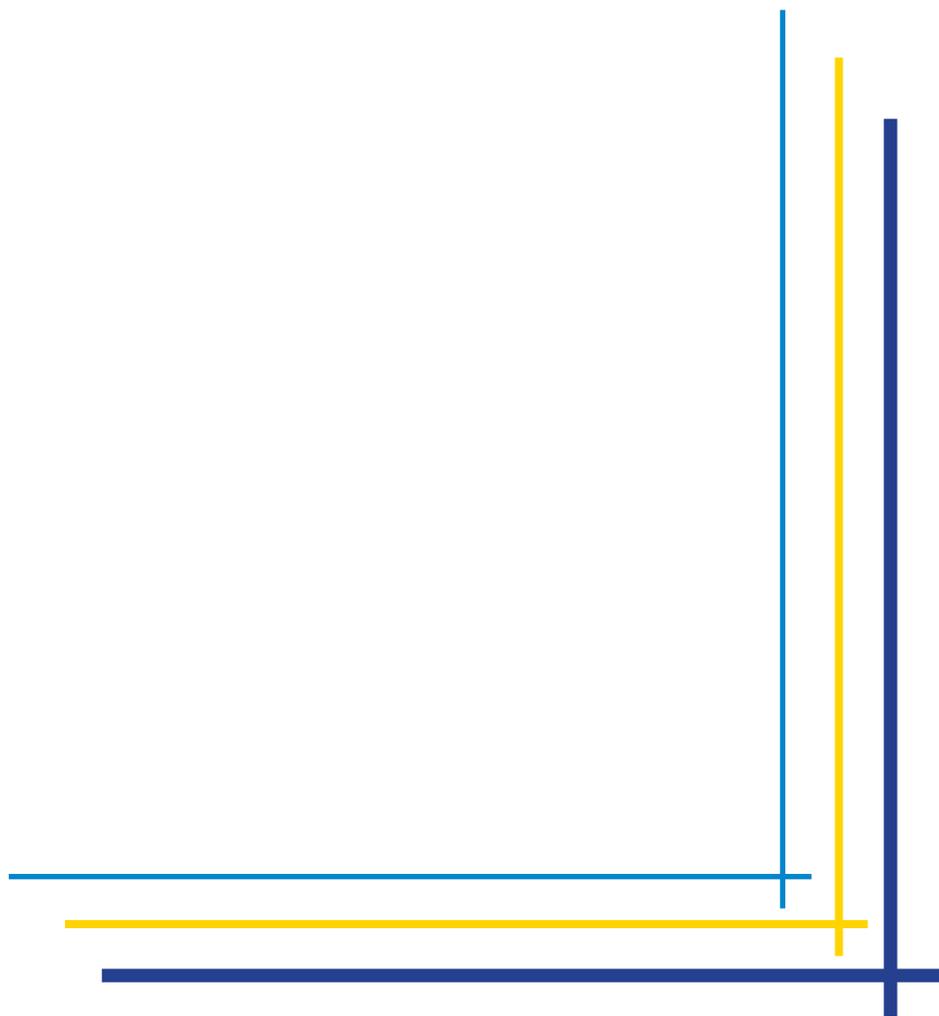
**Social conflicts erupt over assigned roles as the children find it difficult to imagine that the latest Disney princess might have a sister or friend that isn't portrayed in the movie... or that more than one hero or side-kick can exist. Children who have not had any direct exposure or experience with the characters and story being reenacted quickly learn these scripts from their peers and diligently adhere to them.**

**As Christian educators, we recognize that media does have value and can also impact children positively when programs are chosen carefully and used with guidance and intention. We place no judgment on families who choose to expose their children to media. We also recognize that children's experiences in the home are carried over into their school experiences. For this reason, we ask that you follow these guidelines regarding media use:**

- 1. Select television programs and movies carefully. Do the characters actions and words reflect the positive values you wish to instill in your child?**
- 2. Limit your child's exposure to media in the mornings especially . Consider the energy your child brings to school. Is your child arriving grounded and ready to learn or is your child revved up and inspired to reenact a program they watched in the morning?**

