



KIRK O' THE VALLEY

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~ A SCHOOL COMMUNITY SINCE 1961 ~

KIRK O'THE  
VALLEY SCHOOL  
  
FAMILY  
HANDBOOK

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# 1 Mission Statement

Our mission at Kirk O' The Valley School is to offer our children these gifts:

- A love of learning
- A knowledge of their world and the thinking skills necessary to make sense of it
- An understanding of themselves and others as unique individuals
- A safe, secure, family oriented environment

We guide our students as they use these gifts to experience the joy of success and discover their own meaningful place in our world.

## 1.1 Goals and Objectives

- To provide a safe, positive and nurturing environment for learning
- To teach basic and advanced skills and to share knowledge by offering a variety of opportunities which appeal to several types of learning styles and multiple intelligences
- To provide instruction at appropriate developmental levels in each grade, with an emphasis on language development in Toddler through Pre-School classes
- To infuse each child with a sense of discovery
- To encourage problem-solving skills in both social and academic settings
- To stimulate higher-level thinking skills appropriate for each developmental age
- To encourage partnership between families and teachers
- To serve children of all races, religions, ethnicities and economic backgrounds, and to recognize and celebrate this diversity
- To offer support for individual student needs
- To provide guidance in the formation of key values and ethics as part of character education

## **2 History**

The Kirk O' The Valley School ("KOV") was created in 1962 as a pre-school that utilized the facilities of the Kirk O' The Valley Presbyterian Church. It thrived for many years in that form until it was determined that a community need justified a staged expansion to fifth grade, allowing children a consistent preparation for middle school.

For over 40 years the school has provided a quality alternative to public education in the greater San Fernando Valley area.

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## **3 Our Educational Philosophy**

At KOV, our goal is for all our students to be successful. We combine high academic standards in a traditional classroom setting, with a sensitivity and respect for many learning styles and multiple intelligences, including linguistic, musical, artistic, spatial-mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and bodily kinesthetic intelligence. Another of our goals is to help our students identify their own areas of strength and utilize these strengths across the curriculum.

Our curriculum and assessment program aligns with California State guidelines and with the standards for best practices of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and The National Accreditation Commission for Early Childhood and Education Programs. This is what makes us different from many other private schools. We do not try to make children fit a curriculum; we strongly believe that children deserve something better. At KOV, our children are viewed, and valued, as individuals.

The ethnic and cultural diversity of our students and families enriches us all. We celebrate a wide variety of holidays and provide children with many opportunities to participate in multi-cultural activities and events.

Although we are affiliated with Kirk O' The Valley Presbyterian Church Corporation, we do not provide specific religious instruction. We celebrate and highlight the holidays and cultural traditions of our diverse student body. While we do not evangelize or proselytize, we do wish to present ourselves as faith friendly. We encourage all families to teach their children in the traditions of their faith. Preschoolers have a traditional, ecumenical prayer that is sung before snack each day. Children are not required to participate nor encouraged to do so if their parents object. The prayer is printed under section 13.3 of this handbook.



Our staff members take the health and safety of our children very seriously. Attention to the cleanliness and security of our facility, the health needs of each child, playground safety and a comprehensive disaster preparedness plan demonstrate our commitment to health and safety issues.

Because we are a Toddler Center, Pre-School and K-5 elementary school, KOV students have the opportunity to sustain and enjoy meaningful friendships from early childhood through age eleven years. This is an unusual and very special feature of our school life.

Kirk O' The Valley Preschool's approach to caring for the whole child insists on keeping the teacher to student ratio well below the legal limit. Our Tot center in most cases will maintain a 1:4 ratio and preschool a 1:7 ratio. This ratio is maintained in both indoor and outdoor activities. KOV assigns children whose birthdays fall within six months of each other to a team of teachers who remain with them throughout the ten month school year. KOV's Tot program has one or two groups, depending on enrollment and/or the dynamic mix of the class.

Our preschool day begins at 9:00 and ends at 1:00. Childcare is available before and after school. Our professional staff remains with the children throughout the school day and throughout the extended day, nap, and child care periods. No "outside" staff is brought in to cover the extended time that children are in the care of KOV.

Our staff of 20+ teachers in preschool had been employed at Kirk for an average of fourteen years. We are fortunate to be connected with the excellent Early Childhood Education institutions of LA Pierce College, the West Valley Occupational Center, and LA Valley College. Our relationship with these credentialing institutions offers an excellent referral source for new teachers by sending us interns to be mentored and ECC students for their field practicum.

Our standardized testing program, conducted in the Spring of each school year for Grades 2-5, is designed to complement our overall academic program in the elementary grades. Again, we want our students to experience success. We have chosen CTB: McGraw Hill's Terra Nova CAT (complete battery) as our achievement test. After careful research and consideration, we concluded that the complete battery was the right test for us. Kindergarten children do not receive paper-pencil standardized assessment. First Grade and Second Grade take a "practice" standardized test for exposure to the testing process, but the test is not graded.

In September of 2009, Singapore Math was introduced to all grade levels, following an extensive training process for Kirk's elementary staff. This has proven to be a wonderful gift to our students by broadening and deepening their

understanding of math, but also increasing their joy and confidence in studying math.

Our staff is creative, experienced, dedicated and caring. All of our lead classroom and specialist teachers hold current credentials or degrees appropriate for their grade levels and subjects. Staff development is ongoing, provided by guest speakers, on-site workshops, reading and Internet exploration, and by participation in off-campus educational seminars and conventions. Our teaching and administrative staff maintain membership in numerous education associations, including the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC), International Reading Association, and National Association for the Teachers of Mathematics.

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## **4 Parent-School Partnership**

The following “covenant” comes from Chaminade Middle School. It is equally appropriate at KOV. No school can succeed in fulfilling its mission unless parents share that commitment. By enrolling their child at Kirk O’ The Valley School, parents agree to read, understand and endorse the school’s mission and policies.

### Parents can expect that the school will:

- Establish positive, professional relationships with students, characterized by mutual respect, warmth and good will.
- Keep parents informed of their child’s progress.
- Make every effort to respond to parent inquiries within 24 hours.
- Model integrity, academic curiosity, responsibility and creativity.
- Be teachers to all students at all times, and be dedicated to teaching ethics and character formation.
- Develop and sustain partnership with parents that support each student’s well-being and increasing autonomy.
- Enforce standards of student behavior in a fair, firm, compassionate and educationally sound manner

The school can expect that parents will:

- Provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes, habits and values that are consistent with those of the school.
- Maintain regular contact with teachers and administrators.
- Show support and encouragement by participating in a positive manner in school events.
- Recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.
- Develop students' moral values by modeling integrity, civility, honesty and respect for the value of each individual.
- Support consequences for behavior deemed unacceptable by the school.
- Help students capitalize upon successes, and learn from setback and failures as part of an individual's growth process.
- Respectfully seek to secure information and resolve problems through appropriate channels of communication (i.e., Teacher, Assistant Director, Director).

School personnel are expected to treat parents as experts about their own children, who have something crucial to contribute in our work with the student. Conversely, parents are expected to treat our teachers and administrators as professionals who know what to teach and how to teach it.

Kirk O' The Valley School believes that a positive and constructive partnership with a student's parents or guardian is essential to the fulfillment of the school's mission. Parents who do not support the mission, or fail to be civil and/or become disruptive in their relationship with the school, *jeopardize that relationship*. Thus, KOV reserves the right to discontinue enrollment or *not to* re-enroll a student if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of any parent or guardian make such a positive, constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise interferes with the school's accomplishment of its educational purposes.



## **5 Enrollment and Tuition Policies**

### **5.1 Non-Discrimination**

KOV does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or economic background. Although our facility is aging and is not yet fully ADA compliant, we are incrementally correcting and updating it as time and money allow.

### **5.2 New Applicants**

An application must be submitted to the school office along with the appropriate fee. The application will be reviewed by the Director and passed to the classroom teacher, who will, in turn, arrange a meeting with the potential student. In most cases the teacher will call the student's teacher to learn more about the child. An applicant will be notified within two weeks of the assessment by the classroom teacher.

