

Revised September 2026

Heavenly Christian Academy

Parent Handbook

Revised September 2026

Parent Orientation & Handbook Access.....	6
Handbook Policy Reference - By Handbook Order.....	7
Handbook Policy Locator - Alphabetical.....	9
Licensing & Texas Rising Star Reference Notes.....	11
Philosophy & Goals.....	12
Mission Statement.....	12
Animals.....	12
Arrival.....	12
Attendance & Absence Policy.....	13
Assessment & Individualized Learning.....	13
Bags.....	13
Breastfeeding.....	14
Biting.....	14
Car Seats & Strollers.....	14
Choking Hazards.....	14
Communications.....	14
AI Receptionist & Family Support.....	15
Conferences.....	15
Curriculum & Goals.....	15
Developmental Milestones.....	15
Ethics & Professional Conduct.....	16
Child Progress Monitoring & Family Communication.....	17
Positive Teacher-Child Interactions.....	17
Grievance Procedure and Parent Concerns.....	17
Guidance & Discipline Philosophy.....	18
Dress Code.....	20
Drop-Off Procedures.....	20
Emergency Preparedness.....	20

Revised September 2026

Enrollment & Admission.....	20
Family Participation.....	21
Family Engagement.....	21
HCA Growing Together in Faith – A Family Partnership Program.....	21
Family Resources.....	22
Field Trips & Water Safety.....	22
Gang-Free Zone.....	22
Hearing & Vision Screening.....	23
Health & Dental Checks.....	23
Holidays & Hours.....	23
Late Pick-Up Policy.....	23
Hygiene.....	23
Incident & Accident Reports.....	24
Inclement Weather Policy.....	24
Inclusion & Individual Support Plans.....	24
Infant Safe Sleep.....	24
Immunization Requirements.....	25
Licensing.....	25
Meals & Nutrition.....	25
Medical Emergencies.....	25
Medications.....	26
Confidentiality Policy.....	27
Photo, Video, & Social Media Consent.....	27
Learning Centers.....	27
Naptime.....	28
Open Door Policy.....	28
Outside Toys.....	28
Outdoor Classrooms.....	28

Revised September 2026

Parent Education & Notifications.....	29
Parental Rights.....	29
Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness (TRS Enhancement).....	29
Personal belongings.....	30
Physical Activities.....	30
Pick Up Procedures.....	30
Play-Based Philosophy.....	30
Preventing Abuse & Neglect of Children.....	31
Release of Children.....	31
School Readiness.....	31
Separation Issues.....	32
Screen Time Policy.....	32
Security.....	32
Special Care Needs.....	32
Special Occasions & Birthday parties.....	33
Social-Emotional Learning.....	33
Staff Qualifications & Training.....	33
Sunscreen.....	34
Suggestions For Quality Improvement.....	34
Suspension Policy.....	34
Transportation.....	34
Tuition & Fees.....	35
Updating Parent Contact Information.....	36
Vaccine-Preventable Diseases.....	36
Water Activities	36
Weapons	36
Withdrawals	36
Contact Information	37

Revised September 2026

Parent Orientation & Handbook Access

HCA provides parent orientation in both English and Spanish. The orientation video highlights key policies but does not replace the complete Parent Handbook. Parents and guardians are responsible for reviewing the full handbook, asking questions about anything that is unclear, and completing the required acknowledgment.

English Parent Orientation



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UMPeCFpgXs

Orientación para Padres en Español



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNLEyDAIGq4>

If a QR code does not open, parents may use the printed web address or ask the HCA front desk or AI Receptionist for assistance.

Revised September 2026

Handbook Policy Reference - By Handbook Order

Use this guide to quickly locate HCA policies. “Licensing” identifies sections tied to Texas child-care operational or safety requirements; “TRS” identifies sections that provide parent-handbook evidence related to Texas Rising Star quality practices; “Both” means the section supports both. Texas Rising Star assessment also includes classroom observations, staff files, training records, and program records that are not contained in the parent handbook.

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
Philosophy & Goals	12	HCA
Mission Statement	12	HCA
Animals	12	Licensing
Arrival	12	Licensing
Attendance & Absence Policy	13	Licensing
Assessment & Individualized Learning	13	TRS
Bags	13	HCA
Breastfeeding	14	Licensing
Biting	14	HCA
Car Seats & Strollers	14	HCA
Choking Hazards	14	Licensing
Communications	14	Both
AI Receptionist & Family Support	15	HCA
Conferences	15	TRS
Curriculum & Goals	15	TRS
Developmental Milestones	15	TRS
Ethics & Professional Conduct	16	HCA
Child Progress Monitoring & Family Communication	17	TRS
Positive Teacher-Child Interactions	17	TRS
Grievance Procedure and Parent Concerns	17	Licensing
Guidance & Discipline Philosophy	18	Licensing
Dress Code	20	HCA

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
Drop-Off Procedures	20	Licensing
Emergency Preparedness	20	Licensing
Enrollment & Admission	20	Licensing
Family Participation	21	Both
Family Engagement	21	TRS
HCA Growing Together in Faith – A Family Partnership Program	21	TRS
Family Resources	22	TRS
Field Trips & Water Safety	22	Licensing
Gang-Free Zone	22	Licensing
Hearing & Vision Screening	23	Licensing
Health & Dental Checks	23	Licensing
Holidays & Hours	23	Licensing
Late Pick-Up Policy	23	HCA
Hygiene	23	HCA
Incident & Accident Reports	24	Licensing
Inclement Weather Policy	24	HCA
Inclusion & Individual Support Plans	24	Both
Infant Safe Sleep	24	Licensing
Immunization Requirements	25	Licensing
Licensing	25	Licensing
Meals & Nutrition	25	Licensing
Medical Emergencies	25	Licensing