**3. Television also does not promote the active use of the brain's neurons. Exercising the brain is very important to classroom learning and so reading is a better option for learners to adopt. Encourage your wards to read.**

**4. Marketing and branding also make it challenging for children to break away from television and movie scripts. Please select clothing, lunch boxes, backpacks, etc. that DO NOT have images of television or movie characters.**



## Student Discipline Policy

### Positive Discipline Philosophy

The discipline policy at Pearson Christian School is consistent with the educational philosophy of the school and is based on positive discipline according to Maria Montessori. Discipline comes from within and children are taught to identify and bring out the discipline within them. It safeguards each member of the school community and furthers the mental, emotional, physical, social/moral, and spiritual domains of our curriculum. Essentially, our discipline approach is not just to keep students “behaving well” so the teacher can teach. It is an important part of the curriculum -- helping students learn how to work together, respect their community and to be mindful of the needs of others. To this end, each student shall conduct themselves in a manner that supports the general learning environment, respects the right of all to live and learn in a physically and emotionally safe atmosphere, develops independent and collaborative learning skills, supports the development of problem solving skills, and generally upholds the noblest aspects of the human spirit.

### THE FEAR OF GOD

Occasionally, the administration is compelled to use “spare the rod to spoil the child” policy, as found in Proverbs 13:24 in the Holy Bible. This is when the situation is really out of hand and all other options have

been exhausted. It is termed as putting the fear of God in the said learner and may entail some form of corporal punishment.

**At Preschool:** It is important that we keep in your child's file a signed statement by you attesting that our discipline practices have been shared with you and that you understand that they include an occasional application of corporal punishment in dire circumstances.

## **CALMING SPACES**

We teach and help children to use a calming space as a way to help them change their energy or behavior pattern. We view this as a positive way of helping our children better understand and manage emotions and energy. These spaces are non-punitive, near the group or in the school office. A child may choose to find a calming space at any point during the day in which they need to find balance. Children may stay in a calming space for as long as they wish, provided they can demonstrate positive behavior when they choose to resume their usual activities.

Our goal is to teach children to make positive behavior decisions and manage their feelings appropriately. Our method of discipline, which we consider energy or behavior management, generally follows these steps:

- 1. Guidelines/rules are discussed as a class. Children are taught to use calming spaces and techniques.**
- 2. Energy is redirected. We redirect a child's activity to another center where the energy is more appropriate, i.e. sand, water, clay, hammering, play dough.**
- 3. Reminders are given and use of a calming space is encouraged.**
- 4. Problems are discussed. We discuss a problem with the child or group rationally and try to think of solutions together and examine their possible effects. Calming techniques are discussed and practiced.**
- 5. Warnings with natural consequences are given if behavior persists. For example, a child may be asked to put work away if playing disrespectfully. Calming techniques are practiced to help change the child's energy.**
- 6. There are times when a child's energy is such that they are not able to cope with their feelings alone, or is simply not able to sit alone by themselves for a minute. In such instances, where one-to-one intervention is necessary, another staff member may be asked to intervene and give the child extra attention until they are able to re-enter group activity.**

**7. Generally, our environment and activities are designed in such a way as to avoid the need for disciplinary measures. Our faculty is trained to use early intervention, to help shape the classroom atmosphere toward a happy, harmonious and playful one. Teachers give the children lots of positive feedback and affection, and vary the rhythm of activity during the day to provide for successful experiences.**

**8. The staff offers a variety of materials to work with in order that extra energy can be vented naturally. In cases of discord, children learn to say to each other how they feel and to listen carefully to each other's feelings. This facilitates their solving their own problems instead of a teacher solving it for them. Children are taught to consider each other's feelings and are given lots of positive remarks and rewards for caring behavior.**

## Removal from Class or Dismissal from School

The physical and emotional safety of students on campus is of utmost importance to PCS. Almost all behavioral issues either never happen, because they have been prevented, or they are resolved with little class disruption. However, every community, and every classroom has its issues. Therefore, how do we know when a student needs to be removed from the classroom for a period of time? Each child and every situation is unique, but the general guidelines that a child needs to be separated and parents need to be called are:

1. The child has targeted violent or emotionally aggressive or damaging behavior toward another child or children. In this case, often the “victim(s)” need some separation from the aggressor, so they have time to regain a sense of safety in the classroom. Plus, separating the child can sometimes help the child understand how serious or potentially damaging their behavior is for others.
2. The behavior is repetitive, even if no single event is serious enough to warrant removal, a teacher will use their discretion to determine when it is pervasive enough that the class needs a break and the student needs more direct consequences to understand the situation and work on changing behavior.

**3. If the behavior is impeding instructional time and community space to a degree the teacher warrants is beyond what the class can expect to deal with. Generally, when a student is removed, it is for the rest of the day, and sometimes for a day or two following.**

**4. Always, the staff will try to help the student by considering what his/her needs are. What seems to be the reason behind the behavior? If removal occurs more than two or three times, the child will be considered for an individualized modified behavior plan. If the student isn't already in the student support program, they may be referred for student support services and/or counseling.**

## Protocol for Aggressive Acts and Sexual Experimentation

Whenever a child performs an aggressive act toward another, toward themselves, or toward school property, that child's parents will be informed of the act, the conditions preceding it, and the consequences of it. This is not to suggest that the child should be in any manner punished by the parent. It is simply a way to develop a tracking procedure with the parent's understanding and participation. If such acts persist, by tracking them we may be able to develop a care plan with the parent that successfully resolves the situation. PCS is dedicated to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for each child.

## Adult Conduct

As the adult leaders of our community, PCS faculty, staff members and parents should model cooperative conduct in all situations. We also urge all parents and other adult members of our educational community to understand and support the philosophy and methods of our discipline policy, the essential goal of which is to resolve conflict by educational rather than punitive means, using democratic processes which support the inherent dignity and rights of every individual. If any member of the PCS community shows repeated disrespect towards other members of our community, including the use of abusive language or gestures toward a child, teacher or staff member, and/or an unwillingness to mediate a solution or to resolve a conflict situation using the respectful steps outlined, PCS reserves the right to ask the family in question to leave the school and terminate that family's contracts with PCS learning environment.

Our goal is to teach each child social skills that foster such an environment. If we are unable, after a period of careful intervention, to maintain this type of environment due to the behavior of a certain child, that child's parents will be asked to school her or him elsewhere.

It is natural and normal for children between the ages of 3 to 5 to be interested in sexual differences. There may be a period of ‘you show me yours and I’ll show you mine’ activity among curious learners. Whenever this occurs, the parent will be informed on the day it occurs. We do not feel it is appropriate for a parent to punish a child for this type of behavior. Again, we see it as natural and normal. But we do feel that it is probably the time for a parent to discuss body parts and social customs with the child. If such activity persists, the preschool director will discuss with the parent possible care plans to help the child move on to other, more socially appropriate activities.

### **PROCESS FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCERNS**

As a community-oriented school, it is essential that the adults in the community model the cooperative, compassionate communication we want our children to imitate. PCS has been fortunate to foster a positive culture, where adults in the community are mindful of their communication. Generally, PCS adults are aware of the toxic culture that can result from habitual negative communication, and conscious about how to foster a functional community. In the spirit of PCS, we know it isn’t healthy for people to push away their concerns and unmet desires, but that it is necessary to move through them.

The conflict resolution process below is designed to help us all recognize our needs and to move through them toward resolution... while treating people respectfully and keeping things in perspective. Although we may not, individually, always get exactly what we want; as a community we increase our health and happiness (which, ultimately, brings the best kind of individual satisfaction). The intended result is the gratification of feeling understood, while continuing to grow as humans. It is lifelong learning at its fullest.