### **5.3 Enrollment (Elementary)**

Each student is enrolled for a period of one year. Upon enrollment, the first eight weeks are a probationary period for academic and behavioral evaluation. Re-enrollment is necessary each year. Acceptance of a student for re-enrollment is based on a review by the Administrator and staff. A non-refundable enrollment fee is required at the time of enrollment each year. Pre-School students may enroll anytime during the year upon availability of classroom openings.

### **5.4 Re-Enrollment**

Families may re-enroll children only after all tuition and other fees from the previous year have been paid in full. A non-refundable enrollment fee, which is used to cover the cost of materials and supplies for the coming year, is due at the time of re-enrollment, which begins in the month of March each year.

## 5.5 Tuition Policy

**Tuition is computed on an annual basis, and may be paid in one of three ways:**

- One annual payment may be made in August. Families receive a tuition discount when one annual payment is made.
- Two payments may be made, one in August and the second in January. Families receive a tuition discount when two annual payments are made.
- Ten equal payments may be made: The first is due by August 1st. If the ten equal payments is the option chosen, parents should take note that the August and December payments will be equal in amount to the other eight payments, even though the number of school days is less. Tuition will be prorated, based on the annual fee, for children entering after the start of the school year. Tuition is billed monthly.

A \$25.00 charge will be assessed for returned checks. If a family has more than one check returned due to insufficient funds, all future payments for the current school year must be made with a Money Order or Certified Check.

Failure to keep tuition payments current may affect the enrollment status of the student.

Fees related to the Extended Day Program are determined by occasional or regular use of the program. Please consult the current fee schedule.

**NOTE: The optional child care offered during Winter and Spring holiday weeks is not part of the regular school year full day service. A separate registration and additional payment are required for this service.**

## 5.6 Past Due Accounts

If payment is not received within the four weeks following a billing date, a late fee of \$25.00 is assessed. A notice is sent when the account is 45 days past due. At 60 days past due, the account is sent to collections, the student's enrollment is in jeopardy. Families in temporary crisis and in need of consideration or extended billing should speak with the Administrative Director.

## **5.7 Refunds**

Registration fees are due with the application for admission. These fees are non-refundable with one exception: KOV will refund certain fees if, for some reason, KOV elects not to enroll the student.

If a family chooses not to return to Kirk after having applied and paid tuition, or a deposit toward tuition or enrollment fees, no refund will be issued. If a family chooses to leave after the start date of school, having paid tuition or a portion of tuition and/or fees, no refund will be given.

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## **6 Attendance & Tardy Policies**

### **6.1 Absence**

- A parent or guardian is to call the school office by 9:15 A.M. on the second day of an absence. The office number is (818) 344-1242.
- When a student is ill, request for homework will be honored if it is received by 10:00 A.M. Students will be given as many days as absent, up to one week, to make up missed class work based upon the severity of the illness; this may be adjusted by contacting the child's teacher.
- Please notify the school office if your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease, such as chicken pox, strep throat, pinkeye, etc. Head lice is not considered a disease, but is contagious; therefore, only after effective treatment may the child return.
- If your child is not well or has a fever in the morning, please keep the child home. Students who have been ill should be free of fever or have not vomited for one full day before returning to school.

#### **6.1.1 Extended Vacation Absence (Preschool)**

Occasionally preschool parents take extended vacations during the school year. In order to guarantee a child's enrollment, two weeks tuition must be paid for each three weeks of absence. This policy does not apply to the "short" months of August, December, and June.

### **6.1.2 Special Occasion Absence (Elementary)**

Family celebrations, such as birthdays, vacations, and special trips together, are an important part of being a family. However, families are not always aware of the inconvenience to teachers and the disruption to a child caused by taking children out of school for such occasions. Teachers are usually asked to supply homework and class-work to the student in advance. It is hard for parents to know how time-consuming this can be for a teacher. It is not a small thing to ask. If you wish a teacher to supply makeup work for your child, please notify the teacher at least one week in advance.

We are a school where the teacher individualizes for each student in their class. They also adjust their teaching to the dynamics of each class, making each year different. All this to say, when a parent asks for work in advance, it involves more than just going to the shelf and pulling a group of papers.

Although children are excited to miss school for special occasions, they pay a price that might not always be recognizable to parents. Missing a discussion or hands-on work, falling behind and trying to catch up, missing a special day at school, all can be frustrating and disappointing to a child, most of which the child does not share with the parent.

Therefore, we request and strongly suggest that parents arrange their special trips and outings around weekends, holidays, and our school vacations. **It is the school's policy to allow the teacher to decide whether the request for advance work is timely or reasonable. If the teacher feels it is not, she is free to decline the parents' request.**

## **6.2 Holidays**

Kirk is closed for all legal holidays, Veterans' Day, President's, MLK Day, Labor Day and Memorial Day. Typically Kirk is closed for one week during Thanksgiving week, and two weeks during Christmas and New Year's holiday weeks. Spring break typically consists of two weeks.

## **6.3 Tardy Policy**

### **6.3.1 Elementary Students Grade 1 – Grade 3**

Students in Grade 1 – Grade 3 are expected to arrive at school by 8:30 A.M. If students are not in their classrooms by 8:35 A.M., they will be sent to the school office for a tardy slip and admittance to class.

### **6.3.2 Elementary Students Grade 3 – Grade 5**

Students in Grade 3 – Grade 5 are expected to arrive at school by 8:00 A.M. If students are not in their classrooms by 8:05 A.M., they will be sent to the school office for a tardy slip and admittance to class.

### **6.3.3 Tardy Procedures for Elementary Students**

The following tardy procedures are followed:

- 3rd Tardy – The parent/guardian will receive notification of the 3 tardies.
  - 4th Tardy – The teacher will schedule a parent conference and work with the parent/guardian to resolve the situation.
  - 5th Tardy – The teacher and administrator will schedule a conference with the parent/guardian.
- 

## **7 Campus Safety Information**

KOV is proud of the warm, family spirit that is part of our long tradition. It is necessary, however, to have policies that protect the health and safety of our children without compromising our family-like environment.

### **7.1 Authorized Release of a Child (Elementary)**

**The following procedures are in place for the protection of the elementary children in our care:**

At the beginning of each school year, parents are asked to submit a list of adults who are eligible to release their child from the care of KOV. If an adult is known to the teacher responsible for releasing the child, the child shows an obvious recognition toward the adult and responds positively, such as a grandparent, family member, or close family friend, the teacher may ask for the adult's identification or they may choose to release the child based on the teacher's relationship with the parents and family of the child without asking for formal or legal identification.

If the parent or adult questions the teacher's judgment in releasing their child to an adult, the parent should report the situation immediately to the director. Complaints concerning specific situations around the release of children



voiced at a later time, although taken seriously, cannot be addressed effectively with KOV staff. Immediacy is our best tool for success.

KOV recommends written or verbal authorization for release of a child, however, if the adult seeking to release a child is another parent in the school, and there has been no expressed wish, written or verbal, by the child's parent that the child should not be released to said parent, then the teacher may assume the adult is authorized by the child's parent, such as in the case of a play date.

KOV requests email authorization to release a child to an adult not his parent or guardian and not on the eligible list.

A child will not be released to anyone under 18 years of age.

## **7.2 Authorized Release of a Child (Preschool)**

KOV will not release a preschool child to anyone without specific written permission from the child's parent or guardian.

## **7.3 Custodial Arrangements for Children**

Students attending Kirk O' The Valley School who live in two-parent families, single parent families, and single/two-parent families, may have varied custodial arrangements. The school is a neutral place for the children; therefore, any arrangements made regarding drop off and pick up of children are to be made outside of the school.

