

Little  
  
**Saints**

**Early Education  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2024-2025**

## 2024/25 Early Education Staff Directory

<b>Hillcrest Christian Early Education Office</b>	<b>Hillcrest Christian Main Office</b>
449 E. Wilbur Avenue Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	
<b>Early Education Director:</b> Cheryl Curtis <b>Office Phone:</b> 805-495-5513 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ccurtis@hillcrestcs.org">ccurtis@hillcrestcs.org</a> <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.hillcrestcs.org">www.hillcrestcs.org</a>	<b>Head of School:</b> Dan Vande Pol <b>Main Campus Phone:</b> 805-497-7501 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:dvandepol@hillcrestcs.org">dvandepol@hillcrestcs.org</a> <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.hillcrestcs.org">www.hillcrestcs.org</a>

<u>Staff Member</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>Rm. Number</u>
Cheryl Curtis	Early Education/Preschool Director	Office
Amy Vande Pol	Office Manager	Office
Alane Astorga	Spanish Teacher	Office
Hailey Luna-Serrano	STEM/Lead Support Teacher	Office
	Support/Sub Teacher	Office
Ashley Regalado	Acorns Teacher	Rm 1
	Acorns Teacher	Rm 1
Katie Gervasi	Sprouts Teacher	Rm 2
Mikaela Labrador	Sprouts Teacher	Rm 2
Jessica Cleaver	Saplings Teacher	Rm 3
	Saplings Teacher	Rm 4
Savanna Contreras	Saplings Teacher	Rm 4
Bella Huff	Saplings Teacher	Rm 4
Kelly Lenhert	TK Teacher	Rm. 5
Kyleigh Thorton	TK Teacher	Rm 5
Janet Contreras	TK Teacher	Rm 6
Maddie Barkley	TK Teacher	Rm 6

Dear Early Education Parents,

Thank you for entrusting us with your children, God's greatest gifts to each of us as parents. They are our legacy for future generations. That is why at Hillcrest Christian School, our faculty and staff have valued our incredible partnership with parents from one generation to the next for 44 years to impact your children's lives and help prepare them for an amazing future.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

It is our prayer that your children will truly feel the love and care we have for each of them. Even more important is that they will come to know the special plan and purpose God has in store for them as they grow and develop into confident, successful students with God-given talents and abilities.

It is our privilege to walk alongside you to encourage your children to grow in Christian character, Godly wisdom, integrity, and to make challenging decisions with grace. As difficult obstacles arise, this is what will prepare them to be successful not only now in school, but also in college and in life.

In the process, your children will be motivated to excel by some of the most outstanding faculty in the nation, by the most friendly, welcoming students, and by some of the most dedicated parents. Hundreds of supportive alumni, pastors, and community members who proudly support the servant leadership of our student body and faculty at Hillcrest Christian School surround this distinctive community.

So be prepared for great things this year as you prayerfully support Hillcrest Christian's mission to impact your child. Be ready to see God's work as we partner to support our programs and commit to making a difference because your kids and our faculty are so worth it! Believe God for miracles as you pray for our children to grow in their character and hearts towards Christ and others.

Enjoy the memories as you come out to support the special events and games, because they will only be this age once. Enjoy this year as parents; enjoy being involved and making a difference. Pray for God's hand of blessing on your child and our ministry at Hillcrest Christian. Relish every experience from preschool through high school. Watch God touch our kids' hearts at Hillcrest Christian School and create amazing miracles.

Thank you for partnering with us in raising up the next generation to impact the world for Jesus Christ!

In His and Your Service,  
Dan Vande Pol, Head Of School and  
Cheryl Curtis, Early Education Director

**Hillcrest Christian School's Mission**

Hillcrest Christian School is dedicated to serving the Christian community by providing high-quality Christian education and discipleship for the development of well-rounded students who will impact this world for the Lord Jesus Christ through Biblical thought and action and a deep-rooted foundation in God's word.