Suggestions for moving through the conflict resolution process gracefully:

- Remember that PCS educators are dedicated to finding solutions that fit within the school's philosophy. Conflict can be a time to better understand the philosophy of the school.
- Remember that a "perfect educational environment" for children is not truly perfect, i.e. "without flaw" – but one where children and adults can experience problems and learn from them in a supportive environment. Also remember, problem solving is a major skill to be studied by everyone.
- Recognize many problems represent the proverbial balance between individual and communal needs.
- Have faith that, unless a situation is extremely traumatic, your child is resilient. Believe in the holistic strength of your child.

- Remember that many problems are best solved by our children – for their sake and for ours.
- Remember that educators and support staff, although they try to be saints, have the same human frailties, emotions, and flaws as everyone else.
- Keep the feelings of others in your heart.
- Forgive.
- Keep the problem in perspective. Ask yourself:
  - How much do I value Pearson Christian School in relation to this particular problem?
  - How important will this problem seem in a year, in several years?
  - Is the problem something I can live with?
  - Is the problem important, urgent, both, or neither?
  - While our emotions can make problems seem incredibly urgent, most conflicts can be wisely resolved with time and patience.

## The Conflict Resolution Process

Please take a minute to read these recommendations regarding the steps to conflict resolution. We want to hear from you as we are committed to making PCS a community where needs are addressed in a clear and respectful way. After all, a problem cannot be fixed if school personnel are not aware of the problem or if they don't understand that a particular situation, policy, or action is/was considered a problem or concern to you or the community. Ultimately, the process establishes Trust.

### The Process:

#### 1. Identify and define the conflict

- Recognize that conflict is a normal part of the human condition, and does not make you weak or wrong. To recognize our feelings, and to directly confront the person with whom we have a conflict, requires courage.
- What really is the problem? Can you identify the problem without blaming the other person or group? Think in terms of “I want...I need...I feel...,” rather than “You did this, or “You didn't do that.” Be aware of your true feelings and the feeling of others.

#### 2. Find a safe way to vent your feelings without damaging the community. Feelings strongly influence our behavior, and they need

validation. It is human, with our need to validate our feelings or to simply think them through, to spread the problem to others, which often creates stronger feelings and moves things beyond perspective. When possible, we recommend that you work directly with your child's teacher (or applicable person) if you have concerns or needs that involve the teacher or a classroom situation. This way, you work with the person who has the ability to solve the problem.

**Please Note:** In a school community, many conflicts are resolved after the first two steps. When a conflict or concern is shared directly with the teacher or leader, often a miscommunication, misinformation, missing information, or a misunderstanding come to light. If this is the case, most likely it can easily be resolved (if it hasn't spread among too many people).

3. If you feel a need for further resolution (after going through this process) or the concern involves PCS as a community, you may make an appointment with the Director of Operations.

**Written Concerns:** If you would like the concern documented, please write a letter to the Director of Operations stating the concern and stating your needs and proposed solutions. If you need mediation between you and the teacher, the Administrator/Manager will help you.

If you choose to, or if you are asked to write down your concern, we encourage you to be as clear and concise as possible. Try to be equally clear in writing about what you feel you need from the teacher or the school.

4. Expect that the teacher and/or Manager will listen to your concern, but may not immediately offer a solution. Provide the teacher and/or Manager time to analyze and/or observe first hand (if applicable) the situation, and gather information. Allow him/her time to respond, which may be a day or several weeks.
5. Expect that the teacher and/or Director may ask you to brainstorm for solutions with them.
6. Together, agree upon a solution. This may require compromise. Remember the solution is not written in stone, but is something both parties are committed to trying.
7. Together, implement a solution.
8. Follow-up evaluation. After allowing plenty of time, make sure the chosen solution has really solved the conflict to your mutual satisfaction.
  - If you are satisfied with the result, please let the other party know. If

you submitted a written concern, please also indicate your satisfaction in writing for documentation.

- If the conflict has not been resolved to your mutual satisfaction:
- Start the process over again and try a different solution.
- You are welcome to address the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Contact the Board Chairperson prior to the next meeting to review your concern and to request placement on the meeting agenda, if needed. The board, while not designed to manage or problem-solve operational and managerial issues or to direct school management in the resolution of conflict, will take the information into consideration, and determine whether the Manager has violated any policies.