Parents are asked to submit, in writing, any information essential for school staff members to know in relation to the custodial arrangements for the child(ren). This is to be done when enrolling the child(ren). The information provided would include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Person(s) to be called in case of an emergency or for conferences related to academic or behavioral concerns.
- Person(s) to whom the school may release the child(ren) and, if appropriate, for what purpose.
- Person(s) to whom the school may not release the child(ren).
- Person(s) permitted to attend parent conferences and/or to review school records for the child(ren).

- Person(s) to whom copies of school newsletters, progress reports, report cards, test scores, and any other written information about the school and the child(ren) should be sent. Information will be sent to both parents, if requested. If double reporting and mailings are desired, please submit the names, addresses and telephone numbers for both parents. An additional fee may be charged for double reportings and mailings.

Our mission at Kirk O' The Valley School is to share with parents the responsibility of caring for and nurturing their child(ren). If a copy of a court order mandating a custodial arrangement for a child would provide information that the school needs to better serve the child, please provide a copy for our files. If you believe that a custodial arrangement may affect either a child's academic performance or behavior in school, please contact the school office for an appointment to discuss how everyone caring for the child may best work together to assist the child.

## 7.4 Special Circumstances for Release

Occasionally there are domestic situations in which a parent is not permitted to transport a child or authorize his/her release from KOV. It is the obligation of the responsible parent to inform KOV of any restraining order or legal circumstance that would prohibit the release of a child to a biological parent or otherwise legal guardian. KOV will make every effort to flag the child's records, alert the teachers and comply with all legal requests.

**KOV cannot deny release to a biological parent who has not been identified by the legal system as unauthorized to release a child.**

## 7.5 Drop-Off and Dismissal Procedures

### 7.5.1 Elementary Drop-Off Procedures

The location where students are dropped off depends on the time they arrive. **Kindergarten children must be signed in on the sheet by the Kindergarten classroom.** The following is a list of drop-off locations by time:

- |                                  |   |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| 7:00 – 8:00 A.M.                 | - | Students go to Room 4  |
| 8:00 – 8:30 A.M.<br>(First Bell) | - | K – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade students go to rear play area<br>Class begins for 4 <sup>th</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade students |
| 8:30 A.M.                        | - | Students Line up in rear play area to be escorted by teachers to classrooms.   |

### 7.5.2 Preschool Drop-Off Procedures

The location where students are **signed in** depends on the time they arrive. **All preschool students must be escorted to supervised areas in the morning.** Please do not allow your child to leave the car, cross the parking lot, and enter the school alone while you remain in your car. The following is a list of **sign in** locations by time:

- 7:00 – 8:30 A.M. - Students are **signed in** at Room 4
- 8:30 – 9:00 A.M. - Students are **signed in** at their classrooms and then go to the rear play area.
- 9:00 A.M. - Preschool schedule begins for each class. Teachers escort children to classrooms or children remain on play yard with their teacher.

### 7.5.3 Dismissal Procedures

Parents may meet children near the classroom entrance at dismissal time, as follows:

- Preschool - Children are **signed out** at their classroom at 1:00 P.M.
- Kindergarten - Children are **signed out** at their classroom at 2:00 P.M.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade - 2:30 P.M.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades - 3:00 P.M.

Children may be picked up in the rear yard area after regular school hours. Parents must sign children out in a “Sign-Out” book. **A full signature is required by law. Initials are not considered a full signature.** Students are allowed a 5 minute “grace period” before being escorted to the extended day care area. Please see the After School Care Section for further explanation.

### 7.5.4 Dismissal from After-School Programs

Children must be **signed out** of each after-school program. This applies to students of all ages. Elementary children who are not picked up the time of the activity’s dismissal will be escorted to the rear play area to await pick-up by a parent.

Parents arranging car pools for students must supply the office with written information and permission. Please notify the office of any change in the pick-up procedure.

### **7.5.5 Rainy Days**

Elementary students arriving early should go to the Angie Quinn Room. After-school extended day students are to be picked up in the Angie Quinn or Art Room. Preschool students are to be picked up in the Angie Quinn Room or Room 4.

### **7.6 Campus Visitors**

Campus Visitors and classroom parent volunteers may be asked to wear a badge identifying their presence on campus. The badges are available for visitors in the school office at the sign-in book for visitors or in the classroom for classroom volunteers.

Any adult on the premises not recognized by a staff member or teacher at KOV may be stopped and questioned as to his/her purpose on campus, and may be asked to either wear the appropriate identifying badge or leave the campus.

### **7.7 Release During School/Campus Security**

After arriving at school, students are not allowed to leave the school campus until the end of the school day. Arrangements must be made in advance if you need to pick up your child(ren) before the end of the day.

Students needing to be excused before the regular time must bring a note from their parent/guardian.

When picking up children before dismissal, the parent/guardian is to go directly to the school office to have the child paged. Teachers are not to release children from classrooms. Elementary students will be sent to the office to meet the parent/guardian after they are summoned via the intercom.

To ensure campus security and student safety, all parents and campus visitors are required to sign in at the school office after 9:00 A.M. and before 2:00 P.M. with the exception of a scheduled school activity.

If a forgotten item is being delivered to a student (between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M.), please take the item to the school office. Students will be notified by office personnel, and the student may pick the item up during recess

or lunch. In the case of a preschool child, the item will be delivered to the classroom by an office staff person.

The parent/guardian must notify the office in writing if someone other than the parent/guardian or designated adult on the student's emergency card is picking up the child.

Every effort should be made to schedule appointments after dismissal time.

The school assumes no liability if a child leaves the campus in violation of this policy.

### **7.8 After School Admittance to Elementary Classrooms**

Students are not permitted to retrieve homework materials from locked classrooms. Parental requests to enter locked classrooms may be considered by the administrative staff.

### **7.9 Parking Lot Safety**

Please pull into a parking space. DO NOT drop off children by pulling up to the fence or stopping in the parking lot. Please watch your **speed** at all times in the parking lot.

### **7.10 Parking Restrictions**

All cars must be removed from the south parking lot by 9:20 A.M. each day. The driveway gate is locked each morning at 9:30, and unlocked at 1:30 P.M. Parking is not permitted in the south parking lot (the lot area directly behind the school office) during the time the gate is closed. Parking is permitted in the west parking lot behind the gate, but not past the school office. If a parent is behind the closed gate and children are on the yard, a parent will be required to wait until the children are off the play yard or the parent is given clearance to move the car by a Kirk staff member.

**NOTE: There is restricted parking some afternoons from 3:15 to 5:00 to allow for extended playground space for elementary children.**



## 8 Before/After School Care

The After School Care service is offered to parents before and after school hours. After School Care staff members are committed to the same philosophy as that of the school staff. They have pledged to act in a supportive, loving, caring manner with each child. In most cases the after school program is staffed by a teacher from our preschool or elementary staff, credentialed in Early Childhood Education. Children not enrolled at KOV during the school day are not eligible for the after school program.

Children are permitted to arrive at school at 7:00 A.M. They are to be taken to Room 4. A fee is charged for children participating regularly in the before and/or after school program. An hourly charge is assessed for occasional users of the service. The State of California requires that all children rest in the afternoon. Please see section 13.1 of this handbook for KOV's nap policy.

### 8.1 Late Pick Up

It is mandatory that the parent/guardian sign the child out no later than 6:00 P.M. A late charge of \$1.00 per minute is assessed for any time a child is picked up after 6:00 P.M. This fee goes directly to the teacher who was in charge of the child at 6:00 P.M. Repeated failure to pick up a child by 6:00 P.M. may result in this service being withdrawn.

### 8.2 Activities

After School Care activities include indoor and outdoor games, stories, and exercise. A free play and snack time are also part of the daily After School schedule.

### 8.3 Billing

Fees for the extended day program are announced at the beginning of the school year. See the After School Care forms for rates and schedules.

**Contract Rate:** For students using after school care on a regular basis, the fee is generally paid each month with tuition.

**Hourly Rate:** For students using after school care on an occasional basis, billing for extended day is for the previous month, rather than the current month.

