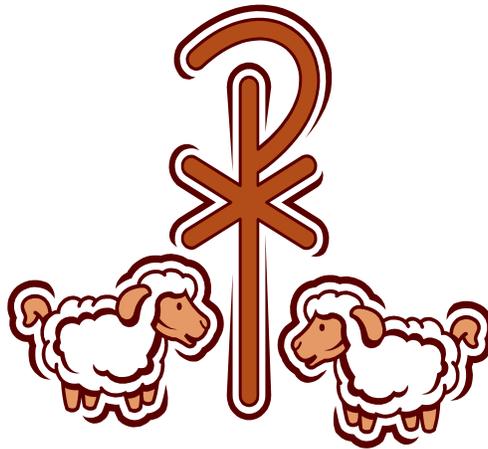


Parent Handbook



**The Good Shepherd School
Preschool and Child Care
10290 Dorchester Road
Summerville, SC 29485
(843) 875-8722
(843) 871-1064 fax
gss@dorchesterpresbyterian.org**

**A Non-Profit Ministry of
Dorchester Presbyterian Church
843-871-3572**

Dorchester Presbyterian Church

10290 Dorchester Road
Summerville, SC 29485
(843) 871-3572 • (843) 871-3579
www.dorchesterpresbyterian.org

Jeff Kackley
Pastor

Dorothy Blackwelder
Associate Pastor



Dear Parents,

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs!” (Matthew 19:14) Our church is very proud of the Good Shepherd School, and we welcome you and your child to our family. We believe that all children are a gift from God and deserve the best care – through love, compassion, learning, exploration, and play. We take very seriously the great task of nurturing and caring for children during these young formative years. There are so many people working to make sure that your children are in good hands – through the directors, teachers, assistants, cooks, and a dedicated board, we strive to provide the best care possible. We know it is difficult to leave your child in someone else’s care, but we trust that the Good Shepherd School is a great place for your children to be when they cannot be with you.

If you and your family do not have a church home, we welcome you to become a part of the church family at Dorchester Presbyterian Church. We have great Sunday School classes for all ages at 9:00 am (September-May) and worship at 10:15 am. We would love to see you here. We also have an e-mail prayer chain with over 100 prayer warriors who are dedicated to going to God in need and in thanksgiving. Please let the GSS staff or us know if you ever want to be included on our prayer chain.

We are excited about Chapel time. Each Tuesday at 9:30, we invite the Preschool and Pre-K classes to the sanctuary for a Bible lesson, prayer, and singing. We will also host chapel for the Explorers Class on the first Wednesday of each month. Children’s Chapel will be led by the pastors and members of the church; we hope this will be a good chance to get to know the children better and to encourage their faith development along with the lessons they are doing in their classrooms.

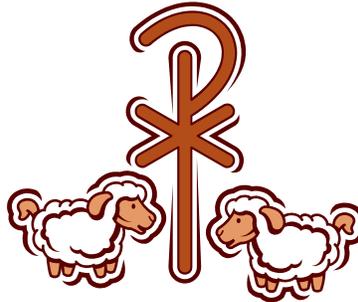
Please let us know if there is anything we can do for you or your family.

Grace and Peace,

Jeff and Dorothy

jeff.kackley@dorchesterpresbyterian.org OR dorothy.blackwelder@dorchesterpresbyterian.org

Good Shepherd School
Summerville, SC 29485
(843) 875-8722
gss@dorchesterpresbyterian.org



Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to welcome you to The Good Shepherd School. We thank you for allowing us to share in your child's education. We believe each child is uniquely designed and precious in God's sight. The Good Shepherd School Staff understands the importance of attending to children's individual needs.

As Director, I want to create and encourage a partnership between The Good Shepherd School and families as we strive to provide quality Christian childcare, education, and development opportunities that will honor and glorify God.