## Family-to-Family Conflict Resolution

Every conflict or uncomfortable situation is unique, and needs to be worked out in its own unique way. However, through years of experience, we have found some common situations that are best resolved with the help of the school counselor. One of those situations is when a parent/child/family has concerns or complaints about another child or family in the classroom. This is a delicate situation that requires compassion and courage. In these cases, we are likely to ask both families (or multiple families) to meet together with the counselor and any other involved parties.

### PLAYGROUND RULES

#### Slide & Tunnel:

1. Always use the stairs to get to the top; stay off the rock siding.
2. Slide sitting up and feet first.
3. One person at a time.
4. Do not block the bottom of the slide.
5. Slides are for people only - not toys, rocks, etc.

#### Swings:

1. Preschoolers are only allowed on the swings in the preschool playground, in front of the school.

2. Swing front to back with bottom on seat and head up.
3. Swing seats are not twisted or rolled.
4. Exit swings without jumping.
5. Stay behind the swings when pushing. “Underdog” pushes are not permitted.

#### **Sandbox:**

1. All sand and sand toys are to remain in the sandbox.
2. Do not throw sand or put it on other people’s bodies.
3. Cover the sandbox when not in use.

#### **Monkey Bars:**

1. Objects may not be used to reach the monkey bars.
2. One person at a time.
3. Do not hang upside down.

#### **Bridge:**

1. Keep bridge clear from toys and debris.
2. Children may run, skip, or hop across the bridge. Do not jump in one place on bridge.
3. Stand up while on the bridge.

### **Gardens & Natural Objects:**

- 1. Walk in garden paths. Do not climb in or over garden beds or walls.**
- 2. Treat living plants kindly. Do not pull off leaves, branches or flowers.**
- 3. Always ask permission before harvesting or weeding the garden.**
- 4. Small sticks may be used for digging, building, and pretend play provided that they are used safely and peacefully. Children with sticks must walk at all times. Sticks are not to be used as weapons.**
- 5. Keep all ground cover (pebbles, mulch, pine needles, etc.) in its designated area of the playground.**
- 6. Do not throw rocks, nuts, mulch, or sticks.**

### **Riding Toys:**

- 1. Riding toys may be used on the basketball court or sidewalk with teacher supervision.**
- 2. Keep riding toys on pavement and drive slowly.**
- 3. Do not crash into people or other objects.**
- 4. Keep hands and feet on riding toys when they are moving. Sit properly on seats.**
- 5. Stop riding toys to allow others to safely walk past.**
- 6. Riding toys are for preschool and kindergarten only.**

All toys and materials must remain in designated learning centers (crayons with art, blocks & ramps with building, gems and shells in the fairy garden).

Except for the ground floor users, Creche to Kindergarten 1, who do not use shoes in the classrooms, shoes must be worn at all times by the rest of the school.

All gates must remain closed and latched. Weapons, imaginary or otherwise, are not allowed at school.

## PARENT DONATIONS

We are by no means against parents donating to the school as teachers will often have a wish list or send home requests for items needed for arts and crafts projects, theme-related play or day-to-day operations (class supplies, etc.) in the weekly newsletter. We do appreciate your contribution and we say thank you for your support of our program and students through your donations.

## **STAFF GIFTS**

**As stated earlier, the Parent Council has been mandated to help organize gifts for the staff. This is in view of the fact that the Board considers the presentation of gifts to a professional staff member by students and their parents an undesirable practice because it tends to embarrass students with limited means and gives the appearance of currying favor. Such compensation includes, but is not limited to, cash, cheques, stocks, or any other form of securities, gifts and other such things of value (more than 200 cedis). The superintendent may approve acts of generosity to individual staff members in unusual situations. However, at no time may a staff member accept compensation from any other source, other than the Board, for the performance of his/her duties of his/her public employment, or as a supplement to his/her compensation.**

## **RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES**

**A list of resources for parents and families will be made available on the Pearson Christian School website.**

