



**EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION CENTER**

**HANDBOOK**

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Early Childhood Educational Center



<http://www.collegedaleacademy.com>

### **Mission Statement**

We are a Seventh-day Adventist school established to educate, equip, and inspire students to be critical thinkers who serve others and reflect Christ's character.

### **Educational Philosophy**

Hands-on, experienced-based learning was an important method of teaching used by Christ. ECEC utilizes these teaching strategies and other best practices in early childhood education to create an environment that encourages children to develop a personal relationship with God. The Scriptures in combination with God's second book (nature), experienced through daily, practical experiences, create the foundation of a Christ-centered curriculum. Our teachers are especially sensitive to the individual learning style of each child, and allow children to excel at their own pace.

### **ECEC Faculty and Staff**

Our faculty and staff are chosen with care for their education, experience and love for children. We share a common vision for children's care and seek to provide a feeling of comfort and safety for the children through predictability and open communication with their home. Our teachers are experienced. They have a passion for what they do and want to share it with your child.

The Early Childhood Educational Center is a part Collegedale Academy. ECEC falls under the elementary administration with an ECEC director and board. Each classroom has a lead teacher as well as an assistant. All employees and volunteers have had thorough background checks with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigations and up-to-date CPR and First Aid training for the assured safety of our students.

## **Admission**

ECEC admits students ages 3-5 of any gender, race, color, nationality, religious affiliation, or ethnic origin to all privileges, programs, and activities generally granted to students at the center. Applications are available on the CA website, [www.collegedaleacademy.com](http://www.collegedaleacademy.com). An enrollment fee is required in order to hold a position for the student. The enrollment fee does not guarantee acceptance into ECEC.

Acceptance is considered only after the completed application and financial agreement are approved. Students will not be accepted if transferring with an unpaid balance at another school. Parents of returning students must update all information in their files in order to complete the reapplication process.

Please note that, when possible, acceptance letters will be sent to each family to verify enrollment of their child/children into the program. If time is a consideration, a phone call may be used to verify the acceptance of a student into ECEC.

CA requires that 5-year-old students would enroll into a Kindergarten program. Exceptions to this policy are based upon parent recommendation and students' developmental readiness. The lead teacher and director of the ECEC program will make determinations on an individual basis. However, completion of ECEC as a 5-year-old does not fulfill Kindergarten requirements. The student must enter Kindergarten as a 6-year-old.

## **Requirements for Enrollment**

All applicants must go through the following procedures:

### **1. Application**

Fill out and submit to Collegedale Academy (CA) all application forms for ECEC.

### **2. Parent Interview**

Director and/or Lead Teacher will tour parent(s) in an effort to learn about the child, placement, and to answer any questions parent(s) may have regarding the program.

### **3. Administrative Team Acceptance**

Members of the ECEC Administrative Team will meet to discuss and review the parent tour, and all other application paperwork including the approval of the CA financial form in an effort to make a final determination regarding acceptance into the ECEC.

## **Returning Students**

All students must reapply in order to ensure placement for any new school year. If all other previous information remains the same, then applicant only needs to fill out a new financial form and the re-enrollment signature form in order to apply.

## **Change of Information**

ECEC holds the parents/guardians responsible for notifying CA regarding a change of street address and/or billing address, email address, cell phone number(s), home phone number, or work phone number. The office will notify the teachers of changes.

## **Medical Records**

ECEC is required by law to maintain up-to-date health and immunization records for all students. New students must have a health record on file before they can attend their first day of school. When your child receives additional immunizations, the physician must complete and sign a form to be submitted to the office. These forms are available through your doctor's office or the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department office.

## **ECEC Curriculum**

Our CA Early Childhood Educational Center follows the Pebbles curriculum as recommended by the Southern Union.

## **Math**

Counting, number recognition, addition, and subtraction, IXL, STEAM

## **Language**

Oral communication, comprehension, reading, and writing

## **Culture**

Life, physical and Earth sciences, art, geography, maps, countries, and people

## **Outdoor Learning**

Insects, seasons, water life, animal habitat, gardening

## Bible

Children know and love Jesus through stories and special Bible tasks. Each day, the children will worship God through singing and scripture. The children experience Bible lessons using hands on wooden manipulatives. The lessons begin with creation and end with the second coming of Jesus.