My goal is to continue and to build on the wonderful program that has been established here. I hope the information within this handbook will serve as a valuable resource. I look forward to a building relationship with you and your child. Have a great school year!!

Blessings and Hugs,
Toia M. Thompson
Director

The Mission & Vision of The Good Shepherd School

Dorchester Presbyterian Church's Good Shepherd School is licensed by the SC Department of Social Services.

The Good Shepherd School is a ministry of Dorchester Presbyterian Church. At the Good Shepherd School, we believe that each child is loved by God, that learning begins at birth, and that each child is unique with their own learning style and rate of development.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to provide a high quality early childhood education program in a Christian environment that focuses on the whole child – spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

Vision Statement:

The Good Shepherd School strives to provide a high quality program in a stimulating learning environment designed to help your child grow and develop. Our caring and trained teachers use developmentally appropriate curriculum to optimize learning in a safe, Christian-based setting.

Our program will include:

- Christian curriculum supported with current educationally sound practices
- Activities and materials appropriate for the child's age and development
- Continuing education of staff
- Regular communication with parents
- Nutritious meals and snacks

=Approved by the GSS Board on April 25, 2013 and by the DPC Session on May 21, 2013=

Board of Directors

The Good Shepherd School of Dorchester Presbyterian Church is governed by a Board of Directors, which is appointed by the Session of Dorchester Presbyterian Church. The Board has the responsibility for the overall guidance of the total program. Members of the Board of Directors are:

Todd Heldreth —Chair
Elease Holmes
Susan Johnson
Joey Kuhlmann
Don Oswald
Julie Richardson
Steve Ulmer
Shannon Wickersham

Administration

Director: Toia M. Thompson

The Director, under the supervision of the Board of Directors and in accordance with the established policy, is administratively responsible for the operation of the Preschool and Child Care Program of Dorchester Presbyterian Church.

Assistant Directors: Kim Monnet and Sherry Posadas

The Assistant Directors, under the supervision of the Board of Directors and the Director of the School, are responsible for assisting with day-to-day operations and supporting all of the teachers as they implement their daily lesson plans.

Classroom Goals and Curriculum

Infants and Creeper: Our Infant and Creeper programs offers a warm, loving, and nurturing environment for your children to explore, learn, and grow. Reading, singing, and giving individual attention to each child is essential. Each child is given the opportunity for tummy time and floor play. Children are taken outside for a walk in the buggy as weather permits. A daily sheet is given at the end of each day to help you know more about their feeding, eating, sleeping, and playing schedule. We do our best to accommodate your child's schedule and ask that parents schedule a time prior to enrollment to meet with teachers to give them a chance to get to know your child's needs. We encourage parents to call and check on their child whenever they feel the need. **Christian Education:** Our Infant and Creeper Classes will be read to from *The Children of God Storybook Bible* by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Toddlers: The Toddler program enables children to explore and grow in their changing world. Children will experience short structured activities as well as free play activities to encourage the development of gross motor skills. Outside time is scheduled twice daily as the weather permits. The Toddler curriculum will center around integrated thematic units based on high quality children's literature, with a book of the week along with several developmentally appropriate activities that relate to the weekly literature.

Explorers: Much like the Toddler program, the Explorers program gives opportunities for the children to grow and explore through short structured activities and free play to encourage the development of gross motor skills. The Explorer program is scheduled to go on the playground twice daily as weather permits. The Explorer curriculum will center around integrated thematic units based on high quality children's literature, with a book of the week along with several developmentally appropriate activities that relate to the weekly literature. The Explorer curriculum will include more activities focused on beginning to learn basic colors, shapes, letters, and numbers. The children will achieve these goals through story time, singing, playing, art, and exploring.

This is the age at which most children are toilet trained. We ask that you work with your child at home before training actually begins at school. Please bring an adequate number of training pants so that we can keep your child dry in case of accidents. If you wish to use pull-ups you may for a short period of time, but we do not recommend it as sometimes they confuse the child. When dressing your child for the day, please remember pants with buckles and zippers, such as overalls, are not the best choices for toilet training. Clothing that is easy to pull up and down should be worn.

