

Albuquerque Christian School



Early Education Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Mission Statement

Equipping students to be Jesus in their world

Vision Statement

ACS is a Christ-centered, diverse educational community where students and staff grow spiritually and academically in Christ's love to become leaders of tomorrow.

Albuquerque Christian School Early Ed is an early childhood ministry serving families of children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. We are located at 4931 Mcleod RD NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. Our operating hours are Monday through Friday 7:15AM to 5:30 PM. ACS Preschool is a 5-Star facility and is licensed by the State of New Mexico with licensing information posted in the childcare area.

**Albuquerque Christian School
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Message from the Principal

Having been a product of Christian education and choosing to place my 4 boys in Christian education, I know the value that Christian environment brings to children and families both. More than just a place where your child will be safe, ACS is a place where students can thrive in all aspects of life. We build a community within the class and school both.

Tami Perez
Principal

This handbook has been prepared as a source of reference, and as a guideline regarding expectations for the students and parents of Albuquerque Christian Preschool and Childcare. The enrollment of your child is an automatic agreement on your part to join hands with other parents, teachers, and the administration to help provide the best possible program to the students enrolled at ACS.

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ACS: Who We Are

Welcome

Children are precious gifts. Choosing where parents want them to grow academically and spiritually is a decision not to be taken lightly. Albuquerque Christian School, with a commitment to educate the children at the school, wants to build a partnership with parents to foster a community mindset focused on Jesus. We offer a safe campus environment, with loving and qualified teachers, where students learn core academic skills but also have the opportunity to build Fruits of the Spirit characteristics as they navigate school life with others. With a Biblical worldview across all subjects, teachers and staff both promote Christian values. Our desire is that when students leave the doors of the school, they are equipped to navigate the world around them using Biblical principles in life decisions and emerge as leaders with strong ethics to guide others.

Educational Philosophy

ACS is fully committed to the education of the children at our school. We want to partner with parents to contribute to the growth of our children both spiritually and academically. We will teach Biblical truth to every student and teach the Pledge of Allegiance, sing patriotic and praise songs. The Bible is used as a resource for life. All faculty and staff members are fully committed to the healthy development of each child. We will promote Christian values based on the Bible in all academic and extracurricular activities. We will not promote the specific doctrine of a particular denomination of Christianity and will refer students' questions concerning debatable topics to their parents. Our goal is to let the Lord work through us to create a Spirit-filled, loving, and safe Christian environment where children can grow spiritually and academically in Christ's love.

Statement of Faith

- We believe the Bible to be the only inspired, infallible, authoritative, unerring Word of God.
- We believe there is one God, eternally, existent in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, His personal return in power and glory.
- We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith are we saved. This belief includes the essential role of baptism for the remission of sins.
- We believe people were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation.
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling and teaching through the Word of God, the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. We believe that marriage is meant to be between a man and a woman and that any other sexual union is a sin.
- We believe that God created two genders, male and female. (Genesis 1:27; 2:24)

Programs Currently Available

Preschool (3s and 4s–August to May)

This program serves students who are well potty trained and ready to begin to learn through instruction from teachers, exploration in their environment, and from forming relationships with fellow students. Students born before September 1, 2021 may be eligible to enroll in PreK3. Students born before September 1, 2020 may be eligible for our PreK4 classroom. Parents may choose to enroll their child in a full day or part day program. Preschool follows a traditional school calendar, August to May, with summers off. 8am-2pm Full Day, 8am-12pm Part Day.

After care is also available for preschool students through our Preschool Ram Club program. Students are welcome to stay until 5:30pm under the supervision of trained staff. Families will be charged \$9/hr when students are signed in.

Lamb Club (Infant and Toddlers–Year Round)

For our littlest of friends, babies as young as 12 weeks old and up through 36 months may enroll in our Infant and Toddler program. This is a full day program with care available from 7:15am-5:30pm. Lamb Club is a full year program with care available year round with some days and weeks where care is not available due to local and national holidays and normal school breaks.

Registration & Admission

Non-Discrimination Policy

ACS admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school, provided they meet the entrance requirements. It does not discriminate based on race, color, handicap, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, athletics, or any other school-administered programs. ACS maintains the right to refuse admission to any student if it is believed that the student will not benefit from the program offered at ACS.