### **Statement of Faith**

We believe the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments of Holy Scripture (the Bible) to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2 Peter 1:21; Acts 4:18-19; Romans 13:1-5)

We believe there is one and only one true and living God existing in three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each a distinct Person, but all of one essence and all having the same nature, perfections, and attributes; and each is worthy of precisely the same worship, confidence, and obedience. (Genesis 1:26; Jeremiah 10:10; Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19) We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; His sinless life, His miracles, His shed blood on Calvary as a vicarious substitute and atoning death, and in His personal and visible return in power and glory. He was buried; He rose again bodily; He ascended to God the Father according to the Scriptures. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; John 2:11; Isaiah 53:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Mark 16:19; Hebrews 4:15, 7:25; Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11)

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, coexistent with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the chief agent in regeneration for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, the chief conviction of sin, and the chief comforter of the believer who indwells Christians, uniting them as one in Christ, enabling them to live a Godly life and empowers them to serve in the church and community in the name of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19; John 16:7-11; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 8:9, 13-14; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20; 12:12-14, Ephesians 4:1-7,30; 5:18)

We believe the triune God created the universe apart from pre-existing materials and without any evolutionary process as set forth in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. We believe that man is the direct creation of God - body, soul, and spirit - and is made in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26; Genesis 1:1; Matthew 19:4; John 1:1-3; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3)

We believe that Adam, the first man, sinned by disobedience. This act resulted in the fall of mankind and incurred both physical and spiritual death for all. We believe that everyone will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and there receive eternal life or death. We believe eternal salvation for the lost comes through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, by His sacrifice on the cross alone, is a gift and not as a result of works. Salvation is found in no one else but Christ, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we are saved. (Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12; 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; John 1:12; 3:3, 17:17; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:17; Acts 4:12)

We believe that heaven is the glorious eternal home for those who are saved by accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and that hell is the place of eternal separation from God for all who reject Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. (2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:10,15; John 14:1-3; Revelation 7:15-17) We believe that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all and that this unity of Spirit in the body of believers through the bond of peace overcomes denominational differences. (Ephesians 4:3-4)

We believe that the local church observes two ordinances - baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion). We believe that all who have received Christ as Savior and Lord should be baptized in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that the Lord's Supper should be observed in remembrance of Jesus Christ's death for our sins until He comes again. (Matthew 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Romans 6:3-6; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26) We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:6-9) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy only between a man

and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Hillcrest Christian School and to provide a Biblical role model to students, parents, and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Hillcrest Christian School in any capacity or who serve as volunteers agree to and abide by this statement on marriage, gender and sexuality. (Matthew 5:16, Philippians 2:14-16, 1Thessalonians 5:22)

### **Vision Statement**

Our vision is to develop and maintain an accredited, multiple-facility, interdenominational, community-wide, Christian school system for students from 18 months through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The school system will provide rigorous academic instruction that is faithfully integrated with a God-centered Biblical view, including a range of extra-curricular and athletic activities. Our goal is to help students strengthen their personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and develop their talents, abilities, and character to impact this world for Him.

### **Philosophy of Education**

The educational philosophy of Hillcrest Christian School is based on a God-centered view of life. This view holds that God created and sustains all things. All things, including man, are dynamically related to God and have the purpose of glorifying Him. Because man is a sinner by nature and choice, he cannot glorify nor have a relationship with God on his own. He can do this only by choosing God's gift of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, thereby committing his life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The God-centered view of life also holds that God communicates truth to man through the Bible. The Bible is the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God and is the standard for all Truth.

Our primary aim is to assist Christian parents in their responsibility for their children's education and training and provide an emotionally and physically safe environment. As such, HCS will provide rigorous academic instruction and extra-curricular activities that are integrated with a God-centered view of life. The intent is to help students develop their talents, abilities, and character to impact this world for the Lord.

Our responsibility for the student encompasses the spiritual, mental, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional aspects of student life. These areas are inseparable and are all influenced by the truth that God is the center of life. Therefore, the Bible will not be taught compartmentally or intellectually alone. Instead, the truth of God's Word will be incorporated throughout the whole curriculum.

This philosophy requires that we promote high academic standards while helping students achieve creative and critical thinking skills using the best-integrated curriculum model available. The curriculum at Hillcrest Christian Preschool forms the basis for developing an effective, developmentally appropriate preschool program, which includes teaching in all areas vital to young children's growth.

The curriculum will be taught by a qualified Christian faculty, who will also serve as role models with their Christian walk, a positive attitude, and the belief that God has called them to work with children. Staff members also meet or exceed the approved standards for early childhood education and experience set forth by California. In addition, our staff pursues further professional and spiritual growth through continued coursework and seminars.

This philosophy dictates that we cooperate closely with parents in every phase of the student's development, always offering assistance in understanding the purposes of HCS.