Christian Education: The Toddlers and Explorers use the *God and Me* devotional book, which provides a scripture, questions, and a prayer for each day. The Explorers attend chapel monthly.

Preschool:

The Preschool class uses the Creative Curriculum, which addresses all of the important areas of learning, from social-emotional and math to technology and the arts, and incorporates them throughout every part of every day. It also offers daily opportunities to individualize instruction, helping teachers meet the needs of every type of learner. Children in the Preschool class will continue to master colors, shapes, letters, numbers, fine and gross motor skills, and begin the process for pre-writing and pre-reading to prepare them for our Pre-K program.

Pre- K:

The Pre-K class uses The Scott Foresman Opening the World of Learning (OWL) curriculum, which prepares children for kindergarten with ongoing assessment of research-based success predictors and playful, purposeful, and personalized instruction. This program provides integrated math, science, and social studies lessons, and excites kids about learning through highly appealing children's books, posters, picture cards, and music.

Preschool and Pre-K Christian Education: The Preschool and Pre-K classes use the *God Loves Me* curriculum to guide their morning devotion. There will be a different Bible story each week that will also be used in a weekly chapel service, which is led by pastors and members of Dorchester Presbyterian Church.

Conscious Discipline in All Classes: This is a management program that uses daily conflicts to teach Character Development, Conflict Resolution, Social Skills, and Self Control. During our circle time and other activities planned throughout the day, teachers integrate this program into our existing curriculum. Conscious Discipline empowers our teachers to execute various skills that are needed to build a sense of community in the classroom called the "school family."

Policy for Transitioning Between Classes

The children in the Explorers, Preschool, and Pre-K classes will transition once a year every August. They must meet the age requirements of each class by September 1st in order to move into that classroom. Due to DSS policies, children must be fully toilet-trained before transitioning into the Preschool classroom. Throughout the year, the classrooms and curriculum will change in accordance with the children's age. We feel that the children really thrive when they are comfortable and secure with their teachers and this is one of the reasons we have limited our facility to yearly transitions for these classes.

Transitions between the Infant, Creeper, and Toddler rooms will be based on the child's age as well as development. Decisions will be made in consultation with the child's teacher, parents, and the director.

Parent Participation

The early years are an important time in your child's life. It takes the cooperation of parent and teacher to build a firm foundation for your child. Therefore, we welcome and encourage parent participation. You can help your child adjust and grow by:

- Helping your child look forward to coming to The Good Shepherd School. Your positive attitude will help your child come to school with joy and anticipation of happy experiences.
- Knowing your child's teacher. Work with her concerning any problems that might arise.
- Taking an interest in what your child does at school. Take time to listen to your child's daily experiences as he or she shares them with you.
- Sharing any upsetting experiences that you think will help the teacher understand the child.

Parents are encouraged to visit the school at any time. We have an open door policy. Your questions as well as suggestions are welcome.

We realize that parents are very busy, whether they work outside the home or have chosen to stay home. We often need parents to help with field trips, parties, and other activities. Please let us know if your schedule can accommodate activities planned in your child's class. If you have a special talent you would like to share with the children, or would like to lend a helping hand, either with projects at school or working on projects at home, please contact your child's teacher.

DORCHESTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS A SMOKE, DRUG, AND ALCOHOL FREE CAMPUS. PLEASE ABIDE BY OUR POLICY.