Please note that there is a 5 minute "grace period" following dismissal time after which parents will be billed for the full hour of extended care. Each child must be signed out from the after-school program by a parent/guardian. **Parents assume responsibility for the care of children following the sign-out.**

Siblings of elementary students who arrive before 8:15 A.M. will be billed the hourly rate for before-school care. Any portion of the hour will be billed as a full hour for before-school childcare.

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## **9 Student Health Requirements**

### **9.1 Communicable Disease Control**

State law requires that public and private schools exclude any child affected with a communicable disease for a prescribed isolation period. Students exhibiting any of the following symptoms should be kept at home: acute colds, swollen glands, red or discharging eyes, skin eruptions or rashes, flushed skin, headaches, fever, or behavior that indicates the child is ill. When teachers observe any of these symptoms, the child will be sent to the office, and the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the child.

### **9.2 AIDS Policy**

Any Student who is infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which leads to Acquired Immune Deficiency (AIDS) or AIDS-related Complex (ARC) is to be treated with respect and dignity. Every reasonable precaution will be taken to protect the confidentiality of records and other information.

For most infected school-age students, the benefit of an unrestricted environment should be given priority when making decisions about the student's educational program. For students who display abnormal behavior, such as biting, and students who have uncovered, oozing lesions or open wounds, a more restricted environment is advisable to protect both the infected child and other children.

Any decision regarding the type of educational services and environment appropriate for a student will be made in consultation with the student's physician, parents or legal guardian, the administrator, the teacher, and when appropriate, the pastor. The Public Health Department may be consulted for advice.

### **9.3 Head Lice Infestations**

Parents are responsible for reporting cases of head lice infestations to the school office. Parents of classmates, as well as siblings' classmates in school, will be notified so that appropriate action can be taken. Head lice checks may be

conducted on all children in any affected classrooms. For detailed information, call your physician.

## **9.4 Administration of Medication**

Any prescription medication to be taken during school hours must be brought to the school office with written consent from the parent/guardian for its administration.

The medication must be in its clearly labeled, original container. The student's full name, physician's name and telephone number, name of the medications, dosage, date of expiration, and schedule for administration must be on prescription medications. A school medication form, including the name of the medication, time of administration, and dosage must be signed by the physician. A form provided by the doctor's office may be substituted for the school form. The parent/guardian must sign the liability release section of the medication form. No medication will be administered to a child unless these forms are submitted. Forms may be obtained from the school office. Office personnel will administer and log medications and dosage given.

## **9.5 Immunizations**

California law requires that children entering school for the first time present evidence (unless exempt for personal or medical reasons, which must be stated in writing) that they have been immunized for polio, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, measles, varicella (chicken pox) and mumps. In addition, the State Health Department requires that all children be immunized against rubella (German Measles). Every child entering Pre-School and Kindergarten is required to be immunized for Hepatitis B, varicella, and tuberculosis. The school office staff is responsible for verifying immunization records when students enroll at Kirk O' The Valley School.

Occasionally, because of personal belief or because of a child's particular health condition, a family will elect not to immunize a child. The family must sign a Personal Beliefs Exemption Form available from the school office stating which vaccines they have declined. This exemption must also be signed by a health care provider. Should an outbreak occur in the school of a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible and for which their child has not been immunized, the family will be notified, and will be required to keep the child away from school until the danger of infection has passed, and/or the child's physician gives clearance for the child to return.



## **9.6 If a Student Becomes Ill at School**

If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, the parent/guardian will be notified. Please notify the school office when there is a change in your address, telephone number or alternate emergency contact person. **IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT EACH STUDENT'S EMERGENCY CARD BE KEPT UP-TO-DATE.** A new emergency form is to be filled out at the beginning of the new school year. If the school is unable to contact the parent/guardian, the person listed on the emergency card will be called to make arrangements to pick the student up from school. Students are not allowed to go home without adult supervision.

## **9.7 If a Child Bites Another Child**

It is the philosophy of KOV to teach children conflict resolution, and to help them distinguish between accidental and intentional injury to another. In most cases, such incidents will be handled by the classroom or yard teacher, and a "boo boo note" sent home with the child at the end of the day to inform parents of the incident.

If a child bites another child, the parent of the biter will be notified. If the bite is severe enough to break the skin, or serious enough that more than minimal first aid is necessary, a parent of each child will be called.

## **9.8 In Case of Accidents**

In the case of an accident, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. Should a situation require emergency care, paramedics will be called or other appropriate medical attention will be summoned. If a student needs to be transported to an emergency facility, a staff member will accompany the student.

## **9.9 First Aid Procedures**

If a child is injured, becomes ill, is stung by an insect, bee, wasp or spider at school or during school-related trips, the following procedures will apply:

*Minor Cuts and Abrasions* – A staff member will verify that the cut or abrasions is minor. The injured area will be washed with soap and water, and a staff member will apply an adhesive bandage.

*Bee or Wasp Sting* – A staff member may remove the stinger if it is readily accessible, and apply ice. The emergency card will be checked to determine if the child is allergic to bee stings. The parent/guardian will be called.

*Illness* – The child's temperature will be taken, and the child will remain in the office. The parent/guardian will be called if there is a fever or if the child indicates that he/she cannot complete the school day.

*Head Injury* – A staff member will apply ice and observe the child. The parent/guardian will be called. The incident will be recorded in a record book maintained by the office staff.

*Broken Bones* – A staff member will apply ice and keep the child still. The parent/guardian will be called. If the parent/guardian or alternate on the emergency card cannot be contacted, an administrator will determine if the child requires immediate emergency treatment.

Please notify the school office in writing if you wish to request that another procedure be followed.

## **9.10 Allergies**

Parents are expected to notify the school office and the teacher in writing concerning any information or precautions that need to be observed regarding food allergies or special medical condition of a child. Any drugs or emergency medical devices to treat the condition must remain in the school office.

With a parent's written consent, preschool children with allergies will be photographed. The photo will be displayed prominently in the child's classroom stating the foods and other particulars to be avoided, or actions to be taken in the event of inadvertent contamination.

## **9.11 Re-admittance**

After any injury that results in a student wearing any type of cast, neck brace, splint, sling or requiring the use of crutches, a doctor's note allowing readmission to school is required. The note should indicate any physical activity limitations. A doctor's release indicating that the child may resume normal activities is required before a student will be allowed to participate in previously limited activities.

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# **10 Other Information Related to Student Welfare**

## **10.1 Substance Abuse Policy**

KOV is a smoke free, drug free, alcohol free, and firearm free campus. Any student found in possession of any such items will be immediately suspended.

## **10.2 Parent Participation/Observation**

Parent participation and interest in the school program are both a service and gift to our community.

### **10.2.1 Elementary Parent Participation**

To minimize disruption of the school program and enhance volunteer time in the classroom, it is necessary to schedule volunteer assistance in advance with the classroom teacher. Requests for classroom observations are made through the office and scheduled at the discretion of the teacher and administration.

### **10.2.2 Preschool Parent Participation**

KOV's preschool has an open door policy. Prospective parents and currently enrolled parents are free to visit the classroom of their child at any time deemed necessary or desirable by the parent. Parents are required to check in at the office during school hours (9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.) before entering the classroom.

## **10.3 Parent Permission – Field Trips (Elementary Only)**

When parents/guardians sign tuition contracts with Kirk O' The Valley School, the school agrees to assume responsibility for protecting the child(ren) enrolled during the school day and while the children are participating in school-sponsored activities, both at and away from school. Field trips are planned as part of the instructional program in which student participation is expected. The parent/guardian's signature on the tuition contract indicates that the parent/guardian is granting permission for:

- Their child(ren) to use all of the school play equipment and to participate in all school activities.
- Their child(ren) to leave the school premises under the supervision of a staff member for neighborhood walks or a field trip in an authorized vehicle with the understanding that a Field Trip Permission Slip must be signed by the parent and returned to the school prior to the day of the field trip. No child will be allowed to attend any field trip without written consent from the parent/guardian. Verbal permission, either in person or by telephone, will not be accepted.