Eligibility for Admission

At ACS, the principle criterion for the admission of a student is his/her willingness to accept and strive to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. This means he/she will do his/her very best to get along with fellow students. Each student will obey and respect his/her teachers. All students will strive to achieve their God-given potential in the service of Jesus. *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another,” (John 13:34).*

For admission into our childcare program, a student must follow the guidelines above. Teachers and administrators will determine if the program offered at ACS can effectively serve the student. ACS reserves the right to refuse admission to (or discontinue enrollment of) a student who cannot be adequately served by the program offered at ACS. In addition, enrollment will be discontinued if it is determined that the student is a detriment to other students.

PreK3 and PreK4: All children must be **fully potty trained** and able to use the restroom without assistance. **Fully potty trained includes being able to communicate bathroom needs to teachers, the ability to pull down pants/underwear to use the restroom by themselves, wipe if necessary, and tell teachers if an accident has been had.**

Financial Considerations

The funds necessary for the daily operation of ACS come directly from the fees and tuition paid by the families of those students enrolled in the school as well as a capital fund. We believe it is our duty as a Christian school to meet our financial obligations in a responsible manner, and this is accomplished with the money brought in through school fees, tuition, and donations. Families that have an established ECECD contract may have their fees waived but need to let the admissions coordinator or Director know.

Application Fees

Each new family goes through an evaluation process to make sure that the student is academically, socially, and emotionally ready for our program. **The application fee (\$100) is non-refundable.**

Registration Fees

Registration fees are assessed before open registration each year. Registration fees must be received in order to hold a place on the class list. First time enrollment/registration is \$300 per student and \$250 for every additional student. **Registration fees are non-refundable.**

Tuition Fees

ACS families with preschool children can pay yearly tuition up front for a 5% discount or opt for a 10 or 11 month payment plan through FACTS. Families choosing a monthly payment must have the first month's tuition paid before the student will be allowed to start school.

Current tuition costs are listed below:

Infant (6 weeks to 18 months) - available year round w/ school holidays	\$1250/mo
Toddler (18 months to 36 months) - available year round w/ school holidays	\$1100/mo
Pre-K 3 (3 Day, MWF - Part Day - 8am-12pm)	\$3900/sch. yr
Pre-K 3 (3 Day, MWF - Full Day - 8am-2pm)	\$5300/sch. yr
Pre-K 3 (5 Day - Part Day - 8am-12pm)	\$6200/sch. yr
Pre-K 3 (5 Day - Full Day - 8am-2pm)	\$8000/sch. yr
Pre-K 4 (5 Day - Part Day - 8am-12pm)	\$6200/sch. yr
Pre-K 4 (5 Day - Full Day - 8am-2pm)	\$8000/sch. yr

Families with ECECD Contracts

Families with a current ECECD contract with ACS listed as the center will have tuition and fees paid to ACS directly from the State of New Mexico. Families will not receive a tuition contract or invoice on a regular basis. ECECD does not cover incidentals like lunches, class pictures, parent background checks, or t-shirts. Parents can pay those through FACTS incidental charges.

FACTS Contracts

All tuition and/or childcare accounts not paid in full by August 1st will be handled using the FACTS (Fast Automatic Cash Transfer System) Tuition Management Company. Parents will be responsible for setting up an account for direct withdrawal from either a checking or savings account. The withdrawal can be set up for either the 5th or the 20th of the month. A yearly FACTS enrollment fee of \$55 per family will be assessed. Families with established ECECD contracts can request to have the \$55 fee waived—See Business Manager for additional information.

Penalties and Late Fees

- In the event that an attempted FACTS withdrawal returns as insufficient, FACTS will automatically assess a \$30 missed payment fee through the established bank account. The missed tuition payment will then be re-attempted by FACTS in 15 days.
- The Business Office will assess a \$30 fee for checks written to ACS or PTFC and returned as insufficient.
- Students will not be enrolled in the next grade or program level if money is owed from the prior school year.
- Additional fees may occur on delinquent accounts

Early Withdrawals

When a preschool family finds that a new school might be best for their student, a written request needs to be turned into the school. If a student leaves during the course of the school year and the tuition has been paid in full, the tuition will be refunded on a prorated basis. The entire month's tuition is charged for any month in which the student has attended one or more days. Tuition will be completely refunded if the Business Office receives notice to withdraw the student's enrollment before the actual start of the school year. **There will be no refund for application or registration fee.**