Parent Complaint Procedure

When a parent or legal guardian with a child and/or children enrolled in The Good Shepherd School has a complaint or concern they wish to have resolved, the following procedures have been outlined:

1. First schedule a meeting with your child's teacher to discuss your concern.
2. If no resolution is possible, schedule a meeting with the Director. The Director will consult with the teacher and keep a file of complaints/concerns made and actions taken to resolve the issue(s).
3. A meeting may be arranged with the parents, Director, and the classroom teacher. If a solution is not found, the parent may request a meeting with the GSS Board.
4. The GSS Board will decide what, if any, action is required on the part of the teacher or Director. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

Arrival and Pick-up Procedures

Childcare hours are from 6:30 A.M. until 6:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. School doors will be locked and parents must enter through the office door or via their family's individual entry code downstairs. This is for the safety of our children. Parents may exit through the locked doors but we ask that you **do not allow anyone to enter through the locked doors**. The door upstairs on the office side will remain open all day.

Please note that Preschool Instruction and Activities begin at 9:00 A.M.

If you plan to drop your child off after 10:00 am, please call before 10:00 am to notify the office staff so they can ensure we have enough teachers and meals for the rest of the day. Please do not drop-off your child between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm because it disrupts naptime for the other children in the classroom.

Please observe the designated Entrance and Exit to the school parking lots. Proceed into the area very slowly and with caution!

You may use the marked angle parking at the nursery entrance of the school when dropping off or picking up your child. An area on the other side of the driveway has also been paved for parking for your convenience. If you have business to conduct inside which will take a while, please park in the large church parking lot.

Please do not leave children unattended in cars or on school grounds or leave your car running unattended in our parking lot.

In order to stress the need for consistency, please help your child get on a schedule. As soon as the child is able to predict his schedule, he is able to feel comfortable and enjoy his new experiences. We hope that you realize that this takes several weeks of consistent types of partings for most children to be able to separate from their parents without tears. Feel free to remain in the office area so that we can sit and talk until your child calms down. This usually takes moments and makes you feel better about leaving your child with us. Please call as frequently as you wish for an update about your child's day. We understand that it is difficult to leave your child for the first time.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is charged weekly on Monday via Tuition Express automatic withdrawal. Tuition Express enrollment forms can be obtained in the office.

There is no deduction for vacations, absences, holidays, etc. Current rates, subject to change to meet the needs of the school and the children are:

Infants: \$158 per week	Toddlers: \$156 per week	Explorers: \$154 per week
Preschool: \$154 per week	Pre-K: \$154 per week	

Drop in rate: \$50.00 per day

Sibling discount: If a family has two or more children attending GSS full time, there will be a 10% discount on the oldest child’s tuition.

Registration Fee: A non-refundable yearly registration fee of \$100.00 for each child is required. This is to secure a child’s child care slot for the coming school year in August. All registration fees are due upon admission and every March 1st. If a new student enrolls between January 1 and March 1, the first annual re-registration fee will be reduced to \$50.

The GSS will hold a spot for a child with a paid registration fee for up to two weeks from the agreed upon start date. If the child does not begin within those two weeks, the spot will be filled and the registration fee will be forfeited.

Late Pick-up Fees: We ask that every effort be made to arrive on time for pick-up. Your account will be charged \$2.00 per minute for each minute your child is here after 6:30 p.m.

Withdrawals: Parents may withdraw a child from the program at any time; however, a *two week written notice is required*. Parents wishing to withdraw their child, but who fail to provide a two week written notice, will still be liable for the tuition for the last two weeks. Withdrawal and subsequent re-enrollment will entail an additional registration.

Insufficient Funds: A fee of \$25.00 will be charged to your account for any non-sufficient funds transaction. After two NSF incidents, all payments must be made by money order. If your account is not current by Friday at closing and arrangements are not previously made with the director, your child will not be allowed to return to school until the weekly tuition and fee is paid in full.

