

# Garrett Christian Academy

PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

AGREEMENT

2025-2026

[www.garrettchristian.org](http://www.garrettchristian.org)

# Garrett Christian Academy

## 2025-2026 PreK Acceptance Handbook

Welcome to GCA! Please review the enrollment paperwork checklist and submit all items to the office **as soon as possible**.

### Payment Due Dates

- Tuition Payment Plans will be set up upon acceptance to GCA.
- Before/After Care Payments - charges are billed monthly

### Financial Aid

- You may request a financial aid form from the office (morgan.schrock@garrettchristian.org) Completed forms can be emailed back to Morgan, mailed to GCA (4051 Accident Bittering Rd. Accident, MD 21520) or dropped off in the locked box (inside the main entrance of the school at the bottom of the stairs.)

### Beginning of Year Items

- Review our academic calendar (will be emailed and listed on our website).
- Purchase the items off of your child's grade supply list (will be sent out later).
- If you are interested in volunteering at the school to help with various projects for our teachers, we have parent volunteer day every Thursday from drop off until approximately noon. Contact Jessica Maust (301)-746-2646 or BJMaust03@gmail.com) if you are interested in more information or volunteering.
- Full acceptance is contingent upon review of paperwork from prior school.
- All students are accepted on a probationary basis and may be dismissed at any time.

Thank you and welcome to GCA!

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# Garrett Christian Academy

## Tuition, Discounts, and Fees

### 2025-2026 Tuition Rates

Tuition	\$5,600
Pre-K3, 1 Day Tuition	\$1,400
Pre-K3, 2 Day Tuition	\$2,450
Pre-K3, 3 Day Tuition	\$3,500
PreK3, 4 Day Tuition	\$4,550

### 2025-2026 Discounts

Multi-Student (2 children enrolled)	\$500/ child
Multi-Student (3 children enrolled)	\$1,000/ child
Multi-Student (4+ children enrolled)	\$1,500/ child
Clergy Discount	\$200/ child
Pay-in-Full Discount <i>*Full payment due August 1<sup>st</sup> to receive discount*</i>	\$100/ child

**This year all payment plans will be set up in FACTS in the near future.**

Options will include:

- ACH (Bank withdraw)
- Credit Cards
- Debit Cards
- Check/Cash, only if necessary

### 2025-2026 Before/After Care Rates

Before Care, Drop-In	\$9/Day
After Care, Drop-In	\$9/Day
Before/After Care Max <i>When a family before/after care bill reaches \$150 all further charges that month will be waived.</i>	\$150/Month/ Family

*\*Billed the first week of the following month and due on the 15th\**

### Other Fees

Credit Card Surcharge	3.6%
New Student Enrollment Fee (non-refundable)	\$115
Returning Student Enrollment Fee (non-refundable)	\$65
Activity Fees will be charged through the duration of the school year in the case of field trips, etc.	

## Child Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop Off: 8:15 AM - 8:30 AM

- Enter at the **green** arrows.
- Pre-K- Follow the **red** arrows. The red heart is the door you will use.
  - If you have K-8, drop off the PreK student first, and then continue to the blue line.
  - *Please park in a parking spot if you wish to walk your child to the door.*
  - You do not need to sign your child in for drop off.

Pick Up: 3:00PM - 3:15PM

- Use the same lines as drop off.
- PreK Parents
  - You may begin pick-up at 2:50 PM.
  - You must park and go inside to sign out your child.
  - If you also have older students, please pick up your PreK child first, then continue to the blue line.
- Before and After Care
  - Drop-off for Before Care will be at the Pre-K door
  - Pick-up for After Care will be at the Pre-K door OR on the playground if it is nice outside. All students must be signed out of After Care.