## Enrichment Program

- Physical Education (sneakers required for participation)
- Music
- Art
- Library

### Office Hours

Regular office hours at the elementary are Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday's from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. If an emergency arises during the school day and a parent needs to contact the teacher, please call the elementary office at 423-396-2122.

Business office hours at the high school are Monday through Thursday, 7:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. / 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Friday's from 7:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The high school phone number is 423-396-2124.

### Morning Drop-off Procedure

Each child should be escorted into the building by a parent or guardian 18 years or older. **In an effort to aid in children's independence, please say your goodbye in the hallway before allowing your child to enter the classroom on their own.** Please wait to make contact with the teacher before leaving a student at the classroom door. On occasions, a young child may be unhappy when the parent leaves. Our staff is always ready to provide extra loving attention to an unhappy child, easing the student into a new school day. Our one-way windows into the classroom allow parents to view the classroom activities.

**Students can be dropped off between 7:30 – 8:00 Monday through Friday. Pick up is between 3:00 – 3:20 Monday through Thursday and 2:30 – 2:50 on Friday.** After that, your child will be taken to the After Care Program and you will be charged the daily fee.

## **After School Care**

If you need your child to use the after school care services, you must fill out the paperwork available in the elementary office. Parents should pick up children promptly at the completion of After Care Program. There will be a late charge of \$15 for every 15 minutes you arrive late.

## **Sickness/Illness**

A child who is ill should be kept home from school. **We encourage parents to keep home a child who shows any of the following symptoms:**

- Swollen glands or a sore throat
- Fever free **without** medication for 24 hours
- General signs of illness such as vomiting, earache, headache, listlessness, or weakness
- Discharge or crusting around eyelids and redness in the whites of eyes (typical of conjunctivitis or “pink eye,” which is highly contagious)

**Sending your child back to school too soon can impair his or her recovery and can also contribute to others getting an illness.**

## **Medications**

All prescription medications brought to ECEC are to be given to the office manager for safekeeping. Medicines must be in the original container and labeled with the name of the student, name of the medicine, dosage, and time for each dose. A completed Medication Administration form (available in the office) is to accompany all prescribed and over-the-counter medications. A physician’s signature is required. Please note that ECEC employees may not distribute medication past its expiration date.

## **Medical and Disaster Procedures**

All emergency information is supplied by the parents on the Application for Admission form. This information is kept on file at the school. In the event of a medical emergency, the school will make every reasonable effort to contact the child’s parents or guardians as specified on the form. If contact cannot be made, the school exercises the authority given and will seek proper care for the student.

## **Accident Procedures**

For minor accidents such as a small cut or scrape, ice or an adhesive bandage will be applied. Parents will be called if necessary. A minor injury will be documented in the child's communication folder. In the case of a major accident, the student's parent or guardian will be called to come to the school.

## **Accident Insurance**

The school system carries an accident insurance policy that covers medical payments for school accidents. The school's insurance is secondary to the family or employer group insurance. If an accidental injury requires hospitalization or treatment by a legally qualified physician or surgeon within 30 days of its occurrence, the student insurance will pay the reasonable and customary expenses incurred for necessary medical, dental, or hospital care within one year from the date of injury—up to a maximum of \$25,000 for any one injury subject to the Excess Provision, Limitations and Exclusions as stated in the policy. The policy is in effect when the student is:

1. On the school grounds during the days and hours when school is in session.
2. Traveling directly to and from home for regular school sessions. (injuries sustained while off campus for personal reasons during the regular school session or injuries sustained as a result of operating, riding in or upon, or alighting from a two-wheeled or three-wheeled motor vehicle are excluded.)
3. Participating in an activity solely sponsored and supervised by school authorities.

Should a student be injured under these conditions, he or she should:

1. File a report on school insurance form with the school secretary within 24 hours after the accident.
2. File a claim and collect payment from the family or employer group insurance.