When a parent wants to disenroll his/her child from the Lamb Club program, the parent must put the request in writing (email is allowed) giving at least 14 days notice. Parents who do not give 14 days notice will be billed for the full 14 day period. **There will be no refund for entrance evaluation/application or registration fee.**

Other Expenses

Extended care (from 2pm to 5:30pm) is available for preschool students who need additional care through our after school Ram Club program. Care is offered at \$9 per hour and broken into 15 minute increments.

Calendar Considerations

Parents are responsible for finding alternative care when the school is closed due to local or national holidays or school breaks. Please refer to the 2024-2025 ASC School Calendar for all the dates.

Policies and Procedures

Field Trips (Preschool Programs Only)

Off-site field trips may be offered when the trip will enhance the learning environment and meet the objectives of the educational goals of the classroom. There must be enough parent drivers available. The following guidelines must be followed for off-site field trips:

- A permission slip must be completed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher.
- Siblings will not be allowed on field trips.
- All vehicle safety procedures given to drivers must be followed.
- Proof of insurance of any drivers must be presented at the front desk prior to the field trip (2 days before the trip).
- Students and parents are expected to abide by all ACS standards of conduct and dress code while on field trips.
- All chaperones must have a background check and receive approval 2 days before a scheduled field trip.
- PreK3 parents must transport their child and be present during the trip.
- School day field trips replace classroom instruction. There is no teacher in the classroom and students not attending will need to stay home on these days.

Field Trips Transportation (Preschool Program Only)

The following will be adhered to by all ACS employees/volunteers while transporting children as New Mexico state law requires that all children under age 18 be properly restrained in a car seat, booster seat or seat belt. The New Mexico law further specifies that properly restrained means: **Children ages 6 and under, and children who weigh less than 60 pounds regardless of age, must be properly secured in a federally approved car seat or booster seat.**

New Mexico law also states that when children are wearing a seatbelt, properly restrained means that the lap belt sits low across the hips, not on the abdomen, and that the shoulder portion of the seat belt crosses the chest, not the head or neck. When wearing a seat belt, New Mexico state law says properly secured children are able to sit all the way back against the vehicle seat with their knees bent over the seat edge.

All PreK3 students need to have a parent accompany them. PreK4 students may be transported by school staff when appropriate child seats are available and used.

Absences

During the school year, if your child is sick or not attending school for any reason, please call the front desk or communicate directly through email or Bloomz with the teacher. If you know ahead of time that your child or children will not be in attendance in childcare, please let us know, especially if it is more than a day or two.

Medication

ACS does not have a school nurse but does assist parents by giving medication (prescription or over-the-counter) to students when medically necessary. We encourage parents to give morning medications at home whenever possible. ACS follows the New Mexico School Health Manual Standards:

- Parents will submit written authorization from the provider for the medication to be given during the instructional day
- The written authorization must match the label on the medication (student's name and medication and dosing instructions)
- The medication is in the properly labeled pharmacy container or OTC container
- The medication will be stored in a locked drawer in the back office
- School staff will administer the medication and note the dosing for parent's review
- For life-threatening emergency situations (anaphylaxis, severe asthma, diabetic reaction), school staff may administer oral, inhaled, or injectable medication as long as a student has the following:
 - A provider's written authorization for emergency medication on file for the current school year
 - The staff member has been trained to administer the medication
 - Emergency medication is stored in an unlocked drawer for quick access if needed

Parents may come to the school to administer medication to their student, if proper medication documentation is not available.

Injuries

A designated ACS employee will attend to any child's minor injuries administering first aid as needed. Parents will be notified immediately in the event of a head injury or any other injury of greater concern.

Notifiable Diseases

No facility shall admit or allow the continued attendance of children who are ill or who are known or suspected of having any notifiable disease. An assessment of the child's condition will be made (i.e., temperature taken, symptoms noted, etc.) and if it is determined that the child is ill, the parent will be notified. If unavailable, the emergency numbers will be called until a designated adult can be located to come for the child. Until this adult arrives, the child will remain in isolation under the care of an adult. A list of notifiable diseases will be posted in the childcare area at all times. A child diagnosed as having a notifiable disease will be reported to the Epidemiology & Response Division at 505-827-0006. If there is no response, call 866-885-6485.