## **Before and After Care**

- Before care is available between 7:30AM-8:15AM
- After care is available between 3:15PM-5:30PM

*A \$15 fee will be charged for students remaining after pick up time, plus an additional \$1 per minute thereafter. While we understand that emergencies and unexpected situations arise, we also want to be respectful of our staff's time and ensure prompt pickup for students.*

## **Helpful Tips for Drop Off and Pick Up**

Drop off and pick up times are the most difficult time of day for both the child and the parent/guardian. Some young children suffer from separation anxiety. It is difficult for a parent/guardian to leave knowing the child is crying. Most children stop crying and are content within 5-7 minutes after they leave. Therefore, it is appreciated if parents could spend a few moments saying goodbye and then leave the child with the teacher. We find that the children adjust much better and learn to handle drop offs much quicker if the parents don't stay for long.

The child's parent/guardian is the only person authorized to pick a child up from the daycare unless notice is given by that parent/guardian. Verbal notice is permitted if the person that will be picking up the child is on the emergency contact list, otherwise the parent/guardian must give written notice allowing another person to pick up the child. Anytime a person, other than the parent/guardian, is picking up a child we will check their ID to confirm that he/she is the person to release the child to.

## **Withdrawal**

The care and well-being of your child and the other children at the preschool is important to us. Therefore, if there are any issues that arise that jeopardize that care, either party may terminate care upon immediate notice. If possible, please notify the director prior to withdrawing your child from GCA so that your account can be finalized. Upon withdrawal a \$200 early withdrawal fee will be charged per child. Parents will be refunded for the month following the withdrawal date and every month after. In addition, discounts will be allocated on a pro rata basis.

## **Snow Days, Cancellations and Delays**

In almost all cases, GCA will be open on scheduled days and on time, Monday through Friday 8:15 am - 3pm. In the event a delay or closure is necessary due to extreme weather conditions, parents will be notified through Parent Alert (a text message system managed through FACTS) and through email. GCA generally follows Garrett County Schools for decisions about closings or delays.

To ensure consistency in scheduling and to support a stable learning environment, modifying scheduled days will not be permitted.

## **Holidays**

The school will be closed for the following major holidays: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The school calendar will include all holiday closures.

\*You will be informed of any additional closings that the center does not have scheduled. Days are subject to change and a notice will be issued to the parent(s).

## **Illness & Injury**

Parents should not bring sick children to the school. If a child arrives at the school with a fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, lice, conjunctivitis (pink eye), or other symptoms of an acute or contagious illness, the teacher will refuse to admit the child. A child should not be brought to school if the parent had to give the child medicine to treat symptoms associated with these highly contagious illnesses. A child should not come to school if they've experienced any of these symptoms in the last 24 hours. A child that is sent home with any of the above symptoms should not return until symptom free for 24 hours or until he/she has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours or a doctor's note should be provided stating the child is not contagious. A child should be allowed to recover fully after an illness so other children in the group do not risk possible exposure. Upon discovery of an illness, parents will be notified. If the child becomes ill or is injured while in the center's care, parents will be notified and must make arrangements to have the child picked up immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the person designated on the Emergency Information Card will be notified.

Any child with the following symptoms should be sent home:

- \* Vomiting (1 time)
- \* Diarrhea (2 times)
- \* Temperature of 99.9 or above
- \* Any colored mucus (eyes or nose)
- \* Any unidentifiable rash

## **Injury/Incident Reports**

If a child is injured or involved in an incident, an incident report will be completed for that child as well as any other child involved in the incident. (e.g. if one child bites another an incident report should be completed for the child that was bitten and the child that bit) When completing an incident report the names of other children involved will never be mentioned. They will simply be referred to as "other child/another child." The report will be signed by the parent/guardian at the time the child is picked up then returned to the director.

Incidents for which a report will be completed include but are not limited to:

- \* Fall resulting in a scraped knee
- \* Collision with a child/object resulting in a bump or bruise
- \* A child being scratched or bitten by another child
- \* Bee sting
- \* Nose bleed
- \* Anything resulting in a mark of any kind on the child

Incidents for which a child's parent/guardian will be called include:

- \* Head injury
- \* Bee sting
- \* Nose bleed
- \* Any injury needing application of ice
- \* Any scrape or injury needing special attention

## Medication

The center will not administer any type of medication (including but not limited to diaper rash ointment, aspirin, cough drops, decongestant, or other non-prescription drugs, as well as prescription drugs) without a physician's authorization form signed by your physician. The medication must be clearly labeled with the child's name and be in the original bottle.