Every parent/guardian who assists as a driver for any off-campus activity must be 21 years of age, possess a valid California Driver's License, and proof of current insurance coverage. Copies of these documents must be on file in the

school office each school year before a driver can be authorized to transport children. Private vehicles used for transporting students must be equipped with a seat belt./car-seat (if applicable) for each person in the car, and the driver responsible for seeing that all seat belts/car-seats are properly fastened.

#### **10.4 Respecting Children's Privacy**

Under no circumstance will a staff member discuss a child with a parent or family member other than the child's own parent. Discussing, comparing, or divulging any information about health, behavior, the development, or academic progress of a child, or any personal, family information is not permitted by any staff member at KOV to another parent. Organizations, schools, and health care providers should submit a written consent from the parents when requesting information about a child.

As a matter of ethics and out of respect for other families' privacy, we strongly encourage parents to restrict their conversations to matters involving their own children. Gossiping or discussing another family's child is not compatible with KOV's culture of protecting childhood and creating the best possible environment to nurture children.

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### **11 Child Abuse Reporting Obligations**

In accordance with California law, teachers and school administrators are mandated, under penalty of fine and jail term, to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse, which includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, emotional deprivation, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, sexual abuse or exploitation.

In this very serious and legally defined area, the school will not contact parents/guardians in advance of making a report to legal authorities, which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters. The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed, is to mandate that a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse be made immediately. School staff members will make these reports in the best interest of the affected child, and they do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative other than reporting their suspicion for investigation and review.

## **12 Preschool Academic Information**

### **12.1 Curriculum**

The Preschool curriculum is a developmental, play based program, enriched by a focus on STEAM. We approach each child as an individual and believe best practices as set forth by all leading child advocate agencies supports the belief that children learn best through play.

### **12.2 Parent Teacher Conferences**

Two conferences are scheduled each year for the purpose of verbally informing family members about the development and learning of their child. A written assessment will be provided at that time, along with a discussion of the child's portfolio.

### **12.3 Special Needs**

KOV teachers are not trained nor credentialed in diagnosing special needs of the children. If over a period of time, a teacher observes behavior of a child that is inconsistent with her experience with most other children, after consultation with the Director, the teacher may ask for a conference with the parent, and suggest a consultation with the child's pediatrician. Depending on the outcome with the pediatrician, it may be necessary to refer to another specialist, such as an occupational therapist, speech therapist, or LAUSD Regional Center.

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## **13 Preschool Policies**

### **13.1 Nap Time**

Afternoon day care children are signed into the program at 1:00 P.M. The State of California requires that all preschool children rest in the afternoon. Kirk children nap from 2:00 – 4:00 P.M. The sleep room coordinator monitors the capacity of the sleep room and whether space and cots are available on a particular day. A parent whose child is not enrolled in the full day program must speak with the sleep room coordinator in Room 4 before leaving a child past 2:00 P.M. Parents of children using the sleep room must purchase a sleeping mat available through the school office. It is the personal property of the child and will be sent home each Friday for laundering.

### **13.2 Diaper Changing Policy**

#### **13.2.1 Tots In Training**

Children may start at KOV's Tots in Training class at 20 months. Children need not be potty trained to enter this program at Kirk's TOT Center. Each child's

diaper is changed and a record made of the change at regular intervals. If the child is fully potty trained at 27 months, he/she is eligible to enter preschool on the main campus.

### **13.2.2 Children Transferring from Tots In Training to KOV Preschool**

Before a child transfers from the TOT Center program to the main campus, the Director of the TOT Center must certify that the child is mature enough to be appropriately placed on the main campus, including having no toilet accidents for at least three weeks prior to the transfer. In some cases, children regress in toilet training with change. Extra clothes are always advised. Under no circumstance will a child remain soiled or unattended if an accident happens.

It is not in the best interest of the child to remain in the TOT Center environment beyond a certain age. The toys, furniture, program, and ages of the other children so not serve a child well beyond the age of 3.0, unless the Director has determined the class to be a full term class that does not matriculate during the school year.

Therefore, it is expected that the family and the TOT Center staff will work together to see that the child is potty trained by the age of 3.0 and ready to matriculate out of the toddler program. If the child is still in pull ups and unable to use the toilet independently for both bowel movements and urination by that age, the parents will be asked to conference with the Director of the TOT Center to discuss whether the child will be permitted to remain in the program. The parents may be asked to keep the child at home in order to focus on enabling the child to become potty trained. The child can be readmitted as soon as he/she is considered to be fully potty trained and eligible for Kirk's regular preschool program.

Kirk O' The Valley School recommends that matriculation from the TOT Center, a child spend at least one year in a class on the preschool's main campus before entering Pre K. It is developmentally inappropriate for a child to transition to a class of two-year-olds to a class of four-year-olds.

### **13.2.3 Preschool Children New to Kirk**

While the TOT Center is well equipped and staffed to assist and encourage children to become toilet trained, the facilities on the main campus are not as suitable for toilet training or diaper changing. Therefore, we must insist that children be out of pull ups and in underwear before they can be enrolled in the preschool program on the main campus. If a child has a bowel movement "accident", our staff will change the child and report the incident to the parent. After the third incident, the parent will be called to change the child.

If the parent elects not to come change the child after the third incident, the parents will be assessed a diaper changing fee of \$15. A follow up discussion will be held with the parent, teacher, and the director to evaluate whether the child is appropriately placed.

Under no circumstances will a child be left unattended in soiled clothes. Parents who place their children in our trust should expect no less.

### **13.3 Prayer Before Snack**

The following prayer is sung by preschool children before morning snack:

*I have a little hat that sits on my head  
My little hat is (color of the day).  
And when I take it off, I put it under my chin.  
And now it's time for my prayer to begin.  
God is great, God is good  
Let us thank God for our food. Amen.*

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## **14 Preschool Discipline**

### **14.1 General Preschool Discipline Policy**

Most discipline situations are handled by redirection, encouragement to follow rules, and gentle reminders. At times, removing a child from the situation and allowing them to regain control is necessary. It is our goal for all children in the classroom to receive quality care and supervision. For more serious behaviors the following policy will be enforced.

### **14.2 Policy for Children with Difficult Behaviors**

Some children have behaviors that infringe on the personal rights of other children. These behaviors are those that affect the safety of that child and other children or they take undue teacher attention. KOV will take the following steps in dealing with difficult behaviors:

1. Teachers will re-direct the child to appropriate actions or activities over a period of time, modeling appropriate responses. They will teach conflict management skills when appropriate.
2. Teachers will keep anecdotal records noting behaviors and their responses to behaviors of concern.

3. Teachers will discuss the situation with the parent and ask for the parents' input.
4. Teachers and Administrator will discuss the situation with the parents.
5. If the situation persists, the next time the behavior occurs, the parent will be asked to take the child home from school for the remainder of the day.
6. If repeated attempts at step 5 do not alter the behavior, having the child attend a modified schedule may be an alternative.
7. If the staff do not feel that the classroom is a safe and/or healthy environment for **all** children, the parent will need to see an assessment through the school district or other private means in order to have the child remain in the program.
8. The parent may need to provide a classroom aide to assist with their child while he/she is in the classroom.

Students breaking the rules repeatedly or regularly causing disruption to the class or other children may be subject to other discipline such as remaining at a teacher's side during an activity. In reoccurring patterns of misbehavior, a conference will be called with the parent. In unmanageable situations, the family may be asked to leave.

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## **15 Elementary Academic Information**

### **15.1 Curriculum**

The Elementary program is enriched with art, music, science, Singapore Math, Reading Workshop, and Step-Up to Writing. Kindergarten has a developmentally based curriculum, that supports Kid Writing through No Tears Handwriting. Kindergarten teaches academics with a hands-on, experiential curriculum.