## **ESO's Expected Student Outcomes**

## I am an:

### Honoring

- I understand that God created the world and I value the resources and opportunities that I've been given. I strive to steward these good gifts appropriately. *"For by Him, all things were created, in heaven and on earth visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominion or rules or authorities - all things were created through him and for him." Colossians 1:16*
- I understand that God created the world and I value the resources and opportunities that I've been given. I strive to steward these good gifts appropriately. *"And he said to him," You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39*
- I know God's Word guides me in what is right and wrong, and I choose what is right. *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105*
- I understand that I have been made in the image of God and my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. I strive to honor my body through my choices and decisions. *"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27*
- I value all people as God's dearly loved image-bearers. I strive to treat them in a way that reflects their true worth. *"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." Romans 13:1*

### Christ-following

- I trust that Jesus fully atoned for my sins, once and for all, through his sacrificial death on the cross and I understand that Jesus calls me to live as his disciple. I approach God with gratitude and assurance of His love, and I choose to walk with Jesus in an intimate relationship. *"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12*
- I understand that the Bible is God's inerrant, written Word, living and active; I understand that Jesus is the Incarnate Word, the clearest revelation of God. I view Scripture and God through this lens and I desire to follow God's authority in my thoughts and actions. *"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Hebrews 4:12*
- I understand that Jesus' followers have a vital role to play in God's ongoing, redemptive story in the world. I join in this work by listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and being obedient to His call on my life. *"I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Romans 12:1-2*
- I understand that discipleship starts with obedience to God and is developed through prayer, studying scripture, serving others and being a participating member of the body of Christ. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, I choose to be active in my pursuit of Jesus. *"Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name I will do it." John 14:13-14*

### Scholar

- I strive for excellence by being an engaged listener and active learner who glorifies God through biblical thought and action. *"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31*
- I value sound reasoning and creative problem-solving. I am equipped to thoughtfully discuss complex topics, questions and ideas clearly, confidently, and compellingly, both verbally and in writing. *"Ask and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8*
- I value collaboration as a member of a learning community. I am able to clearly communicate thoughts and ideas, recognize the value and importance of the contribution of others, and see a task through to completion. *"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Ecclesiastes 4:9-10*
- I value learning as an ongoing journey and understand the skills I have acquired can be used to further God's Kingdom. I am equipped with skills and habits that will allow me to continue my education in whatever form that might take. *"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established." Proverbs 16:3*

## Admissions Philosophy & Procedures

Hillcrest Christian Preschool is a ministry to families who understand that their child will be taught the Biblical principles through our statement of faith and mission statement in a Christ-centered educational environment.

Any family interested in applying to our program must tour with our Admissions Director or Early Education Director. During the tour, they will discuss our programs, show families around our campus and answer any questions you may have.

If, after a tour, a family wants to pursue admission to the program, they will create an account online at [www.hillcrestcs.org](http://www.hillcrestcs.org) where they can fill out the New Student Application. There is a \$50 non-refundable application fee. Once the application is received, the family will be contacted to schedule a family interview with our Head of School. Our family interviews are a way for our Head of School to get to know the family and share more about who we are.

Once an offer is sent, families have two weeks to accept and complete the enrollment packet, all required licensing documentation, and immunization records, and they must pay the non-refundable fee.

Children will only be permitted to attend with current immunizations. [NO SHOTS – NO SCHOOL](#)

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

Hillcrest Christian School admits students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Hillcrest Christian School does not discriminate based on race in the administration of its educational policies, financial aid programs, and other school-administered programs.

### **General School Information**

Mascot – Saints

Colors – Navy & Gold

Alma Mater – Hillcrest, Hillcrest we pledge our loyalty; To our dear alma mater, we all sing to thee. We are forever faithful to blue and gold. Thy name and honor we shall ever uphold Hillcrest, Hillcrest, thy strength God shall always provide; Dear alma mater, He has been thy guide; Be forever true to the faith of old, God's name and honor we shall ever uphold

### **School theme verse:**

*“For even the Son of Man came not to be served **but to serve**, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45 ESV.*

### **Preschool Program Hours**

Hillcrest Christian Preschool offers 3-day (M/W/F), 2-day (T/Th), and 5 Day Programs.