Handbook Policy Reference - By Handbook Order (continued)

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
Medications	26	Licensing
Confidentiality Policy	27	HCA
Photo, Video, & Social Media Consent	27	HCA
Learning Centers	27	TRS
Naptime	28	HCA
Open Door Policy	28	Licensing
Outside Toys	28	HCA
Outdoor Classrooms	28	TRS
Parent Education & Notifications	29	TRS
Parental Rights	29	Licensing
Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness (TRS Enhancement)	29	TRS
Personal belongings	30	HCA
Physical Activities	30	Both
Pick Up Procedures	30	Licensing
Play-Based Philosophy	30	TRS
Preventing Abuse & Neglect of Children	31	Licensing
Release of Children	31	Licensing
School Readiness	31	TRS
Separation Issues	32	HCA

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
Screen Time Policy	32	Licensing
Security	32	HCA
Special Care Needs	32	Licensing
Special Occasions & Birthday parties	33	HCA
Social-Emotional Learning	33	TRS
Staff Qualifications & Training	33	TRS
Sunscreen	34	Licensing
Suggestions For Quality Improvement	34	TRS
Suspension Policy	34	Licensing
Transportation	34	Licensing
Tuition & Fees	35	HCA
Updating Parent Contact Information	36	Licensing
Vaccine-Preventable Diseases	36	HCA
Water Activities	36	Licensing
Weapons	36	Licensing
Withdrawals	36	HCA
Contact Information	37	Licensing
Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form	38	HCA

Handbook Policy Locator - Alphabetical

This alphabetical locator is designed for parents, staff, licensing staff, and Texas Rising Star assessors who need to find a policy quickly.

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
AI Receptionist & Family Support	15	HCA
Animals	12	Licensing
Arrival	12	Licensing
Assessment & Individualized Learning	13	TRS
Attendance & Absence Policy	13	Licensing
Bags	13	HCA
Biting	14	HCA
Breastfeeding	14	Licensing
Car Seats & Strollers	14	HCA
Child Progress Monitoring & Family Communication	17	TRS
Choking Hazards	14	Licensing
Communications	14	Both
Conferences	15	TRS
Confidentiality Policy	27	HCA
Contact Information	37	Licensing
Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness (TRS Enhancement)	29	TRS
Curriculum & Goals	15	TRS
Developmental Milestones	15	TRS
Dress Code	20	HCA
Drop-Off Procedures	20	Licensing
Emergency Preparedness	20	Licensing
Enrollment & Admission	20	Licensing

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
Ethics & Professional Conduct	16	HCA
Family Engagement	21	TRS
Family Participation	21	Both
Family Resources	22	TRS
Field Trips & Water Safety	22	Licensing
Gang-Free Zone	22	Licensing
Grievance Procedure and Parent Concerns	17	Licensing
Guidance & Discipline Philosophy	18	Licensing
HCA Growing Together in Faith – A Family Partnership Program	21	TRS
Health & Dental Checks	23	Licensing
Hearing & Vision Screening	23	Licensing
Holidays & Hours	23	Licensing
Hygiene	23	HCA
Immunization Requirements	25	Licensing
Incident & Accident Reports	24	Licensing
Inclement Weather Policy	24	HCA
Inclusion & Individual Support Plans	24	Both
Infant Safe Sleep	24	Licensing
Late Pick-Up Policy	23	HCA
Learning Centers	27	TRS
Licensing	25	Licensing
Meals & Nutrition	25	Licensing

Handbook Policy Locator - Alphabetical (continued)

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
Medical Emergencies	25	Licensing
Medications	26	Licensing
Mission Statement	12	HCA
Naptime	28	HCA
Open Door Policy	28	Licensing
Outdoor Classrooms	28	TRS
Outside Toys	28	HCA
Parent Education & Notifications	29	TRS
Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form	38	HCA
Parental Rights	29	Licensing
Personal belongings	30	HCA
Philosophy & Goals	12	HCA
Photo, Video, & Social Media Consent	27	HCA
Physical Activities	30	Both
Pick Up Procedures	30	Licensing
Play-Based Philosophy	30	TRS
Positive Teacher-Child Interactions	17	TRS
Preventing Abuse & Neglect of Children	31	Licensing
Release of Children	31	Licensing

Policy / Section	Pg	Reference
School Readiness	31	TRS
Screen Time Policy	32	Licensing
Security	32	HCA
Separation Issues	32	HCA
Social-Emotional Learning	33	TRS
Special Care Needs	32	Licensing
Special Occasions & Birthday parties	33	HCA
Staff Qualifications & Training	33	TRS
Suggestions For Quality Improvement	34	TRS
Sunscreen	34	Licensing
Suspension Policy	34	Licensing
Transportation	34	Licensing
Tuition & Fees	35	HCA
Updating Parent Contact Information	36	Licensing
Vaccine-Preventable Diseases	36	HCA
Water Activities	36	Licensing
Weapons	36	Licensing
Withdrawals	36	HCA

Licensing & Texas Rising Star Reference Notes

Texas Child Care Regulation: HCA operational policies are organized to address the written policy topics required for licensed child-care centers, including hours, child release, illness, medication, medical emergencies, parent notifications, discipline and guidance, suspension/expulsion, safe sleep, meals, immunizations, hearing/vision screening, enrollment and policy changes, transportation, water activities, field trips, animals, physical activity, sunscreen, parent rights and participation, emergency preparedness, breastfeeding, abuse/neglect prevention, special care needs, and other applicable requirements.

Texas Rising Star: The handbook provides family-facing evidence supporting areas such as family education and involvement, program management, staff qualifications and training, teacher-child interactions, and indoor/outdoor learning environments. Operational evidence maintained outside the handbook should continue to be available for assessment.