## **Emergency Procedures**

- Fire drills are required at least once per month. The signal for a fire is a continuous loud beeping sound from one of the fire alarms in the hallways. A teacher will lead the children to the nearest exit and proceed to the designated meeting place outside of the building. A copy of the designated meeting place is posted prominently in the classroom.
- Tornado drills are practiced throughout the year. The principal will notify teachers of the time for the drill. Children will be moved into inside hallways and away from windows.

- Lock down drills are practiced throughout the year. If deemed necessary for the school to exert extra caution, we will have our students move to a secure designated area for their safety.

### **Emergency Closing Procedures**

Severe weather or other circumstances sometimes dictate that school will dismiss early or close for the day. CA will notify parents using their school-wide parent alert system. This system notifies parents through email and/or text messaging and a prerecorded voice message. The administration will also contact local news channels 3, 9, and 12 if CA is to be closed. CA **does not automatically** follow the public school system for actual or forecasted closings.

### **Dress Code**

All ECEC students are encouraged to wear clothing that allows them to easily manage without much assistance. Coveralls, belts, back buttons, and snaps discourage a child's independence. Elastic waistbands in pants and skirts, pullover tops, and front buttons help children learn to dress themselves.

- No tank tops or sleeveless shirts allowed. Shorts and skirts must be modest in length.
- **Girls must wear leggings or shorts under skirts or dresses.**
- All shoes must be closed-toe, easy to keep on, and soft-soled as to not damage the floors. No hard clogs or cowboy boots.
- **Jewelry (all bracelets, necklaces, rings earrings, chokers, and chains, etc.) is not to be worn.** Medical alert bracelets are allowed.
- Sometimes a classroom can be chilly, so please send a lightweight sweater or jacket your child may wear inside the classroom if needed.
- As winter approaches, please provide heavy coats, gloves/mittens, and warm hats as there will be times when your child will go outside during the school day.
- **All clothing must be labeled for identification.**

We want to make sure that students are dressed properly at all times. Please dress your child in clothing that can get dirty as students will be exploring their environment inside and out.



## Articles to Bring to School

Each child must bring a complete change of clothing to be stored and kept at school in case of accidents. Please place these items in a resealable plastic bag, and be sure to change these items out as the seasons change. **All items must be labeled with the child's name.**

Every student will be provided a tote bag containing a communication folder to bring to school each day. This folder will be used to send home notes from the teacher or school, announcements and student work. **Parents should check this folder daily.** Please remove all of your child's daily work each night.

## Lunches

Each child may order or bring a lunch to school. **All lunch boxes must be labeled with the child's name.** In order to promote independence, please send foods that are already prepared. Items that your child can manage easily will allow them to eat independently and with confidence. **Do not send foods that need to be heated.**

All school provided lunches are vegetarian and nut-free. Sharing food at lunch is strictly prohibited due to allergies and dietary restrictions.

## School Lunch Plan

If you choose to have your child order the school lunch, please prepay for a lunch card in the school office. On the day that your child needs to order a lunch, please check designated box on the sign-in sheet.

Pricing for Meal/Drink Cards

5 meals - \$20

10 meals - \$40

10 drinks - \$5

A combination of the above can be purchased with cash/check. The Lunch Coordinator will retain the lunch card in her records. Communication will be sent through e-mail when the lunch card needs to be reloaded. Families can purchase a single lunch card to include all siblings at CA.

## Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

Please help us keep all of our students safe and take into account food allergies when packing your child's lunchbox. We accommodate any allergy your child has. If it is very serious, we will make sure all families are aware of this allergy when packing lunches, etc. Also, in severe cases, we will post notices at the school. If your child requires medication in case of an emergency, we will train our staff accordingly.

For dietary restrictions and preferences that are not allergy producing, please give your child's teacher a complete written description of your requests. In some cases, we may ask that you provide your child's own snack, along with their packed lunch.

### **Daily Snacks**

Both morning and afternoon snacks will be provided to the students by the ECEC program. The snacks consist of healthy, kid friendly choices. Student allergies will be taken into account.