Illnesses

We want your children at school, but when they are sick and not feeling well, we need them to stay home and get better. We are not equipped with a nurses station or sick bed and cannot watch them when they are under the weather.

- Please keep your child home when he/she is exhibiting any of the following symptoms: diarrhea, vomiting, impetigo, persistent cough, thick yellow/greenish nasal discharge, drainage or discharge from eyes, fever at or above 100.4, or infectious rash.
- Your child may return to school with doctor's approval 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and/or 24 hours after a fever has returned to normal for 24 hours with no medication for fever.
- Children who become ill during the day will be separated from the other children and a parent or guardian will be notified to pick up their child.

- ACS will not admit or allow the continued attendance of children who are ill or who are known to have (or suspected of having) any notifiable disease (see 7.4.3.13 NEW MEXICO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE for specific list of diseases).
- ACS follows the COVID protocols in place as applicable by law.
- If your child becomes sick at school and families are notified, we ask that parents make this a priority and make arrangements for students to be picked up within 45 minutes. ACS does not have a sick bed and all students and staff's health are important.
- No discount is provided for missed days of care.

COVID Protocols

For anyone who tests positive for COVID regardless of vaccination status:

- Stay home and isolate for 5 days. Day 0 is the day of symptom onset, or the day the positive test was taken (for asymptomatic persons).
- If symptoms have resolved isolation is no longer recommended from days 6-10 but a mask should be worn, Alternatively, two negative COVID tests 48 hours apart can eliminate the masking requirement.
- You DO NOT need to get an additional PCR test if you have had a positive at-home rapid test. Any positive test is considered positive.
- Children under two are the exception to masking guidance and should not mask.
- If you have a fever, or other persistent symptoms, continue to stay home in isolation until your fever is gone for 24 hours and other symptoms are resolving.
- To prevent the spread of COVID, tell anyone you have recently had close contact with and encourage them to get tested, monitor for symptoms, and reduce exposure to other people.

For anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 regardless of your vaccination status:

- Get either an at-home rapid test or PCR test if possible and stay at home until you know your test result.
- If you test positive, follow the guidelines for a positive test result.
- If you test negative on a rapid test but still have symptoms, continue to stay at home and get a PCR test OR a second at-home rapid test in 1-2 days.
- If you test positive on the PCR or second at-home rapid test, follow guidelines for a COVID-positive test.

Emergency Procedures

ACS has an extensive set of emergency procedures that have been approved by local law enforcement agencies and our accreditation association for the following types of catastrophes.

- Bomb Threat
- Death
- Earthquake Procedures
- Evacuation or Unexpected School Cancellation Procedures
- Fire Procedures
- Human Catastrophe (intruders) Procedures
- Serious Injury
- Suicide Attempt
- Tornado Procedures
- Weapon

Evacuation Procedure

If it is determined that the school is no longer safe or needs to be evacuated for any reason, the police will be called to enlist their assistance. A parent alert text will be sent with instructions for pickup if needed.

Confidentiality Policy

When Albuquerque Christian School asks for any personal information regarding you or your child, we do not share that information with any person who is not an employee of Albuquerque Christian School. All information is kept in confidence and used only as a part of our academic program.

Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting

As caretakers, each person employed at Albuquerque Christian School who has a reasonable suspicion or knows of a child being abused, must report the incident to ECECD. The ECECD child abuse hotline – 1-855-333-SAFE

Guidance Policy

When a child becomes a student at ACS, he or she agrees to adapt himself/herself to the school's stated purpose and policies. The student is expected to be a good citizen, to maintain a wholesome attitude, to respect his or her fellow students, the administration, faculty, and staff. The student must exercise good manners and sportsmanship, and his or her language must be wholesome. The student shall strive to imitate Jesus. Remember: respect and responsibility!

If a teacher finds a child not doing what is asked of him or her, the teacher first will speak to the child and explain what is expected of him or her. If the behavior continues, the teacher may place the child in time out. This time out will be for the number of minutes equal to the child's age. The teacher will again discuss with the child what is expected of him or her.