Screen time: HCA follows 26 TAC §746.2207. Children under age two do not participate in screen time. For children age two and older, screen time is educational, age-appropriate, limited as required, and does not replace required developmental activities.

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI): HCA provides families information about Texas ECI and can help families locate referral resources for children from birth to 36 months when developmental concerns arise.

Philosophy & Goals

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” – Proverbs 22:6

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe every child deserves to feel **loved, valued, and confident**. Guided by faith, we nurture the whole child—**spiritually, emotionally, socially, and intellectually**—through a balance of learning, love, and positive discipline.

Our classrooms are filled with affirmations such as *“I am smart. I am loved. I am blessed. I am confident. I will succeed.”* These reminders help children build strong self-esteem, resilience, and a joy for learning.

We focus on teaching responsibility, independence, and respect while encouraging each child’s unique talents. With a Christ-centered foundation and evidence-based curriculum, we prepare children for a lifetime of learning, faith, and success.

Mission Statement

Our mission at Heavenly Christian Academy is to create a **faith-filled, nurturing environment** where children feel loved, valued, and inspired to reach their fullest potential. We are committed to developing the ****whole child—spiritually, emotionally, socially, and intellectually—****through hands-on learning, positive affirmations, and character-building experiences.

By partnering with families and trusting in God’s guidance, we prepare each child to grow with **confidence, compassion, and a lifelong love for learning**.

Animals

We love to bring nature into our classrooms! Many science centers feature small live animals such as fish, hamsters, or guinea pigs. Children may help prepare food and water, but for safety, only staff handle the animals. Cages are cleaned by staff, and animals are regularly checked by local veterinarians. Please notify us of any allergies your child may have

Arrival

To ensure a smooth start, please sign your child in at the front desk and walk them to their classroom. Drop-off is required by 9:30 AM (DISD Pre-K by 8:00 AM). If you arrive late, a doctor’s note will be needed. We appreciate your help in keeping our routines consistent for all children.

Revised September 2026

Attendance & Absence Policy

We understand that sometimes children need to be away. Please let us know by 9:00 AM if your child will be absent. Our policy does not allow make-up days or tuition adjustments for absences, vacations, or holidays, as this helps us maintain a consistent learning environment. DISD Pre-K families, please provide a written excuse for any absence.

Assessment & Individualized Learning

Assessment & Individualized Learning

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we recognize that every child develops at their own unique pace. To support each child's growth, we use ongoing observations, daily interactions, and research-based developmental assessment tools to monitor progress and plan meaningful learning experiences. Our program utilizes the **Frog Street Developmental Assessment** to measure children's progress across developmental domains and the **Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ®)** to screen developmental milestones and identify areas where additional support or enrichment may be beneficial.

Assessment is never used to compare children with one another. Instead, it helps our teachers understand each child's individual strengths, interests, and learning needs so they can provide developmentally appropriate instruction and experiences. Assessment results are used to guide lesson planning, individualize activities, and ensure children receive the support they need to thrive.

Families are essential partners in their child's learning journey. We share assessment results, discuss developmental progress during parent conferences, and maintain ongoing communication throughout the year. When appropriate, teachers and families work together to establish individualized learning goals and celebrate each child's accomplishments. Through this collaborative approach, we strive to foster confidence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning while preparing every child for future academic success.

Bags

To keep our classrooms safe and organized, children ages 3 months–5 years should bring daily supplies (like extra clothes or diapers) in disposable bags, not backpacks or diaper bags. School-age children may bring clear backpacks. Thank you for helping us create a tidy, welcoming space!

Revised September 2026

Breastfeeding

We are proud to support breastfeeding families! Mothers are welcome to breastfeed at the center. We offer a cozy rocker chair in the infant room and a private therapy room upon request. Please let us know if you have any special needs—we want you and your child to feel comfortable and supported.

Biting

We know biting can be a normal part of early childhood as children learn to express themselves. Our caring staff will comfort the child who was bitten, gently redirect the child who bit, and encourage positive communication. For privacy, we do not share the names of children involved. If you have concerns, we're here to work with you!

Car Seats & Strollers

Your child's safety is our top priority. For this reason, car seats and strollers should not be left at the center. Please plan for safe transportation each day. If you need assistance, our team is happy to help.

Choking Hazards

To keep everyone safe, we ask that you avoid sending small items such as coins, beads, or removable hair accessories. Thank you for helping us create a secure environment where every child can play and learn safely!

Communications

We believe open communication is key. We connect with families at drop-off and pick-up and share updates through ClassDojo, email, telephone, newsletters, parent boards, and other approved HCA communication systems. Families should keep all contact information current so important notices can reach them promptly.

Revised September 2026

AI Receptionist & Family Support

Heavenly Christian Academy provides an AI Receptionist as an additional front desk service for families. The AI Receptionist can communicate in English and Spanish and may assist with general school questions, enrollment information, school hours and scheduled closures, parent orientation information, commonly asked policy questions, family resources, and directing families to the appropriate staff member.

The AI Receptionist may also assist families with authorized tuition and fee payments through HCA-approved payment methods. Families may always request assistance from a staff member. The AI Receptionist does not replace administrators, teachers, or front desk staff when a matter requires personal review, confidential discussion, or an official decision.

Conferences

We value your partnership and offer quarterly conferences to discuss your child's progress, celebrate successes, and set goals together. DISD Pre-K teachers also hold conferences. If you'd like to meet outside scheduled times, just let us know—we're always happy to connect!

Curriculum & Goals

We're committed to nurturing every aspect of your child's growth. Our curriculum blends Scholastics, Frog Street, and Kids of Integrity, with activities like center time, story time, outdoor play, lessons, field trips, music, games, and art. Each day is designed to inspire creativity, curiosity, and a love of learning in a joyful, faith-filled environment.

Developmental Milestones

We use Frog Street assessments for ages 3 months–35 months and conduct DISD Pre-K assessments quarterly. Results are shared at conferences and help us support your child's unique learning journey.