Half Day: 8:00 am -12:00 pm

Full-Day: 8:00 am -3:15 pm

### **Extended Care**

As a licensed facility, we follow Title 22's state ratios of 12:1 for ages 2-5 and 6:1 for ages 18 months-30 months. All extended care requests require a minimum of **1-week notice** and be approved by the director. Day of drop-in requests must be pre-approved by the Director prior to your child staying for extended care. After school, Extended Care starts at 3:30 pm. Any child who is not registered for Extended Care will be brought to the office at 3:30 pm.

### **Change of Schedules**

Any change in your child's scheduled days requires a 30-day notice, and the director's approval, and a fee of \$50 will be charged at the time of the change.

**Tuition** Please see the Early Education Tuition sheet for details.

### **Parking**

According to CA Vehicle Code 15620, any person responsible for a child who is 6 years of age or younger may not leave that child inside a motor vehicle without being subject to the supervision of a person who is 12 years of age or older. No vehicle may be left with its engine running or the vehicle's keys in the ignition.

### **Double Parking**

Parents can double park in the mornings as needed and in the afternoons **after 3:10 pm Monday - Thursday and 1:55 on Friday**. Double parking cannot occur during Elementary pick-up time Monday-Thursday 2:55 pm - 3:20 pm and Friday 1:40 pm - 1:55 pm.

### **Arrival and Pick-up**

Parents/Caregivers must walk children into the school, make contact with your child's teacher, help your child put things away, sign in and out on Brightwheel with the code, and complete legal signature. This is a State Licensing requirement, and the school may be fined \$150 for each missing **full** signature. As a legal signature is required at HCS, we require someone 18 years old and older to pick up students.

All check-ins and check-outs will be completed via the Brightwheel Application. Parents are responsible for paying \$150 per missing signature.

If for any reason, the child is to be picked up by someone other than those listed on the emergency contacts and authorized pick-up list, a written/email notification must be sent to the school by the parent before the child is released. Identification will be required upon pick up. No child will be released from the school to anyone who does not have proper identification.

### **Late Pick-Up Policy**

Please call the office if you are expected to be late in picking up your child. 805-495-5513.

After 12:00, 3:30, and 5:30 PM, you will be charged \$25 and \$1 per minute after.

After the third late pick-up, you will be removed from the extended care list until further notice.

### **Late Arrival**

If you arrive and your child's class is already in circle time, please bring them to the Early Education office. This will help the teacher keep the focus of the class. Knocking on the door while circle time is in progress distracts those arriving on time and disrupts their learning. Any arrivals after 9:30 am must get the director's approval before doing so.

### **Vacations/Holidays/Absences**

The yearly tuition is divided into ten equal payments based on the number of days offered in the school year. No credit is given for scheduled school holidays, vacations, or sick days.



## **Classroom Schedules**

Each classroom will have a unique schedule that meets its students' needs. A copy of the schedule and welcome packets at enrollment will be handed out on the back-to-school night. Schedules are flexible based on emergent curriculum and children's needs.

## **Celebrations**

Celebrations are SO much fun and are great ways for families to earn volunteer hours!

Holidays: Teachers will contact families to help plan, prep, and implement. We Celebrate Christmas, Easter, International Day, Teacher Appreciation, Mother's Day, and Father's Day.

## **Birthdays**

Parents can bring a store-purchased healthy snack to share with the class and sing Happy Birthday after the morning snack. Hillcrest Christian Preschool does not facilitate birthday parties. \*No candles are permitted on campus.\* Please check with your child's teacher for any known allergies as the birthday snack must be appropriate for all students in the class. For students with summer birthdays, your teacher will select a day for all summer birthdays to be celebrated together.

## **Chapels**

Preschool chapels are held weekly at 9:30 AM on alternating Wednesdays This is when we come together and talk about the Bible lesson we are learning as a school and worship Jesus! Parents are always welcome to attend chapel with their students.

## **Disaster Preparedness**

HCS stocks emergency supplies to be used in the event of a major disaster in which the students might have to stay at the school for an extended period. Each student must purchase one with their enrolment packet or bring one before the first day of school. Earthquake and Fire drills are practiced quarterly. If an emergency occurs, HCS will contact parents first and then move down the emergency contact list if parents cannot be reached. A minimum of at least one person on this list is required in the event of an emergency.

## **Nut Policy**

We are a nut-free Early Education campus. Any nut products packed will be sent to the office for pick up. All nut alternatives ***must*** be labeled with the product name. **Example:** "Sun Butter."