Once these procedures have been followed and the child is still having difficulties, the parent will be called to help address the issue. If the child's actions continue or are causing harm to another child, the principal or director will call the child's parents to discuss the matter.

General Information

Meals and Snacks (Preschool)

Children have lunch at school daily. You may pack a lunch for your child or order from the hot lunch menu which goes home monthly. Daily meals are available for purchase through Renweb. All meals meet the food requirements as indicated in the code of federal regulations for child nutrition programs. Food offered at school will not pose a choking hazard. Parents shall provide their students with an A.M snack and a refillable water bottle. Children may bring their own snacks, but please be aware of the allergies of the other students. When preparing lunches, please be aware that lunches will not be heated at school.

Meals and Snacks (Lamb Club)

For our little Lamb's, parents will need to bring in all food and drinks for the day. With dietary restrictions, allergies, and preferences, we find it best for families to know their littles best and bring in food that fits their needs. We have bottle warmers to make sure temperatures are comfortable for our littles.

Schedule

The children's daily schedules are posted in each classroom. All children who are at the school for more than 5 hours will be subject to the mandatory rest period.

Family Involvement

Parents and supporters are welcome and encouraged to visit the school any time. The all-school assemblies on Monday and Friday mornings afford a perfect opportunity to observe an integral part of the student's day. Family members are also welcome to join their students for lunch. All visitors are also asked to sign in at the reception area and are asked to respect the school's policy regarding modest attire (please see the dress code section of this handbook for guidelines). The classroom teacher will be able to guide you in any way you may be of help. For any kind of extended time in the classroom, any parent or family member will need to go through ACS's background check.

Dress Code (Preschool Program Only)

There is no uniform in PreK3 or PreK4. But there is a dress code. The very nature of Albuquerque Christian School demands that we be concerned about the image we are projecting. The dress code is best described as "conservative" and students are required to dress modestly and appropriately.

- Clothing should be neither excessively tight nor excessively baggy without rips, tears or frays.
- Shirts must cover the midriff when raising arms. They may be sleeveless as long as there are at least 3 inches at the shoulder. Polos, button-ups, blouses, and t-shirts without inappropriate slogans or advertisements or questionable material are acceptable tops for students
- Rubber-soled closed toe and back shoes are required. Tennis shoes are recommended, and students may be asked to refrain from certain playground and/or PE activities if inappropriate shoes are worn.
- Jumpers, skirts, and skorts are to be no more than 3 inches above the knee. Shorts are to be worn underneath jumpers or skirts (bicycle shorts are acceptable if they do not show when the student is standing).
- Pants can be khaki, jeans, or other cotton blend fabric but must not have rips or tears. They must fit at or near the hips (not baggy).
- Hair is to be well groomed, clean, and neat. Style and/or length should not be so extreme as to be disruptive. Hair should not be colored other than natural hair colors.
- Backpacks, notebooks, book covers, lunch boxes, outerwear, jackets, etc. may not display vulgar or inappropriate language and/or symbols.
- Jewelry shall not be in violation of any aspect of the ACS Dress Code, nor shall it be so extreme as to be disruptive.
- Hats, sun visors, other billed headwear, or beanies will only be allowed to be worn outside except on designated days.
- Jackets and other outerwear may not contain any objectionable logos or themes.

Holidays and Parties

Please let us know if you have any sensitivity to a specific holiday or celebration. We often ask for parental help with snacks when a holiday comes around that the class will be celebrating. You are welcome to bring snacks for the class when it is your child's birthday.

Entering the Building

For safety reasons, all outside doors are locked against entry without the receptionist's or child care provider's knowledge and approval.

Your child is not allowed to open the door even for a family member or friend. Teachers are available upon drop off to help your student enter the building.

Ring the white doorbell. Someone will push the buzzer so that you may open the door to enter. Stop there and let the receptionist or childcare provider know why you are here. In some cases, you will be required to sign in.

Signing In and Out

Early education staff members will sign your preschool child into school each day upon arrival and sign them out at the end of the day. Parents of Lamb Club children are required to bring the student into school each day and sign them in personally.

Parent Acknowledgement

After reading the book in its entirety, please sign below showing your understanding and acknowledgement to abide by the center's policies.

Childs Name

Parent Signature