2015-2016 School Calendar

August 7	Teacher Work Day	closed
August 7	Meet the Teacher	6:00 pm – 7:00 pm
August 10	School Year Begins	
September 24	Open House	6:30 pm-7:30 pm
September 7	Labor day	closed
November 25	Thanksgiving Holiday	Closing at 3:00
November 26 & 27	Thanksgiving Holiday	closed
December 23	Christmas Holiday	Closing at 3:00
December 24 & 25	Christmas Holiday	closed
December 31	New Year’s Eve	Closing at 3:00
January 1	New Year’s Day	closed
January 18	MLK Day	closed
February 15	President’s Day	closed
March 25	Good Friday	closed
May 27	Pre-K Graduation	3:00 pm
May 30	Memorial Day	closed
June 6	Summer Camp Begins	
July 4	Independence Day	closed

General Policies

Appropriate Attire: Children attending The Good Shepherd School are to be dressed properly for play. Tennis shoes or other closed-toe shoes are required for the safety and protection of the children. Shoes must be kept on at all times while at the center except during water activities. According to DSS regulations, children may not wear necklaces of any kind to school. Seasonal appropriate clothing is to be worn. Extra sets of clothing must be provided for each child attending school in case of accidents. Please label all clothing with your child's name, especially jackets. GSS is not responsible for lost or broken items.

Confidentiality: All information contained or kept in children's records is kept confidential and no information is to be released without written parent permission or a court order.

Visitors: All visitors must report to the office. GSS has an open door policy and parents and guardians are allowed to visit when their child is present. GSS asks that parents respect the other children and classroom structure so as not to disrupt the schedule.

Authorized Pick Up: Only those persons with prior approval and authorization will be allowed to pick up a child. A picture ID and code word will be asked of all persons picking up children. This is to ensure the safety of all children. **All persons must report to the office.**

Tracking of Children: **Parents or authorized pick up persons must sign in and out on attendance sheets at arrival and departure.** All children are to be in attendance and supervised at all times by a parent, guardian, or staff person. No child is allowed to wander the hallway or outside unattended. Roll calls are done on field trips, fire drills, evacuation drills, and playground times to ensure all children are accounted for. Classrooms will have a sign "we are..." posted on their classroom doors to inform parents of where the children are located.

Evacuation Plan: Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom in the event of an evacuation or emergency. Drills are done as required by state agencies.

Field Trips: A field trip permission form will be given to parents upon enrollment. Children will be transported by GSS bus. No child will be allowed to attend a field trip without written parental permission.

Toys from Home: Toys from home are not allowed to be brought to school except for show and tell days. On these days toys must be small enough to fit in the child's cubby or back pack. GSS is not responsible for items brought from home.

Rest Time: Each child will receive rest time daily. A small blanket, lovie, and/or a small pillow may also be brought in – but all bedding must fit in the child's back pack or cubby. All blankets are to be taken home on Fridays to be washed.

Meals: GSS will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack daily. Breakfast will be served at 8:00. Parents should feed their children breakfast prior to drop-off if not arriving by 8:00. Review the menus which are posted and e-mailed. If your child is allergic to an item on the day's menu, please pack their meal or snack for that day.

Bottles and Food from Home: All bottles, cups, water bottles, and food from home should be labeled with the child's name and the date.

Correspondence: All newsletters, menus, calendars, memos, lesson plans, receipts, tax statements, permission slips, etc. will be sent via e-mail. Occasionally a paper notice or form may be put into your child's folder. Please make sure the office has an updated email address. **Please check your email often as this is our main form of communication.**

Conferences: Conferences will be held twice a year for the Preschool and Pre-K classes. Arrangements for teacher/parent conferences for other ages and at other times to discuss your child's progress can be made through the office.

Discipline: Discipline methods will be based on positive reinforcement. Corporal punishment and deprivation of food, liquids, etc. will not be allowed. Verbal, physical, or psychological abuse is not allowed. Methods used by GSS staff are warnings, positive redirecting, and time out for children ages two and older.

Birthdays: Parents are welcome to bring in birthday treats for their child's class. Please make arrangements through the office for allergies that may be present in the classroom. If inviting children to an outside function please invite all the children in the class. GSS is not allowed to give out email addresses, telephone numbers, or home addresses of the children.