## **Snacks**

Snacks should include two nutritional choices and vary from day to day. Please label all items with your child's name and make sure it is ready to eat as is from home. Teachers will not be preparing snacks in class. There are no microwaves/refrigerators available for student snacks. If your child is staying past 3:15 PM, please include another snack that will be eaten during extended childcare.

If your child does not have an AM or PM snack, by licensing requirements, we are required to provide your child with one, and you will be billed through the cafe per food item they order.

## **Lunch**

Children who stay past noon must bring lunch or order a hot lunch from our cafe. Lunch from home must include nutritious and healthy items (protein, carbohydrates, fruit, vegetables, and water). No candy. Anything your child does not eat will be saved in their lunch box to take home, so you know what they are or are not eating. Please **LABEL** all lunch/snack bags and water bottles with the child's name, as we often have identical bags. Lunch brought from home must be ready to eat as is. There are no microwaves/ refrigerators available for student lunches. Teachers will not be preparing meals.

**Water ONLY in your child's reusable water container as we do not have water fountains on campus and children need access to water at all times. Please do not put juice, watered-down juice, or any other additives into your child's water or into his/her snack or lunch bags.** Each classroom has filtered water jugs in each classroom to refill their water bottles. Teachers use these jugs to refill their children's water containers during school hours.

### **Hot Lunch**

Our Cafe's daily specials are posted weekly on our website, including an entree, side, drink, or a la carte items. All items are priced as listed on the posted menu.

Parents must write their child's first and last name on the order sheet and order on the sheet in the EE office. All billing is processed through your FACTS account. **All orders must be submitted before 9 AM.**

### **Social Media/Photo Policy**

Students' photos/videos may be used for publicity purposes. Photo and video images taken on campus at sporting events and/or field trips, etc, will be posted on the Hillcrest website and social media accounts. These photos will not include any personally identifiable information about our students from Acorns-12th grade. Personally identifiable information includes student names, addresses, email, and phone numbers. Photos/video images taken from on-campus sporting events and/or field trips will be posted in the yearbook and include the child's name and grade. Parents who wish to rescind this agreement regarding the website and social media may do so at any time by sending a written letter to the administration, effective upon receipt.

### **Confidentiality**

Information regarding children, families, and staff is private and confidential. We will only discuss your child with you and treat each family with respect and privacy.

### **Visitors on Campus**

All visitors must check in at the school office through our Raptor System. Our Raptor System scans Driver's Licenses to do an immediate background check and sign people on and off campus. The system will print an ID badge, which **must be worn at all times on campus** and returned to the office to check out when leaving campus. Students are only allowed to bring visitors on campus during the school day if written permission has been obtained from the administration one day in advance.

### **Volunteer Hours**

Families must complete 10 hours of volunteer service to the school annually throughout the year. There are numerous opportunities for service in both classroom and school-wide activities. Speak with the teachers directly or check with the PFA at [hcsdfa@hillcrestcs.org](mailto:hcsdfa@hillcrestcs.org). Parents are responsible for logging the hours worked on their FACTS account. Families will be invoiced at a rate of \$40/per hour for any hours not completed. (See the Volunteer section for what qualifies as volunteer hours.)

### **Communications**

Christian education is a partnership between the school and the families that we serve. Good communication is one of the keys to working successfully together.

## **FACTS**

All school emails are sent through FACTS. It is linked to the HCS website at [www.hillcrestcs.org](http://www.hillcrestcs.org), which the faculty maintains to provide information related to events, assignments, and announcements. Please login to <https://logins2.renweb.com/logins/parentsweb-login.aspx> whenever you need information. The Family Directory is located on FACTS. Please inform the school of any changes to your contact information.

## **Brightwheel**

Daily parent communication is essential to a successful partnership. Brightwheel is implemented to allow parents and staff to communicate during the school day. Announcements, pictures, and daily activities will be posted to your child's Brightwheel account as feasible by each teacher.

Please note staff will answer BrightWheel messages during business hours,  
7:30 am-5:30 pm Monday-Friday.

## **Email**

Staff can be contacted by email. Every staff member has an email address consisting of the first initial of the first name, then the complete last name, @hillcrestcs.org. An example of Jane Smith would be [jsmith@hillcrestcs.org](mailto:jsmith@hillcrestcs.org).

Staff will only communicate through Brightwheel, staff email, and school phones.