### **15.2 Homework Guidelines**

Although it is the trend in many schools, both public and private, to assign hours of intensive homework to elementary children, Kirk believes it burdensome to childhood, contrary to best practices, and offers little to no benefit in preparing children for success as adults, employers and employees in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Current research shows that reading, particularly literature that the child has some part in selecting, is the best assignment to foster a lifelong love of learning.

Therefore, Kirk assigns 15 to 30 minutes of reading each night for Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade. Additional assignments may include math, grammar, or preparation for a test.



### **15.3 Student Study Team**

The Student Study Team is available to preschool and elementary staff who experience persistent, serious, and challenging behavior or academic progress from children under their supervision. Teachers should observe the child and identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that predict challenging behavior or that may contribute to the child's use of challenging behavior. If the behavior persists and sufficient progress cannot be made through consultation with the parents or through other attempts at behavior modification, the teacher has the option of requesting the SST team to observe.

The SST team consists of the Preschool and Tot Center Directors, the ECC Coordinator, the Administrative Director, and the child's classroom teacher. Other interested parties or specialist may also be requested to attend along with the parents of the child. The goal of the SST is to:

- 1) Gain a better understanding of the child as a whole.
- 2) Provide information to the family about the child's development and experience at school.
- 3) Enable the teacher to develop a better understanding of the child.

If the SST team recommends resourcing the child, the parent will have 45 days to complete the appointment. If the parent fails to follow through with this recommendation, further steps may be taken by the director, which may include asking the child not to return to school.

### **15.4 Parent Teacher Conferences**

Parents/guardians are asked to meet with the classroom teacher for a conference at least twice a year. This meeting provides valuable communication for both the teacher and parent/guardian. It is a valuable tool for strengthening the home-school relationship.

If you have concerns about any aspect of your child's school experiences, it is always appropriate to request a conference with the teacher. A note or phone call identifying specific concerns is helpful so that the teacher and/or staff member may work to resolve issues with the child and/or parent.

Your child's teacher should always be your first contact. If you and the teacher are unable to resolve an issue, you may request a conference with the teacher and the school Administrator, as well as request a Student Study Team meeting.

## **15.5 Special Needs**

KOV teachers are not trained nor credentialed in diagnosing special needs of the children. If over a period of time, a teacher observes behavior of a child that is inconsistent with her experience with most other children, after consultation with the Director, the teacher may ask for a conference with the parent, and suggest a consultation with the child's pediatrician. Depending on the outcome with the pediatrician, it may be necessary to refer to another specialist, such as an occupational therapist, speech therapist, or LAUSD Regional Center.

## **15.6 Progress Reports**

Informational communication, both verbal and written, between parent/guardian and teachers regarding a student's progress occurs throughout the year and may be initiated by either the parent/guardian or the teacher. Official progress reports are sent home in the middle of each reporting period for any student who has a grade of C- or lower, has dropped a full grade since the previous grading period, or who exhibits unacceptable work habits or cooperation. The progress report is to be signed and returned by the parent/guardian.

The parent/guardian is responsible for contacting the teacher for a conference to determine what steps need to be taken to improve the student's progress.

## **15.7 Report Cards**

Report cards are issued 3 times per year. The report card includes an evaluation of the student's academic progress, as well as an assessment of study habits, class behavior and cooperation. At each conference, the parent signs the original report card and receives a copy to take home. The original report card is sent home at the end of the school year. A copy is kept in the child's cumulative office file. Report card samples for each grade are available in the school office.

## **15.8 Achievement Tests**

The Terra Nova CAT (California Achievement Test) is administered during the Spring for Grades 1 through 5. The scores reported on the test compare each student's performance with that of a national sample of students in the same grade, tested at the same time during the school year. The results of the tests are distributed to the parent/guardian each year in July. (See our explanation of testing under "Our Educational Philosophy" in section 3 of this Handbook.)

## **15.9 Promotion**

Students are promoted to the next grade based on their academic achievement with consideration for basic ability, chronological age, physical and social maturity, learning difficulties and excessive absences. If retention in a grade is a consideration, the parent will be requested to conference with the teacher and Administrator in the Spring semester. A final decision regarding promotion will be made by the middle of the fourth quarter. If specific behaviors have been identified that are negatively impacting a student's achievement, the teacher and/or school Administrator may suggest outside testing and diagnosis. Kirk's Student Study Team will meet to guide retention/promotion decisions.

## **15.10 Parent Requests for Evaluation and Referrals**

A \$25.00 fee will be collected by KOV for the completion of evaluation and referral forms initiated by parents. Such forms include all requests from public or private schools for written evaluations of K-5 KOV students. No fee will be charged when recommendations for testing by outside personnel are made by KOV teachers. No fee will be charged to graduating 5<sup>th</sup> grade families for records for middle schools.

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## **16 Elementary Student Responsibilities**

### **16.1 General Rules**

Kirk O' The Valley School is committed to creating a safe and orderly learning environment that reflects an academic focus (as appropriate for preschool and elementary age students). We believe school is a place to learn and we hold high expectations for all students in academic achievement and behavior.

The following is a list of general rules for students:

- Students must show respect and courtesy toward adults by obeying requests made by teachers and yard supervisors.
- Students must show respect and courtesy toward other students of all ages.
- Aggressive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- Students must show respect for school property and the property of others.

- Students must follow safety rules inside the classroom and on the playground.
- Playground rules are posted in the courtyard and on the rear playground.

## **16.2 Classroom Discipline**

All of our teachers use assertive discipline. This means that each classroom has a set of rules that all children must follow to assure a productive learning environment. Children who follow the rules are rewarded with praise, awards, special activities and special privileges. Students who choose to break rules must face consequences.

- The first time a child chooses to break a rule, he/she receives a warning.
- A second warning (or warnings) may be appropriate for younger children.
- Following warnings, the student will face a consequence established by the teacher.
- The next time the student breaks a rule, he/she will serve lunch detention and/or “community service.” The parent will be notified.
- Students breaking the rules repeatedly will be sent to the director or assistant director for disciplinary action which will include a parent conference and may include a suspension from school if there is a recurring pattern of misconduct inside or outside the classroom. The Kirk Student Study Team may become involved in resolving behavior problems.

Fighting and other severe disruptions are treated with appropriate discipline at the time of the occurrence. A parent conference will be necessary immediately.

## **16.3 Possible Consequences**

- One (or more) verbal warnings will be given at the time of the incident.
- The student will be asked to sit on the bench and the classroom teacher will be informed.
- Parents will be notified of recurring misbehavior.

- The student will be asked to provide “community service” and/or serve lunch detention.
- Suspension will be implemented in cases of serious repeated misbehavior, particularly if a student’s actions result in intentional bodily harm to another student.

## **16.4 Suspension and Expulsions**

Suspensions from school are given by the director for the worst infractions of school and classroom rules. Suspensions are given as a last resort. A suspension signifies that a child’s behavior has been so disruptive that the only reasonable way to deal with the situation is to remove the child from the school environment. If a child is suspended from school, a parent is required to meet with the director before the child’s return to school. The following behaviors, taken from Section 48900, Article 1 of the California Education Code, will be the criteria used at KOV for suspension or expulsion:

- Misconduct when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct.
- Continued willful disobedience, habitual profanity or vulgarity, open and persistent defiance of school personnel, assault and battery upon a student on school premises or while under the authority of school personnel, or any threat of force or violence directed toward school personnel at any time or place.
- Willfully defacing or destroying property, real or personal, belonging to the school, staff members, or other students. The students and their parent/guardian are liable for all damages.
- Use, possession or sale of illegal substances for minors, such as alcohol, tobacco or drugs, while on or off campus.

Children who continue to misbehave after suspension may be asked to find another school to meet his/her needs. Parents will be advised of the possibility of the expulsion and a specific period of monitoring and observation will be established by the Kirk Student Study Team (SST) as a final opportunity for the child to behave appropriately prior to expulsion.

The Student Study Team may become involved in cases of repeated misbehavior in or out of the classroom. The SST will support students, teachers, families and administrators as solutions to behavior problems are developed and implemented.