Revised September 2026

Ethics & Professional Conduct

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe our work with children and families is a sacred trust. Each staff member is expected to model integrity, kindness, and professionalism in every interaction—with children, families, co-workers, and the community.

Our ethical standards are guided by both **Christian values** and **the Texas Early Childhood Professional Code of Ethics**. All staff members agree to uphold the following principles:

- **Respect and Dignity:** Treat every child and family with kindness, patience, and respect, honoring their culture, beliefs, and individuality.
- **Confidentiality:** Protect the privacy of children and families by sharing information only with authorized persons or agencies as required by law.
- **Integrity:** Maintain honesty, fairness, and accountability in all actions and communication
- **Professionalism:** Present a positive image of Heavenly Christian Academy through appearance, language, and behavior at all times.
- **Safety and Supervision:** Ensure the physical and emotional safety of every child through constant supervision, adherence to policies, and appropriate boundaries.
- **Continuous Growth:** Participate in professional development, seek feedback, and strive for excellence in early childhood education practices.
- **Faith and Compassion:** Reflect God's love in daily work by being patient, humble, and understanding toward all children and families.

Violations of ethical or professional standards are taken seriously and may result in retraining, corrective action, or termination. Our goal is to maintain a Christ-centered environment where families feel safe, respected, and supported every day

Revised September 2026

Child Progress Monitoring & Family Communication

Your child's growth is carefully observed and documented throughout the year. Teachers use developmental checklists and assessments to guide instruction and support individual needs. Families receive written progress reports three times per year, along with opportunities for parent-teacher conferences. If you'd like to meet more often, just ask—we're here for you!

Positive Teacher-Child Interactions

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe that every child deserves to feel respected, heard, and supported. Our teachers model kindness, patience, and self-control, using calm voices and gentle guidance. Children are encouraged to make choices, express their feelings with words, and solve problems respectfully. We know that positive interactions build trust and help children develop confidence, independence, and strong social skills.

Grievance Procedure and Parent Concerns

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we value open communication and believe most concerns can be resolved quickly through honest and respectful conversation.

If a parent or guardian has a concern about classroom practices, staff interactions, or center policies, we encourage the following steps:

1. **Discuss the concern directly** with your child's teacher to seek understanding or clarification.
2. If the concern is not resolved, **schedule a meeting with the Director** for further discussion and support.
3. Should the concern remain unresolved, parents may contact Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) Child Care Regulation. Current local office contact information is available through the HHSC Child Care Regulation website. Parents may also contact the Texas Abuse & Neglect Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 when appropriate.

Revised September 2026

We are committed to working together with families to find solutions that support our children's safety, happiness, and well-being.

Guidance & Discipline Philosophy

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe that every child learns best in an environment built on **love, respect, and understanding**. Our goal is not to punish, but to teach — helping children build the self-control, confidence, and social skills they need to thrive.

Our Approach

We use **positive discipline** methods that guide children toward making good choices. These methods are designed to support emotional growth, build self-esteem, and strengthen independence through:

- Individualized guidance and support for each child
- Clear, age-appropriate expectations and routines
- Encouragement, praise, and positive reinforcement
- Gentle redirection and opportunities to make better choices
- Positive reminders and calm conversations about behavior
- Short, supervised calm-down or reflection time (approximately one minute per year of age) — used only when needed to help a child regain self-control

Our Commitment

We never use harsh, cruel, or humiliating forms of discipline. The following are strictly **prohibited**:

- Physical punishment or threats
- Punishment involving food, naps, or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking, or biting

Revised September 2026

- Hitting, spanking, or striking in any form
- Yelling, ridicule, or humiliation
- Harsh or abusive language
- Locking a child in any room or restricting movement
- Requiring silence or stillness for extended periods

Working Together

We value strong communication with families. Parents are asked to review and sign our **“Addressing Challenging Behavior Policy”** to ensure consistency between home and school. Together, we help children learn responsibility, empathy, and respect — one positive choice at a time.

We understand that learning self-control and positive behavior is a journey for every child. Our approach to discipline is rooted in love, respect, and guidance. We use positive reinforcement, gentle redirection, and clear expectations to help children make good choices. If a child needs extra support, they may spend a short time in our classroom’s “safe place” to calm down and reflect, always under caring supervision.

If biting or very aggressive behavior occurs, we will partner with families to find solutions. In rare cases, a child may need to stay home for up to three days to ensure everyone’s safety. For persistent challenges, we follow our “Addressing Challenging Behavior” policy and work closely with families before considering other care arrangements.

We appreciate your support and communication—together, we create a nurturing environment for all

Revised September 2026

Dress Code

We want every child to feel comfortable and ready to play and learn! Children over 12 months should arrive fully dressed—pajamas are for home. For safety, children who can walk must wear sneakers (no open-toed shoes or cowboy boots, please). We do not dress children at the center, so please bring them in clean and dressed for the day.

DISD Pre-K students (ages 3–5) are required to wear a uniform: a red, white, or navy collared top, khaki or navy bottoms, and sneakers. Children not in uniform will be charged a daily fee. If you need help obtaining uniform clothes, please see the Director.

All children ages 0–5 must keep a change of clothes at the center. The center does not provide extra clothes. If your child has an accident and no change of clothes is available, we'll ask you to pick them up.

If you choose jewelry for your child, please remember we are not responsible for lost or broken items, and some jewelry may pose a choking hazard.

Drop-Off Procedures

To ensure a smooth and safe start to each day, please walk your child to their classroom and make sure they are with their teacher before leaving. We ask that you never leave your child unattended. Please help your child wash their hands upon arrival and departure to keep everyone healthy.