## **Who Do I Talk To?**

Questions or concerns about classroom procedures, activities, or incidents may occur during the year. Parents are requested to follow the Matthew 18:15-17 principle whenever a problem may arise.

1. If you have a complaint or concern, first and foremost, pray about it. Ask God to help address your concern in such a way that it will improve our school and honor Him.
2. Complaints or concerns should be expressed first to the individual in question. Please set up an appointment to talk to them privately. Never negatively discuss the teacher, a child's playmates, or the school in the presence of your child and/or any other children.
3. Ensure that the person you are expressing your concerns knows all the situation details and precisely what you are concerned about and why. Misunderstood worries could lead to further problems and needless heartache.
4. Express your concern only to the person who should hear it. Unnecessary worry, harm, and hard feelings result when problems and dissatisfactions are expressed to persons other than those directly involved with the situation.
5. If you cannot work the situation out between yourself and the person involved, please take the situation to the director.

## **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences are an excellent and effective way to partner with your child's teacher. This time is set aside to review assessments and your child's overall development. Parent conferences are in October and March.

## **School News**

Weekly communication of timely events and information entitled *Hillcrest Weekly News* is emailed to families every other Friday to inform parents of upcoming events for our grades 18 months through 12th.

## **Parentlink Communication System**

This system allows us to contact all our families quickly and efficiently. It can be used to text families urgent information.

## **Financial Policy**

### **Policies**

HCS charges annual tuition due in full by the end of May or at the time of registration. HCS offers a deferred payment plan for the annual tuition. You must indicate your method of payment at registration. This contract obligates you to pay the total annual tuition commitment regardless of any deferred payment plan and regardless of student absence, withdrawal, or dismissal for any reason, at any time during the year. For late entrants, tuition will be calculated based on the month of entry, with our school year being defined as a 10-month year, August-May. All deferred payments must be completed by May.

### **Extended Care Program**

Charges for Extended Care will accrue through the 25th of each month. Extended Care payments are due by the 1st of the month and are considered late, with fees applied on the 5th

Please see the extended care information sheet for pricing.

### **Guidelines for Student Appearance/Dress Code**

A neat and adequately attired student body produces an atmosphere conducive to study and good work in a Christian school. The HCS dress code intends for students to be dressed appropriately and professionally to honor our Lord and prepare students for respecting/honoring the dress code of future employers. The aim is for attire, jewelry, hairstyles, etc., not to be a distraction for the students themselves or others. Any faculty or staff member may determine if a student fails to comply with the dress code.

### **Clothing**

We recommend “pull-on” type clothes with an elastic waist that the child can easily manage. Overalls, rompers, bodysuits, onesies, belts, etc., are highly discouraged. Girls must wear shorts under their dresses and skirts to maintain modesty and protect their bodies from dirt (mostly the sandbox).

Shoes must be worn at all times - including nap times. This is in case of an emergency and we have to evacuate during rest time. **Children must wear closed-toed shoes. Flip-flops, Crocs, Cowboy Boots, and Jellies are not permitted as appropriate footwear.** Rainboots are allowed only when appropriate and students must bring appropriate indoor shoes! This policy is to help prevent injuries.

An extra change of clothes and shoes must be in the children’s cubby in case of accidents or messy play. Please only dress your children in clothes you are ok with getting dirty!

**Personal Items** must be labeled with your child's first and last name. Staff will help children keep track of items as much as possible; however, things will go missing, or another child will have the same item. Toys from home must stay at home unless it is a share day. Teachers will notify you through Brightwheel before such days occur. **Pacifiers and lovies** will only be permitted at rest time. We will encourage children to be independent and use their language to communicate with each other!

### **Preschool Discipline**

At Hillcrest Christian Preschool, we believe discipline is necessary for the student’s welfare and the entire school. Discipline is a means of teaching and instilling a sense of right and wrong in each child. Developing character traits that are consistent with Christian principles is an ongoing objective.

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”  
Proverbs 22:6

We desire to give the child every chance to grow in become more responsible and self-directing. We do not expect any child to be “perfect.” We manage behavior problems by helping the child develop his/her conflict resolution skills. Thus, discipline is firm and consistent yet tempered with kindness, love, and genuine regard for the student. Our positive approach focuses on what is good rather than concentrating on what is not. Teachers keep behavior logs for each student to use as a tool and work with parents and directors to decide on the best plan of action for each individual child.