### **Rest Time**

Rest period is required by state regulations for children under the age of five. The school has purchased rest mats for the children. Parents need to provide roll up nap bedding for their child's use to be placed over mats provided. Nap mats will be sent home every month for laundering.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very special. We have a simple but meaningful birthday celebration for each child. If possible join your child for lunch that day. For specific ways a class recognizes birthdays, please contact your child's teacher. If the child's birthday falls during the summer we will celebrate it on their half birthdays.

**Invitations to birthday celebrations outside school will not be distributed within the class unless all the children are invited.** Gender specific birthday invites need to be handled outside of school. Boys do not always understand why they are not invited to the princess party and vice versa.

### **Show and Tell**

Friday's are celebrated with a special show and tell time. We ask that items relate to the letter that is being discussed at school. The classroom newsletter will keep you informed of the letter of the week.

**These toys are only used during show and tell.**

Outside of Show and Tell, **Children may not bring toys to school.** If a toy or game is brought, it will be put in a safe place until the end of the day when the child may take it home. We often send home a note requesting that the toy not be brought again. Money, gum, makeup, or candy should also not be brought to school.

Items from home that become distracting (usually watches, belts, headbands, etc.) to the learning process will, again, be put in a safe place until the end of the day when the child may take it home.

## **Television/Screen Time**

ECEC occasionally presents short, educational (nature, colors, shapes, numbers, letters/sounds) or Biblical videos/online clips as a supplement to the curriculum.

## **Visitor Policy**

ALL VISITORS MUST SIGN IN BEFORE ENTERING A CLASSROOM. This includes parents, workmen, observers, volunteers, etc.

## **Child Abuse/Neglect**

CA is bound by federal and state law to report any suspected or reported cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

## **Bullying/Harassment**

CA administrators, staff, parents, and students work together to make our school a safe place for all. A student or group of students must not participate in or allow any act or direct or indirect bullying and/or harassment that degrades, injures, threatens, or disgraces a student, staff member, and/or visitor to the school. Bullying and/or harassment including jokes, teasing, gestures, rumor spreading, intimidation, or any physical, verbal, or cyber-attack directed at a person's race, religion, national origin, age, gender, possessions, or physical features.

## **Discipline/A Developmental Opportunity**

ECEC grounds its program in the significant relationship between adult and child. A loving, positive, supportive, and Christ-like bond promotes the child's self-esteem and sense of security.

When external discipline is deemed necessary, the following will be observed:

- Alternative activities will be suggested to the child in need of discipline.
- Persistent misbehavior in a group setting may be dealt with by temporary removal from the group, with the child being able to return to the group sooner if willing to abide by the group's requirements.
- The staff will take the time to talk to the child who seems constantly in need of discipline; exploring ways of making life more pleasant.
- The staff will be sensitive to developmental needs of a child and thus, his/her actions

If the above strategies do not work, the teacher may send the child to the director of the ECEC. The school will consult with the parent(s) for help and guidance in understanding the child. It is important that there is consistency between home and school.

If still unable to resolve the problem with the assistance of the parents and appropriate consequences for the misbehavior, the staff (teacher and ECEC Director) may recommend parents seek professional help or may be required to remove their child from the program if the student's behavior significantly disrupts the harmony of the group.

### **Dangerous/Disruptive Behavior**

ECEC will make every attempt to help a child with any behavioral issues that may surface. However, the policy for persistent or dangerous behavioral issues is as follows: In the event a child exhibits a persistent, dangerous or disruptive behavioral issue that is not solved by usual means, we will meet with the parent as needed to discuss the issue and possible solutions. If the behavior persists, the school has the option of discontinuing enrollment or continuing to attempt to solve the behavioral issue. In the event the behavior may endanger the child or another child, we have the option to cancel their enrollment agreement immediately. Parents will be responsible for tuition due through the date of dismissal.

There are times when a child's redirection from disruptive or dangerous behavior will involve physical relocation. We will always attempt to relocate the child verbally first. If this fails, to protect the other children, we will physically redirect them. If the child has to be lifted, the safest way is to do so by the underarms. If this is impossible because of the physical behavior of the child or the adult's physical limitations, the safest way to move a disruptive or dangerous child is by the upper arm. These instances are extremely rare and will never be done in anger or aggression and, again, verbal redirection is always used first.