Decisions regarding discipline procedures will be based on the following:

- The severity of the offence.
- The student's previous conduct record.
- The student's attitude during the disciplinary conference with a staff member.

When disciplinary measures must be implemented, the staff strives for wisdom and fairness, and attempts to deal with each student as an individual.

### **16.5 Care of Books**

Students are responsible for caring for all books assigned to them and for all library books they check out.

Textbooks are to be covered at all times (Grades 3-5). No adhesive covers please.

Textbooks will be inspected periodically and if damage other than normal wear is noted, appropriate charges will be assessed. The responsibility for assessing damages is left to the discretion of the teacher and office manager.

Parent/guardian will be charged for the cost of a new book, plus tax and shipping, to replace a lost text book or library book.

### **16.6 Care of Property and Classrooms**

Students are reminded that they are responsible for caring for property belonging to others, the school, church, community members, as well as their personal property. Students are not to write, draw on, or deface the desks or walls, schoolbooks, or on anything belonging to the school, the church or others. Students will be required to clean and/or pay for any property they willfully or carelessly damage, and may be subject to school disciplinary measures.



## **17 Elementary Policies**

### **17.1 Backpacks**

All students are encouraged to use a durable backpack or book bag for carrying materials to and from school. Backpacks or other book bags should be labeled with the student's name.

### **17.2 Personal Items**

Occasionally students are asked by their teacher to bring personal items to school to share, or the child wishes to have a personal item at school, such as a hand held digital devices, or other toy. Such items must remain in the student's backpack unless the student is given permission to remove and use it.

### **17.3 Cell Phones**

Cell phones must also be out of sight in the student's backpack. KOV strongly recommends that all emergency situations, in which there is a need for parent/child communication, be held through the phone system in the office. If a child needs to communicate with a parent during school hours, he/she is permitted to do so on the school phone system.

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## **18 General School Policies**

### **18.1 Dress Code**

Children and families are permitted to make their own clothing choices. Generally, boys wear pants or shorts, a comfortable shirt and tennis shoes. Girls wear skirts, dresses, pants or shorts, a comfortable shirt or blouse, and tennis shoes.

We ask that shirts with writing on them be in good taste and appropriate for school. For safety reasons, children are not allowed to wear sandals to school. Close-toed shoes are preferred. We discourage high-heeled or platform shoes. We emphasize that children come to school clean, well-groomed and in clean clothing.

Children in our program are involved in different types of messy projects. Please dress your child in play clothes that can get dirty.

## 18.2 Physical Education

To the extent they are able, all students are required to participate in physical education. A doctor's note is required for limiting a student's physical activities. Once limited, a written release is required by the doctor in order for the student to resume regular physical activities.

The physical education program emphasizes learning athletic skills, rules, physical fitness activities, and good sportsmanship.

### 18.2.1 Sports Programs

Extra-curricular, after-school sports activities are offered. More information is available in the school office.

## 18.3 Lost and Found

**Students' names should be placed on all clothing and personal items worn or brought to school.** Lost items will be taken to the "Lost and Found" area in the main hallway and may be claimed there. Any items left for longer than three months will be given to a charitable organization.

## 18.4 Lunch Program

A school-sponsored lunch program is available. Lunch is available daily, and a monthly menu is distributed. Lunch fees are to be paid in advance. Please ask the office for more information.

We encourage families to provide children with healthy snacks and lunches. Appropriate snacks include fruit, vegetables, granola, crackers, etc. **Grapes, hot dogs, and grape tomatoes, should be cut into small pieces.** Candy, cakes, and "junk food" should be avoided. Children who bring their lunch are encouraged to use a lunch bag or box clearly marked with their names.

## 18.5 Grievance Procedures

Kirk O' The Valley School strives to promote harmonious and professional working relationships between parents, teachers, and administrators. In some cases, however, grievances may arise and it is the policy of Kirk O' The Valley School, and its School Board to facilitate the resolution of such complaints.

Any parent wishing to express a grievance about the program's policies may do so, in writing, to any of the following:



- The Director of the School
- Kirk O' The Valley School Board, via one of the two parent representatives
- The chairperson of the School Board

Parents wishing to express a grievance about the staff may do so, in writing, to the director. Grievances about the director may be addressed to the President of Kirk O' The Valley School Board.

## **18.6 Harassment Policy – General Guidelines**

Kirk O' The Valley School is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from any form of harassment. Harassment of any student by any other student, faculty or staff member is prohibited. Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical disability or sex. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

**Verbal** – Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.

**Physical** – Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberately impeding or blocking movements, or an intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

**Visual** – Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings or gestures.

**Sexual** – Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any or all of the following occurs:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting the student.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Special examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Using sexually degrading words to describe an individual or an individual's body.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
- Telling inappropriate or sexually related jokes.
- Making reprisals, threats of reprisals, or implied threats of reprisals following a negative response to sexual advances.

School staff members will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, substantiated acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Students and/or parents/guardians found to have filed false or frivolous charges may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.

Students are expected to do the following:

- Conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.
- Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating or harassing.
- Report all incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Administrator, teacher, staff member or pastor.
- Discontinue any actions that are perceived as discriminatory, intimidating, harassing or unwelcome as soon as they are informed that this is the perception of others.

### **18.7 Complaint Filing and Investigation Procedures**

If a staff member has knowledge of a student complaint of harassment, the following procedures are used to investigate the complaint:

1. The student or staff member affected may elect to speak individually with the person responsible for the harassment. If the objectionable behavior

does not immediately stop, the student or staff member is to report the harassment to the Administrator. If a student reports to a teacher, the teacher is responsible for notifying the Administrator. If the Administrator is the subject of the allegation, the situation should be reported the pastor.

2. The student or staff member alleging harassment will be asked to complete a formal, written complaint. The student and parent/guardian will be notified of the investigation of a harassment complaint. The complaint will be investigated thoroughly with only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.
3. The investigation will include a meeting with the person accused of harassment to share the nature of the allegations and the name of the person making the complaint. If appropriate, a staff member accused of harassment may be placed on administrative leave during the course of the investigation.
4. When the investigation has been completed, the Administrator in consultation with the School Board will decide what, if any, disciplinary action will be taken. The action taken will relate to the nature, context and seriousness of the harassment and may include expulsion or termination.
5. If the complaint is against a non-employee or non-student, such as a parent, parishioner, volunteer or vendor, the Administration will take appropriate steps to investigate and eliminate the problem.

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## **19 Special School Activities and Events**

### **19.1 Parent Activity Days**

Preschool has two activities each year that families are encouraged to attend. The first is "Family Night". The entire family is invited to return to school during an evening in August for a potluck dinner and a sharing time of music by their children. The second activity is at the end of the year during the day, when a special art project is planned for parent and child, along with a potluck lunch. In the case of working parents who cannot participate, parents can arrange for another adult to be present for the child.

### **19.2 Birthday Parties**

Families may bring a special treat or snack for the whole class in celebration of birthdays, but birthday parties are not to be held in the classrooms. Birthday party invitations are not to be distributed at school unless the entire

class receives an invitation. A class list with addresses may be requested through the school office so that invitations may be mailed to student's homes. Parent/guardian may request that their addresses be excluded from these lists. Addresses may be available in the school directory.

### **19.3 Open House**

Students in all grades participate in the Open House. Invitations are sent home with each child. This event provides an opportunity for students to bring their family members and friends to visit the classrooms and to see their art, science, and social studies projects.

### **19.4 Library**

The Library at KOV is maintained by our School Librarian and her assistants. In addition to book checkout, students receive instruction in the use of research materials. Story time is a regular part of the library experience.

### **19.5 Music Programs**

A Holiday Music Program is presented each year for parents and friends of the school. Invitations are sent home with each child. A Performing Arts production is presented each year by students who wish to develop their stage skills. A Spring Concert is presented each year by the entire elementary student body.