Emergency Preparedness

Your child's safety is our highest priority. Our emergency preparedness plan is available in the front office and at the Director's desk. It outlines the types of emergencies we may face and how we respond. Parents are welcome to review the plan at any time. For DISD Pre-K students, we follow the DISD emergency plan for drills and procedures.

Enrollment & Admission

We welcome all children and families, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability. Each child is admitted on a two-week trial basis to ensure the program is a good fit for everyone. All children must be current on immunizations and have a health statement on file.

Revised September 2026

Enrollment forms must be completed before your child's first day.

Family Participation

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe children thrive when families are active participants in their educational journey. We encourage parents and family members to become involved in classroom activities, special events, celebrations, literacy activities, volunteer opportunities, family nights, and our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Families are also invited to share their talents, careers, cultures, traditions, and experiences to enrich children's learning. We recognize that every family's schedule is different, and we offer a variety of opportunities for participation throughout the year so every family can be involved in meaningful ways.

Family Engagement

Family engagement is an ongoing partnership built on trust, communication, and shared responsibility for each child's success. Our teachers maintain regular communication with families through daily reports, conferences, newsletters, classroom updates, phone calls, emails, and our parent communication platform. Families are encouraged to share information about their child's interests, strengths, routines, and developmental goals so we can provide individualized support. We value family input when making decisions that affect children's learning and continuously seek feedback to strengthen our program and foster positive relationships between home and school.

HCA Growing Together in Faith – A Family Partnership Program

Heavenly Christian Academy believes children thrive when families and educators work together. HCA Growing Together in Faith – A Family Partnership Program is our ongoing family engagement program designed to strengthen the partnership between home and school while supporting each child's development, learning, well-being, and spiritual growth.

Through this program, families may participate in parent education opportunities, family activities, financial and tax education workshops, school-readiness activities, community resources and referrals, conferences, classroom communication, and other opportunities that encourage families to be actively involved in their child's education.

HCA shares information and opportunities through ClassDojo, email, parent meetings, workshops, family events, printed materials, and other approved communication methods. Families are encouraged to share ideas, needs, and feedback so HCA can continue strengthening its services and family partnerships.

Revised September 2026

Family Resources

Heavenly Christian Academy is committed to supporting the whole family by connecting parents with educational and community resources. Families may receive information on child development, positive guidance, health and wellness, nutrition, school readiness, developmental screenings, community services, parenting workshops, and other supports. For children from birth to 36 months when there is a developmental concern, families may contact Texas Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), a statewide Texas Health and Human Services program. Families may learn about ECI, eligibility, and how to find a local ECI program at hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services. HCA can help families locate the appropriate ECI information or referral resources upon request.

Field Trips & Water Safety

Field trips provide exciting opportunities for children to extend their learning through hands-on experiences and community exploration. Parents or guardians must sign a permission slip before their child may participate in each field trip, and children are required to wear their Heavenly Christian Academy (HCA) T-shirt for easy identification and safety. Parents are encouraged to join us on field trips whenever possible to share in their child's learning experience.

The safety of our children is our highest priority during all off-campus activities. Children are actively supervised at all times using appropriate staff-to-child ratios, regular attendance checks, and established safety procedures. For field trips or activities involving or occurring near water, Heavenly Christian Academy follows enhanced water safety practices, including maintaining constant active supervision, keeping children within sight and reach when appropriate, and following all applicable state licensing and safety requirements. Children will never participate in swimming or other water activities without prior written parent permission, appropriate supervision, and required safety precautions.

Gang-Free Zone

For the safety of all, our center and the area within 1,000 feet are designated as a gang-free zone under Texas law. This helps ensure a secure environment for every child.

Revised September 2026

Hearing & Vision Screening

Children age four and older, or who turn four by September 1, will be screened for vision and hearing before the first semester. Screenings are done on site by a certified screener, unless you provide proof of screening results.

Health & Dental Checks

If your child is ill (fever, diarrhea, vomiting, runny nose, skin sores, or other signs of illness), we will contact you and provide a resting cot until you arrive. Please keep your child at home until symptoms have passed and they are no longer contagious. Your cooperation helps keep everyone healthy!

The state requires parents to inform us of any communicable diseases.

Holidays & Hours

We are open year-round, Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. We close for major holidays, including New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (and the day after), Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

Late Pick-Up Policy

We understand that delays can happen. The center closes at 6:00 PM, with a five-minute grace period. After 6:05 PM, a late fee of \$1 per minute per child applies. After 6:45 PM, Child Protective Services will be contacted. Please pay late fees the next day to continue enrollment.

Hygiene

We believe that healthy habits start at home and are essential for your child's well-being and confidence. While we do not brush teeth at the center, we strongly encourage families to help children brush their teeth every morning and evening at home. Good oral hygiene helps prevent cavities and keeps little smiles bright!

We also encourage daily bathing. Bathing every day helps children feel fresh, comfortable, and ready to learn and play. It's a wonderful opportunity to teach self-care skills and reinforce the

Revised September 2026

importance of cleanliness. Clean hands, faces, and bodies help prevent the spread of germs and keep everyone at school healthy.

Thank you for supporting your child in building healthy routines that will last a lifetime!

Incident & Accident Reports

Your child's safety is our top priority. If your child is ever involved in an incident or accident at the center, our staff will complete a clear, detailed report. You'll be asked to review and sign the report at pick-up, and you'll receive a copy for your records. The original stays in your child's file. We're always available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Inclement Weather Policy

The safety of our families and staff comes first. In the event of bad weather, Heavenly Christian Academy follows the Dallas ISD schedule. If DISD is closed, we are closed. If DISD opens late, we open late as well. We'll notify you promptly through ClassDojo, ProCare app, email, or local news outlets.