Health Care

Immunization Record: It is required by SC DHEC that a current record of immunization is provided for us for each child and kept on file. GSS must be given an updated copy of your child's immunization record upon admission and whenever the previous certificate expires.

State & Law Enforcement Regulations: We are mandated by the State of South Carolina and the Department of Children and Youth Services to report neglect and abuse. In addition, we are charged with the safekeeping of each child and must deliver quality care. If the teachers or the Director reasonably believe that a parent, guardian, or authorized person is not mentally or physically capable of taking custody of the child and delivering quality care, the proper authorities will be contacted. The following persons will be contacted in the order below:

- A. Your spouse or guardian of the child
- B. Emergency persons listed on your child's Authorized Release Form
- C. Police Department
- D. Department of Social Services

Administration of Medication: GSS is only allowed to administer medication to a child with a signed and dated prescription and parental consent form. A form must be signed prior to administering the medication. All medications must be in their original containers and labeled with the child's full name. All medication will be stored in the kitchen in a locked cabinet or in the refrigerator in a locked box. All medication will be administered by the office staff.

Emergency Medical Plan: In the event of a medical emergency involving a child, the parent will be notified immediately and the child will be transported by emergency vehicles to the nearest emergency facility as deemed necessary. A GSS staff member will stay with and accompany the child to the facility until necessary. An authorization form must be signed by a parent upon admission.

Mildly Ill Children: If a child becomes ill while at school, the parent will be called immediately and we will request that the child be picked up within the hour. In the event that the parent cannot pick the child up within the hour, the parent must make arrangements to have the child picked up. In the event that the child is not picked up within the hour, all contacts on the child's emergency form will be contacted for pick up. A child attending GSS is to stay home when he or she has an illness that compromises the well being of other children and results in him or her having a greater need for care than the staff can provide.

Children must stay home if they have one or more of the following symptoms:

- **Fever of 100.5 or higher**- Child may return after 24 hours fever free without the use of medication and deemed non contagious.
- **Difficulty Breathing**
- **Lethargic**
- **Persistent crying**
- **Rash**- Any unexplained or contagious rash. Child may return 24 hours after treatment or a doctor's note deeming rash non contagious.
- **Sores** that are weeping or draining
- **Diarrhea**- 3 or more loose, watery stools within a 24 hour period not associated with a medication or diet change.
- **Conjunctivitis**- 24 hours after start of treatment. A doctor's note is required to return.
- **Giardia/Rotavirus**- 24 hours after treatment and a doctor's note.
- **Vomiting**-2 episodes within a 24 hour period. Return after vomit free in a 24 hour period.
- **Flu**- 48 hours fever free without medications and able to participate in activities normally.
- **Chicken Pox**- 7 days or when all lesions are scabbed over.
- **Lice/Scabies/Pinworm**- Return after treatment applied and all signs of infestation are no longer present.
- **Impetigo/Ringworm**- Exclusion only if sores cannot be covered completely.
- **Measles/Roseola**- 4 days exclusion after onset of rash. Medical note required to return.
- **Meningitis**- Exclusion until cleared by doctor's note.
- **Whooping Cough**- 5 days after completion of medication and doctor's note.
- **Strep throat**- 24 hours after treatment begins and fever free without medication.
- **Hand Foot and Mouth Disease**- 24 hours after treatment begins.
- **Thrush**- 24 hours after treatment begins

Parent Signatures

Thank you for taking the time to read the 2015-2016 Parent Handbook. Please speak with a member of the office staff if you have any questions or concerns. Please sign and date the following and return this page to the office as soon as possible.

I have thoroughly read and understand the 2015-2016 Good Shepherd School Parent Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures of the Good Shepherd School.

Child(ren)'s Name(s): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand that my child's full tuition will be drafted via Tuition Express each Monday in advance of service.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____