Most disciplinary action is handled by simply redirecting the child’s behavior. If the behavioral problem persists, the teacher and child talk about the behavior, making sure the child understands why it is unacceptable. The child is then given an acceptable alternate activity. The teacher clarifies to the child that it is inappropriate behavior, not the child.

Should the negative behavior continue, the child will again be spoken to and moved away from the activity to think about his/her behavior. In some instances, the child will be removed from the classroom and taken to the director, who will talk with him/her and determine a course of action that will be satisfactory for both teacher and child.

Parents will be notified by describing the behavior and how it was handled and recommendations on how the parents can redirect and work on the behavior at home as a team effort.

If the unacceptable behavior continues after this, the child will be removed from the situation, and the director and teacher will again counsel the child by giving acceptable alternatives. The parent will be called and asked to conference with the child, teacher, and director if it progresses beyond this point.

Ongoing demonstration of an uncooperative spirit through documented continual disobedience and negative attitude will result in the child’s dismissal from the preschool program.

### **ALL School Discipline Guiding Principles**

- To model Christ-like behavior
- To educate a student on self-discipline
- To educate a student to take personal responsibility for his/her behavior
- To balance justice with mercy
- To make decisions based on behavior patterns and not just isolated incidents, unless severe.
- To make decisions based on the common good of the whole school community
- To be consistent in exercising discipline without neglecting to consider individual circumstances

### **Incident or Injury**

Depending on the nature of an incident/injury, the teacher will complete an incident report and have both the director and the parent sign the report. The parent will be given a copy upon request and the original will be kept on file.

Minor incidents, i.e., scraped knee, elbow, etc., will be recorded on Brightwheel. Anything more than a minor incident will be documented with the school incident report, and parent phone calls will be made.

If a child harms another child, both of the children's parents will receive a report describing the incident. This report will be signed by the teacher, the director, and the parent and kept on file. If a child continues to harm other children, the director will call the parents to pick up the child immediately; they may return the next day. If the behavior continues, the director, the teacher, and the parents will discuss the behavior and partner on steps to help the child. If the behavior continues, the child is subject to dismissal.

### **Bitting**

Depending on the age, biting can be developmentally appropriate; however, it is never tolerated. Teachers will partner with you to create a consistent behavior plan to be implemented at school and at home. This partnership is key in eliminating the behavior.

***HCS Biting Policy: If a child bites or attempts to bite twice in one day, the child will be sent home.***

All biting will be documented on the child's individual behavior log. Children who bite excessively or break the skin will be sent home. This could be grounds for dismissal.

### **Dismissal Procedures**

Dismissal from school due to disciplinary action does not excuse parents from the full year of tuition payment.

1. Incident reported to the administration.
2. Students are suspended until a meeting is arranged.
3. Meeting with the student, parents, and Early Education Director. Students and parents are given an opportunity to be heard.
4. The administration evaluates the situation. The Early Education Director renders the final decision.
5. If a student is asked to withdraw from school and the parents choose not to withdraw, the Administration can exercise their prerogative to expel the student. \*Administration reserves the right to discipline or dismiss students from Hillcrest Christian School for what it considers due cause. Students may also be dismissed from the school if the actions of the parent(s) are disruptive or unsupportive to the school.

### **Playground Rules**

This handbook does not list all the playground rules and procedures. Your child's teacher will detail playground rules with the class. Students are always expected to follow the rules and to respect each other. Good sportsmanship is always expected, and rough play/wrestling is prohibited. Teachers will verbally speak on this during back-to-school night and throughout the year via email.

### **Rest Time**

According to Title 22 of the California Community Care Licensing Handbook, regulating licensing of Child Day Care Facilities requires that provision be made for children to rest after lunch. All children in our full-day program rest between 12:30-2:30 PM.

All children resting must bring a blanket each week. All blankets must be clearly **LABELED** with your child's name, must fit, and be placed in his/her Hillcrest "little saint's" nap bag. Bedding will be sent home weekly or as needed for laundering.

Children are not required to sleep during this time. After 45 minutes, if a child is not sleeping, they will be offered quiet activities that will not bother the sleeping children.

**Diaper bags are not permitted to be in cubbies.**

## Diapering and Toileting Policy

Children in diapers will be changed every two hours or as needed. Children will be encouraged, when developmentally appropriate, to use the restroom. Teachers will communicate with parents to ensure what we are working on here is the same as what is happening at home. Once a child is successfully dry, going potty on their own for **two weeks at school**, and has the director's approval they may attend school in underwear.