Inclusion & Individual Support Plans

Heavenly Christian Academy welcomes children of all abilities. We partner with families and healthcare professionals to create **individual care or learning plans** when needed. Our teachers are trained to adapt classroom routines, activities, and guidance methods to meet each child's developmental, emotional, or physical needs.

Every child is valued, respected, and included in our daily activities, ensuring that all children experience belonging and success.

Infant Safe Sleep

We are committed to safe sleep practices for all infants. Babies are placed on their backs to sleep in a crib free of blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals. Sleep sacks are permitted, but pacifiers must not have attachments. Cribs are checked regularly for safety, and staff visually monitor sleeping infants every 15 minutes. Our team receives annual training on safe sleep to ensure your child's well-being.

Revised September 2026

Immunization Requirements

To keep our center healthy, all children must be up-to-date on immunizations. Please provide a copy of your child's immunization record at enrollment and update us as needed. If your family has a state-approved exemption, please submit documentation according to Texas requirements.

Licensing

Heavenly Christian Academy is fully licensed by the State of Texas. You are welcome to view our licensing standards and our most recent inspection report, which is always posted on the parent board in the hallway. We're proud to meet and exceed state requirements for quality and safety!

Meals & Nutrition

We believe that good nutrition fuels healthy bodies and minds! We provide balanced meals and snacks for children ages 0–5, including breakfast (7:45–9:00 AM), lunch (11:00 AM–12:00 PM), and an afternoon snack (2:30–3:45 PM). School-age children riding the bus receive breakfast from 6:15–7:00 AM.

If your child arrives after breakfast or lunch, please feed them before coming to the center. Outside food is not allowed, except store-bought or packaged treats for special occasions. If your child has special dietary needs, please provide a doctor's note so we can accommodate them.

Thank you for helping us create a healthy, happy environment for all our children!

Medical Emergencies

Your child's safety is always our first concern. In the event of a medical emergency, our staff will:
Provide first aid as needed.

Call 911 if necessary. Contact you immediately.

If you cannot be reached, we will call your emergency contact.

If needed, a staff member will accompany your child to the hospital until you arrive. We are committed to keeping you informed and your child safe at all times.

Revised September 2026

Medications

If your child needs medication during the day, please bring it in the original container labeled with your child's name, the physician's name, and clear instructions. All medications must be signed in at the front desk, and parents must complete an Authorization for Medication form. Over-the-counter medications require a doctor's note. Medications are stored safely out of children's reach. For children with allergies, asthma, or other medical needs, parents must provide a **written health or allergy action plan** from the child's healthcare provider.

These plans:

- Are reviewed with staff at enrollment and updated annually.
- Are posted discreetly in the classroom and kitchen for staff awareness.
- Include clear instructions for prevention, medication, and emergency response.

We work closely with families to ensure all staff understand and follow each child's health plan for safety and peace of mind

Confidentiality Policy

All information shared with Heavenly Christian Academy—such as enrollment forms, medical records, or family details—is kept **strictly confidential**.

Child and family records are only shared with:

- The child's parent or legal guardian,
- Authorized staff members directly involved in the child's care, or
- Licensing or emergency officials as required by law.

We respect your family's privacy and handle all records with care, professionalism, and integrity.

Photo, Video, & Social Media Consent

Heavenly Christian Academy loves to celebrate our students' achievements! We occasionally share photos or short videos on our **ClassDojo, Facebook, or Instagram** pages to highlight learning activities, events, and school spirit.

Parents will be asked to complete a **Photo & Media Release Form** upon enrollment. No images or videos of your child will be shared publicly without your written consent.

We use social media responsibly to reflect the positive, faith-based values of our school and to keep families connected and informed.

Learning Centers

At Heavenly Christian Academy, our classrooms are thoughtfully designed to encourage exploration, creativity, and hands-on learning through a variety of engaging learning centers. Each classroom features **at least seven clearly defined learning centers** that provide children with opportunities to make choices, develop independence, and build skills through purposeful play. Learning centers are intentionally arranged to promote active learning while supporting children's social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development.

Learning centers may include areas such as Literacy, Math, Science and Discovery, Dramatic Play, Blocks and Construction, Art and Creativity, Writing, Sensory, Music and Movement, Fine Motor, and

Revised September 2026

Library, with centers varying based on the age and developmental needs of the children. Teachers rotate materials regularly to maintain children's interest, reinforce current curriculum themes, and provide developmentally appropriate challenges. Through exploration in these centers, children strengthen problem-solving skills, creativity, communication, collaboration, and confidence while engaging in meaningful, play-based learning experiences that support school readiness and lifelong success.

Naptime

Rest is an important part of your child's day! Each child has a mat or crib for naptime. Please send a small blanket labeled with your child's name. Bedding is sent home on Fridays to be washed and returned on Mondays. Children are encouraged to rest quietly but are never forced to sleep.

Open Door Policy

We value your partnership and want you to feel welcome at any time. Parents are invited to visit the center during operating hours to observe their child. We kindly ask that you help us keep classroom routines undisturbed by limiting the length and frequency of visits.

Outside Toys

To keep our classrooms safe and clutter-free, we ask that children do not bring toys from home. The center provides a wide variety of age-appropriate toys and learning materials for everyone to enjoy.

Outdoor Classrooms

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe learning extends beyond the walls of the classroom. Our outdoor classrooms are intentionally designed as learning environments where children can explore, discover, and develop through active, hands-on experiences. Outdoor learning provides opportunities to strengthen physical development, encourage curiosity, build social skills, and foster an appreciation for nature while reinforcing concepts taught in the classroom.

Teachers incorporate purposeful learning activities into outdoor time, including science exploration, gross motor development, literacy, math, music and movement, sensory experiences, and

Revised September 2026

cooperative play. Children have opportunities to observe nature, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in meaningful exploration while developing confidence and independence. Outdoor classrooms are planned to be safe, engaging, and developmentally appropriate for each age group, and children are actively supervised at all times. By providing daily opportunities for outdoor learning, we support the healthy development of the whole child while making learning fun, active, and memorable.