If a child hurts another child during classroom or playground time, parents may be called to take their child home for the day. This is determined by the director's discretion depending on the circumstances.

### **Communication**

Maintaining regular and consistent communication is an important element of a student's educational success. The elementary emails a weekly newsletter titled *In The Know (ITK)* as well as the weekly ECEC Announcements sent by your child's teacher. Please stay informed about school-wide activities by reading these publications.

## **Assessment of Performance**

Parent Conferences - Parent conferences are scheduled as needed. These are occasions for parents and teachers to share information about the child. We encourage both parents to attend these conferences, as each parent influences the child's life and work.

## **Exceptional Education**

At ECEC we recognize and value the academic and social-emotional potential of students of diverse learning abilities. Students with learning differences can experience success when supported by an honest and cooperative parent-teacher-student relationship. Parents are expected to inform the school if their child has a previously diagnosed or suspected learning or attention difference. If a student is having academic or behavioral difficulty, the teacher, and/or ECEC Director may request that s/he is evaluated by an independent professional diagnostician who can assist in clarifying the nature and source of the difference. The results of such an evaluation will be used to develop strategies to help the student on an intervention plan.

## **Volunteers**

Parents are encouraged to get involved during any and all volunteer opportunities. CA Home and School is a vital part of the overall success of the school system. Meetings are held monthly, and parents and volunteers are always welcome. There are opportunities for both working and nonworking parents. Every effort, large or small, is valuable to your child and to CA. In order to volunteer, paperwork is available in the office and needs to be completed before hand.

## **Lost and Found**

Items such as sweaters, jackets, and lunch boxes are found within and around the school campus on a regular basis. At the end of each nine weeks, all unclaimed items will be sold or donated. **Parents are strongly encouraged to label items with their child's name to expedite their return to the rightful owner.**

## **Asbestos Policy**

The inspection and management plan for Asbestos-Containing Building Materials (ACBM) required by the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) has been performed for this facility. The management plan has been submitted to the state for review and approval, and a copy is on file at the CA elementary office and is available for public inspection upon reasonable notice. If desired, a copy of the plan may be obtained upon payment of a reasonable reproduction cost.

## **Conflict Resolution: Parent/Teacher Concern Procedures**

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference K-12 Board of Education has voted the following Local Conflict Resolution Procedure for adoption and use in all schools. The procedure ensures that due process is followed, and it is founded on the biblical principles outlined in Matthew 18. Any questions regarding the fundamental philosophy and/or procedures prescribed should be directed to the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education.

1. Parent is to meet with the teacher\*\* alone or as a family to deal with the concern. It is recommended that both parties maintain confidentiality.
2. If the concern remains unresolved after taking Step 1, the unresolved concern is to be taken to ECEC director and CA elementary principal for the purpose of securing assistance in finding a resolution.
  - A meeting among the four parties (parent, teacher, administrator, and principal) is to be held, with the administrator or principal chairing the meeting.
  - The administrator is to keep minutes of the meeting, including all relevant issues and/or agreements discussed.
  - The minutes are to be reviewed by all parties prior to the completion of the meeting.
  - Should the concern involve the ECEC director or CA elementary principal, the CA board chairman would serve as a facilitator and keep minutes.
  - Should the concern involved the CA elementary principal, the Office of Education at the Georgia-Cumberland Conference is to be notified.
3. At each instance in which a concern is registered, the teacher should have the right to address the concern directly. If the concern remains unresolved, it will be referred to the ECEC Advisory Council. At this point, a Georgia-Cumberland Conference Office of Education representative is to be directly involved.
4. If these steps prove unsuccessful and the concern remains unresolved, a final appeal of the issue can be made to the CA School Board.

\*Or other individual with a concern about the teacher.

\*\*All meetings with the teacher(s) and/or principal must be by appointment.

## **Withdrawing a Student from the Center**

Parents finding it necessary to withdraw their child from school will need to follow these procedures:

1. Have a conference with the ECEC director and CA elementary principal.
2. Notify the classroom teacher.
3. Return completed withdrawal form to the front office.

***Educate ■ Equip ■ Inspire ■ Serve***