What does toilet readiness look like?

- Ability to pull on and off clothing.
- Ability to stay dry for long periods
- Letting adults know when they need to use the restroom.
- Pull Ups do not mean potty-trained.

If a child has a BM accident in their underwear per OSHA requirements, staff will call the director for assistance and safely cut the child's underwear off to not expose anyone to the BM. Teachers and the director will have a conversation with the student about the importance of using the restroom and how important it is to keep all toilet needs in the bathroom. This will be communicated with you in person or over the phone so you can continue the conversation with your child, and we can devise a plan to help them succeed in restroom needs.

If a child runs out of diapers and needs to buy one from school they are **\$1** per diaper.

## Illness

If your child becomes ill during the day, he/she will be removed from the other children, and you will be called to pick him/her up from school. Your responsibility is to come as soon as possible for your child and/or secure alternate childcare. A report will be given to you at pick-up describing symptoms, temperature, and first-aid measures given to your child.

Your child's health is of major importance. For your protection, Hillcrest Christian Early Education Department has adopted the following regulations:

1. **NO CHILD WILL BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND SCHOOL WHO SHOW ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:** red or pink discharging eyes, a temperature of 100.0° and above (99.0° during cold/flu season), nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, rashes, headache, signs of listlessness, weakness, drowsiness, flushed skin or chills.
2. If your child has had a fever during the night, he/she will not be permitted at school until a full 24-48 hours after his/her temperature has returned to normal with **no medication**.
3. If your child is sent home from school with any symptoms in #1, he/she will not be permitted to return to school the next day.
4. The director and teacher can refuse your child's admittance if they see ANY signs of illness.
5. A written doctor's clearance from the doctor's office will be required before a child can return to school if he/she has had or has been suspected of having any communicable/infectious condition or in cases of prolonged illnesses of five days or more. This must include the name of the condition/illness, any medication being given, and assurance that the child is not contagious to other students.
6. If your child is hospitalized for any reason, the child **MAY NOT** return to school without a note from their doctor clearing them to return to group care.
7. **Parents are required to notify the school if their child is exposed to a communicable/ infectious disease so that the health needs of the other children at the school can be protected.**

**Medication: Topical and oral**

Should your child need to be given any type of medication when he/she is in school, the parent must fill out LIC9221 Parent Consent for Administration of Medications and follow the guidelines listed. Do not send any type of medication to the child's lunch box or backpack. This includes cough drops and vitamin tablets.

1. The child's parent or guardian must give written permission for the prescription medication to be given to the child with instructions for dosage and times to be administered in accordance with label directions and written instructions of the child's physician. LIC9221
2. All medication must be brought to the office, and all documentation must be provided before it is approved to administer to the child on campus.
3. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be in the original container with the printed directions stating the name of the medication and dosage on the container.
4. All medication must have a doctor's note explaining how to use it and why they need the medication.
5. All medications must be given at home first and must be on it for 24-48 hours before returning to care.
6. Children can only attend on medication with approval from the Early Education Director. This includes but is not limited to Tylenol, Motrin, and allergy medications.



**Acknowledgment of Receipt of Early Education Handbook**

I \_\_\_\_\_, parent of \_\_\_\_\_ agree to Hillcrest Christian Early Education Parent Handbook. I have received a digital copy of the handbook and understand it may need amendments during the school year.

I understand the Early Education building has a nut-free policy, and I will only pack nut-free food/products for my student's lunches and snacks.

**Parent Pledge**

I will pray for the teachers and the administration of HCS.

I will cooperate fully in the educational functions of HCS, doing my best to make Christian education effective in my child's life so that he/she will love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

I will meet all my financial obligations to the school. If I cannot pay on time, I will notify the school in advance, explaining the delay and projected time for payment.

I will support the school by gift-giving, as the Lord enables me.

I will undertake volunteer duties and responsibilities for HCS as opportunities arise and as the Lord provides the strength and time.

I will attend parent functions for the school whenever possible.

Suppose I become dissatisfied with the school in any respect. In that case, I will seek to resolve the matter with the person or persons involved rather than spreading criticism or holding a negative attitude. I will follow the Biblical instruction found in Mathew 18:15.

I will not criticize the school.

I will seek the advancement of HCS in all areas.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_