Parent Education & Notifications

Heavenly Christian Academy is committed to partnering with families through ongoing education and timely communication. Parent education opportunities may include child development, positive guidance, school readiness, health and nutrition, family resources, parenting classes, financial literacy, and tax education workshops. HCA also partners with Dallas ISD and community organizations to connect families with additional educational and support resources. Notices may be provided through ClassDojo, email, telephone, the front desk, parent boards, printed notices, or other approved HCA communication systems.

Parental Rights

Parents and legal guardians play a vital role in their child's education and care. In accordance with Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Regulation requirements, parents have the right to enter and visit the child care center during hours of operation without prior notice, observe their child at any time while in care, review a copy of the minimum standards governing child care centers, review the center's most recent licensing inspection reports and any corrective action plans, and review their child's records in accordance with applicable laws. Parents also have the right to receive information regarding the center's operational policies, curriculum, guidance and discipline practices, health and safety procedures, and emergency preparedness plans. Families are encouraged to communicate openly with staff and administration regarding questions, concerns, or suggestions. If concerns cannot be resolved with the center, parents have the right to contact HHSC Child Care Regulation to report concerns or file a complaint regarding the operation of the child care center.

Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness (TRS Enhancement)

We celebrate and respect the diverse cultures, languages, and traditions of our families. Our classrooms include books, songs, and learning materials that reflect a variety of backgrounds. Teachers encourage children to share their home traditions and languages, fostering pride and

Revised September 2026

belonging. Our bilingual classrooms support children's home language while building English proficiency, making every child feel valued and connected.

Personal belongings

Please label all personal items with your child's name. Each child has a cubby for storage. While we do our best to keep items safe, the center is not responsible for lost or damaged belongings.

Physical Activities

Children enjoy indoor and outdoor physical activities every day, including running, jumping, climbing, dancing, and organized games. Outdoor play is scheduled twice daily, weather permitting. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather so they can enjoy every opportunity to move and play!

Pick Up Procedures

For your child's safety, only individuals authorized in writing by the parent may pick up your child. Photo identification is required. If someone not listed on your enrollment form will pick up your child, please notify us in writing. We do not release children to anyone under the age of 18.

Play-Based Philosophy

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe that children learn best through meaningful, hands-on play. Play is the foundation of early childhood education and provides children with opportunities to explore, create, discover, solve problems, and build relationships in a joyful and engaging environment. Our play-based approach encourages children to become active participants in their own learning while developing confidence, curiosity, independence, and a lifelong love of learning. Teachers intentionally design learning experiences that combine purposeful play with high-quality instruction aligned with the **Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines**, the **Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines**, and our **Frog Street Curriculum**. Through thoughtfully planned learning centers, small-group instruction, outdoor exploration, dramatic play, art, music, sensory experiences, and guided investigations, children develop language, literacy,

Revised September 2026

math, science, social-emotional, physical, and cognitive skills in ways that are meaningful and developmentally appropriate.

Rather than focusing solely on worksheets or rote memorization, our teachers facilitate learning by asking questions, encouraging exploration, extending children's thinking, and supporting each child's individual interests and developmental needs. By balancing child-led exploration with intentional teacher guidance, we create a nurturing environment where children are encouraged to think critically, collaborate with others, solve problems, and develop the skills necessary for success in school and in life.

Preventing Abuse & Neglect of Children

All staff are trained annually to recognize and prevent child abuse and neglect. We are required by law to report any suspicions to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. If you have concerns, you may call the Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

Release of Children

Children are released only to parents or authorized individuals. Please provide written notice of any changes to your authorized pick-up list.

School Readiness

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we are committed to preparing every child for a successful transition to kindergarten and beyond. School readiness is more than learning letters and numbers—it is the development of the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and confidence children need to succeed in school and in life. Through our research-based **Frog Street Curriculum**, intentional teaching practices, and developmentally appropriate learning experiences, we support each child's growth across all areas of development.

Our program promotes school readiness by building early literacy, language, mathematics, science, social studies, social-emotional development, physical development, creativity, problem-solving, and executive functioning skills. Children participate in hands-on learning experiences, small-group instruction, purposeful play, and individualized activities that encourage curiosity, independence, self-regulation, and a love of learning. Ongoing developmental assessments, including the **Frog**

Revised September 2026

Street Developmental Assessment and **Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ®)**, help teachers monitor progress, individualize instruction, and support each child's unique learning journey.

Families are essential partners in preparing children for future success. We maintain open communication with parents, share developmental progress, and provide resources and strategies that families can use at home to reinforce learning. By working together, we help children develop the confidence, skills, and positive attitudes needed to enter kindergarten ready to learn, grow, and thrive.

Separation Issues

We understand that saying goodbye can be hard for some children. Our caring staff will support your child with compassion and patience during transitions. We encourage parents to reassure children and say goodbye before leaving, helping them build trust and confidence.

Screen Time Policy

HCA follows Texas Child Care Regulation requirements for screen time. Children under two years of age do not participate in screen time activities. For children age two and older, screen time may supplement but may not replace required developmental activities; it must be age-appropriate, connected to planned educational goals, and limited to no more than one hour per day. Screen time is not used during meals, snacks, naps, or rest time; content may not include advertising or violence; and screens are turned off when not in use. School-age children may use screens without the one-hour restriction when completing homework. HCA emphasizes active, hands-on learning and may choose to use less screen time than the maximum permitted by licensing.

Security

The center is equipped with security cameras in classrooms and common areas. The front door remains locked during operating hours, and parents and authorized individuals must use the designated entry system. Your child's safety is always our priority.