### **19.6 Graduation**

A "Graduation" ceremony is held each spring for the children completing Pre K. A 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation ceremony is held each year at the end of the spring term.

### **19.7 Directory**

A school directory is compiled each year. Inclusion of each family's addresses and phone numbers is optional.

### **19.8 Special Assemblies**

Throughout the year, special assemblies are presented to the students at KOV. Assemblies may include theater, music, social studies and science presentations, as well as exhibits from local, county and state agencies.

## 19.9 After School Enrichment Classes

Enrichment classes are offered for a nominal fee, which may include Cooking, Story Hour, Camp Joy (offered by KOV Church), and Tumblebees for preschoolers. Chess, Performing Arts, Arts for All, Cooking, Camp Joy, Performing Arts, and Choir are among those available to elementary students.

## 19.10 Student Store

The school offers a student store that is available to both parents and students. The store has spirit items with the Kirk School name and logo, such as sweatshirts and T-shirts.

## 19.11 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Educational Trip

Students in Grade 5 take an educational trip (or trips) each year. Fundraising efforts related to the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade trip(s) must be carefully coordinated and planned with the director. All monies raised will be deposited in a school account designated for 5<sup>th</sup> grade expenses. The classroom teacher accompanies the students on these exciting trips. The expense of the trip is in addition to regular tuition.

## 19.12 Yearbook

Yearbook Committee coordinates the production of a yearbook. The cost of the yearbook is included in the enrollment fee.

## 19.13 Unsanctioned Events

KOV will not be responsible for any event held on or off campus that is not officially sanctioned by KOV's Administration.

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## 20 Emergency Preparedness

### 20.1 Fire and Earthquake Drills

Both fire and earthquake drills are practiced on a regular basis. In the event of an emergency on campus, the following procedures are as follows:

**Evacuation** – Students evacuate the buildings for both fire and earthquake drills. In a fire drill, the students move to the rear parking lot or Welby Way sidewalk, allowing access for emergency vehicles. Kindergarten and 1st Grade students

may also evacuate to the sidewalk in front of the Tot Center on Vanowen Street. In an earthquake, all students take cover and remain in a “tucked” position until the teacher determines it is safe to leave the room. The children then proceed to the rear parking lot or to Welby Way sidewalk.

**Retention** – In case of an emergency, children will be retained at school until a parent/guardian is able to pick them up. Students will only be allowed to leave with an adult whose name is listed on the emergency card. Identification may be requested.

**Supervision** – All staff members are committed to protecting your children. Staff members will remain with the students until a parent/guardian is able to pick them up.

**Communication** – Please do not call the school if an earthquake has occurred. Communication, at best, will be difficult. The communication lines at the school, if operational, will be used for the school’s emergency procedures. Office staff and phone lines will be unable to handle incoming calls. As soon as it is possible, the office staff will send a message via the Kirk App.

A parent/guardian should call their OUT OF STATE EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON as soon as possible after a disaster occurs. If a parent/guardian is unable to pick up a child by 6:00 P.M., a staff member will attempt to reach the OUT OF STATE EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON to verify a child’s safety and the status of the parent/guardian.

**Pick-Up Procedure** – Students may be released when it is safe to do so. The adult picking up a child should report to the west gate on Welby Way gates and give the person in charge the following information: Child’s name, grade and teacher’s name. So that the staff will be able to account for all children, parents and guardians will not be permitted on campus beyond the gates. The children will be released after they are signed out. The parent/guardian is asked to leave the premises as soon as their child is released.

**Emergency Kits** – All students are to have an emergency kit. Kits prepared by the parent/guardian will be sent home at the end of the school year.

**TRY TO REMAIN CALM AND KNOW THAT WE WILL BE CARING FOR YOUR CHILD(REN).**

## **20.2 Other School Closures**

When inclement weather hampers safe driving conditions, listen to radio station KNX-1070-AM, or other local stations for school closure news. If an

emergency results in the school being closed, room parents will be contacted to begin a telephone chain to communicate the news to each home.

### **20.3 Catastrophic Emergency**

In the event that requires the closure of the school for an indefinite period, no tuition refund will be issued; however, the closed days, beginning with day four of the closure, will be made up, either by extending the school year for the equivalent number of days, or by remaining open during scheduled holidays.

### **20.4 Evacuation Plan – An Overview**

In order to ensure the safety of your children, Kirk O' The Valley School has in place an evacuation plan in the event this is needed. Children will be removed from the school campus only if school personnel are directed to do this by fire or police personnel. If there is danger from a fire, gas leak or toxic spill, it may be necessary to remove children from the area.

The school's evacuation plan consists of two stages:

1. The first stage is to evacuate all buildings and move children to the rear parking lot or Welby Way sidewalk. This would be done in the event of a fire or earthquake.
2. The second stage is to remove children from the area completely. This would be done only by order of the Police or Fire Department.

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## **21 Internet and Technology – Acceptable Use Policy**

Internet access is available to students and teachers at Kirk O' The Valley School. Computers accessible to students in the classroom and in the computer lab have very tight parental controls. Every effort is made to protect our children from inadvertent sites that are not appropriate.

### **21.1 Guidelines**

Access to the internet is to be used in support of educational goals, research, and educational objectives at KOV. The following guidelines are provided here so that parents and students are aware of the responsibilities of internet use. Students and staff at KOV will use computing and networking resources in an efficient, ethical, and legal manner. If a KOV user violates any of these provisions, his or her account will be terminated, and future access could possibly be denied. Additional disciplinary measures may be taken.

All illegal activities such as the transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation, are prohibited. These include, but are not limited to:

- Threatening or obscene material.
- Material protected by trade secret.
- Product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Copyrighted material.

Use of the technology lab and any other electronic equipment provided by the school is a privilege. Students retain that privilege by being respectful of the equipment provided as well as the instructor and other students using the equipment. Parents will be held responsible for any damage caused by the misuse of the equipment in the technology lab or classroom.

The school is not responsible for any personal equipment that is brought to school by a student. This includes hand held devices, phones, ear phones, or any other electronic equipment.

Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Being courteous.
- Following the rules set up by other groups on the internet.
- Using the internet as a resource tool.
- Avoiding inappropriate language; do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Staying on task.
- Do not reveal your personal address and/or phone number, or those of other students and colleagues.
- Note that email is not guaranteed to be private.
- Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by others users.



The Computer Lab staff and/or Administrator at KOV will monitor the user's use of the network resources. Monitoring may include tracking the amount of time spent using these resources. The Computer Lab staff and/or Administrator will use the Acceptable Use Policy to determine what constitutes inappropriate use. Any student can lose all internet privileges at any time for violation(s) of the Acceptable Use Policy.

The following practices are NOT acceptable:

- Using the internet to harass someone.
- Using the internet for commercial purpose.
- Seeking unauthorized access to any resource.
- Vandalism, defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, of any network connected to the internet backbone, uploading or creating of computer viruses.
- Downloading or playing of video or audio clips without permission.
- Accessing chat rooms.
- Visiting a site not appropriate to appropriate research or class work.
- Software piracy (illegal use of software).
- Attempts to learn the password of others.

If any user comes upon an inappropriate website, the user is to click back ONCE on the "BACK" button and notify the teacher or supervisor immediately. Failure to do so will result in consequences or loss of privileges.

## **21.2 Consequences**

Violating any of the guidelines or prohibitions can result in:

- Restricted network access.
- Loss of all network privileges.
- Disciplinary and/or legal action including, but not limited to, criminal prosecution under appropriate state and federal laws.

**NOTE: All Kirk O' The Valley users should be aware that their activities are very visible, and can easily be monitored.**

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## **22 PTF – Description and Purpose**

KOV has a wonderful community of involved parents. Parents, Teachers, Friends (PTF) is the parent-run organization that promotes communication between school and home. It provides a variety of social activities as well as fundraising and support activities for individual classrooms and for the school. Membership includes all parents and guardians of students and all the KOV staff. The meetings and activities are open to all parents, teachers, and friends of Kirk O' The Valley School.