Special Care Needs

Revised September 2026

Children with special care needs are warmly welcomed. We work with parents and healthcare providers to develop individual care plans. Staff receive training as needed to ensure every child's needs are met.

Special Occasions & Birthday parties

We love to celebrate! Parents may bring store-bought treats for birthdays or special occasions—please coordinate with your child's teacher in advance. Home-prepared foods are not allowed.

Social-Emotional Learning

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we believe social-emotional development is the foundation for lifelong learning and healthy relationships. We intentionally create nurturing, responsive classroom environments where children feel safe, valued, and respected. Through positive interactions with caring teachers and peers, children learn to identify and express their emotions, build self-confidence, develop empathy, solve problems, make responsible choices, and establish meaningful relationships with others.

Staff Qualifications & Training

Heavenly Christian Academy is committed to employing qualified, caring, and professional educators who are dedicated to providing high-quality early childhood education. All staff members meet or exceed the qualifications required by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Regulation, including required background checks, orientation, ongoing professional development, and all health and safety training mandated by state licensing.

As a Texas Rising Star (TRS) participating program, our teachers and administrators engage in continuous professional development that goes beyond minimum licensing requirements. Staff receive ongoing training in child development, developmentally appropriate practices, responsive teacher-child interactions, curriculum implementation, classroom management, social-emotional learning, inclusion, cultural responsiveness, observation and assessment, family engagement, health and safety, and other evidence-based instructional practices that support high-quality learning environments. Teachers also participate in coaching, classroom observations, collaborative planning, and professional learning opportunities designed to continuously improve teaching practices and promote positive outcomes for every child. Our commitment to lifelong learning

Revised September 2026

ensures that children receive exceptional care and education from knowledgeable, well-prepared professionals.

Sunscreen

To protect your child during outdoor play, please provide sunscreen labeled with your child's name. Sunscreen must be in the original container and not expired. Staff will apply sunscreen to children under age 5 with your permission; children ages 6 and older may apply it themselves under supervision.

Suggestions For Quality Improvement

At Heavenly Christian Academy, we are committed to continuously improving the quality of care and education we provide for children and families. We value the thoughts, ideas, and feedback of our families and believe that partnering with parents helps us create the best possible learning environment. Parents are encouraged to share suggestions, compliments, and concerns at any time with classroom teachers or the administration.

To support ongoing program improvement, Heavenly Christian Academy regularly collects family feedback through **NECPA Family Surveys**, parent satisfaction surveys, and our **Parent Suggestion Box**, located in the front lobby. Feedback is carefully reviewed by administration and used to evaluate program effectiveness, strengthen family partnerships, enhance teaching practices, improve policies and procedures, and guide future planning. We appreciate every family's input and are dedicated to fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement that supports the success, safety, and well-being of every child.

Suspension Policy

Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing environment for everyone. In rare cases of aggressive behavior, repeated biting, or other serious issues that threaten safety, a child may be suspended for 1–3 days, depending on the situation. Parents will receive written notice with the reason for suspension. We will work closely with you to support your child's positive development.

Transportation

We offer transportation to and from local schools for school-age children. For everyone's safety, children must follow all safety rules and wear seat belts at all times while riding in our van or bus. If your child will not be riding the bus on a scheduled day, please let us know.

Revised September 2026

Tuition & Fees

We strive to make tuition and fees clear and manageable for families.

Registration Fee: \$50 per child / \$85 for two children / \$100 for three or more (annual, non-refundable)

Supply Fee: \$25 (ages 2 months–4 years) / \$15 (ages 5–12), charged quarterly Tuition: Due weekly in advance. A \$20 late fee applies after Tuesday. Parents are responsible for keeping tuition current, even if a child is absent. Five volunteer hours per year waives the registration fee.

Revised September 2026

Updating Parent Contact Information

Parents and guardians are responsible for keeping their family and child information current with HCA. Please notify the front desk whenever there is a change to a parent or guardian name, home address, telephone number, email address, emergency contacts, authorized pickup persons, child's physician, allergies, medications, special health instructions, custody or court documentation, or other information that may affect the child's care or safety. Updates may be submitted through ClassDojo, by email at heavenlychristianacademy@yahoo.com, or by contacting the front desk at 972-681-7545. HCA may require written documentation before changes involving health, safety, custody, or authorized pickup become effective.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

All staff are encouraged to receive recommended vaccinations, including influenza, pertussis, and measles, to help protect our school community.

Water Activities

During summer months, children may participate in water activities with written parent permission. All water activities are closely supervised to ensure safety.

Weapons

Weapons are strictly prohibited on school property. Anyone found with a weapon will be asked to leave immediately, and law enforcement may be contacted to ensure the safety of our community.

Withdrawals

If you plan to withdraw your child, please provide at least two weeks' written notice. Tuition is due for the two-week notice period, whether or not your child attends. This helps us plan for staffing and enrollment needs.

Contact Information

Heavenly Christian Academy

11421 Shiloh Road, Dallas, Texas 75228

Phone: 972-681-7545

Email: heavenlychristianacademy@yahoo.com

Website: www.heavenlychristianacademy.org

Hours: Monday-Friday, 6:00 AM-6:00 PM

Parent Communication: ClassDojo, email, telephone, AI Receptionist, and the HCA front desk

Texas Health and Human Services - Child Care Regulation:

hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care

Texas Child Care Search: childcare.hhs.texas.gov

Texas Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Parents may ask HCA for the current local Child Care Regulation office contact information or use the HHSC website to locate the appropriate office.

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Heavenly Christian Academy

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the policies outlined in the *Heavenly Christian Academy Parent Handbook 2026*. I agree to follow all guidelines and procedures while my child is enrolled at the center.

I understand that this handbook may be updated as needed to reflect changes in licensing regulations or school policies, and that I will be notified of any updates.

Child's Name: _____ **Parent/Guardian Name:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____