Prescription medications must also include the original labeling from the pharmacy, which includes the strength, dosage, and the prescribing physician's name. Provider shall follow the Maryland Regulation 07.04.01.32 when administering medication.

## Medication/1<sup>st</sup> Aid

Maryland state law requires that the only persons who can dispense medication or administer 1<sup>st</sup> aid to preschool children are certified medication technicians and a school's designated nurse. This law includes activities when a child is off campus and there are special instructions to be followed for field trips. When medication is received from a parent it must be in the original bottle, full instructions, a doctor's authorization and a signature from the parent.

Only in life threatening situations can we administer medical aid to a child.

For minor 1st aid; soap, water and ice can be applied.

The child who has received a minor injury will be given 1<sup>st</sup> aid as needed and an injury report completed. The same day, the parent/guardian will be told of the injury and sign the injury report. The director will be told of all injuries and signed reports. Any injury which may require medical treatment beyond simple 1<sup>st</sup> aid must be given immediate attention. The parent/guardian of the injured person will be immediately notified along with the director. An ambulance, if needed, will be called immediately.

## Staff to Child Ratio

We are required to stay in ratio at all times. The state of Maryland regulates that the staff to child ratio as follows:

Child Age	Staff/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
3	1 to 10	20
4	1 to 10	20

## Discipline

Staff members will never spank, hit, shake, or otherwise physically discipline a child. Only when a child is in physical danger would it be appropriate to grab, hold, and/or restrain a child.

When correcting a child, always try to redirect and let the child know what the expected behavior is. (e.g., "Come sit down with the class please" or "Throwing toys can hurt your friends. Please use the toys properly") If the behavior continues the child should be given a "time out" apart from the other children. It is recommended that the "time out" last 1 minute per year of the child's age.

DISCIPLINE – (the following paragraph is taken from our 2015-1016 Parent Provider Agreement)

*When correcting a child, we will first try to redirect and let the child know what the expected behavior is. If the behavior continues, the child will be given a time apart from the other children, the time would last 1 minute per year of the child's age. If needed, the parent or guardian will be contacted by the director.*

A child must be redirected at first offense. The most effective redirection is to guide the child to another area of play away from the situation that needed correction. The staff will give the child choices of alternate areas to play in or activities to do. For example: "Blocks are not for throwing. You may play at the puzzle table or read in the reading center". If the second attempt at redirection is unsuccessful, a time away or time out may be given.

After the time out, staff will talk to the child about the offense and ask the child how he/she can handle it better in the future. If time outs are unsuccessful, the child may do his/her time out in the Director's office. The time out will be one minute per year of the child's age. If the Director feels the child is not ready to return to the classroom, the child may play by his/her self in the office with activities made available by the Director. If negative behavior continues, the parent will be notified by the Director and a plan of action will be put in place that both the Director and parent will agree on. The child may be sent home if negative behavior is severe, and may even be asked not to return to the school for a designated number of days/weeks.

Garrett Christian Academy Preschool will strive to adapt a positive approach to discipline. To discipline is to guide, to train an individual to adhere to a code of conduct. We will strive to "catch a child being good". Recognizing and encouraging good behavior is key to this strategy.

### **Classroom Rules:**

- Use Walking Feet
- Use Inside Voice
- Hands are not for Hitting
- Use Kind Words

### **Outside Rules:**

- Steps, ladders and ramps are for going up. Slides are for going down.
- Go down the slides in a sitting position, feet first.
- Never stand on the bench or the table.
- When using swings sit facing forward and swing back and forth, not side to side.

### **Bathroom Policy**

Staff will always accompany children to the bathroom and assist children as they have personal needs. Each child should respectfully be given privacy needed. When children are finished using the bathroom they should, with the assistance of staff, wash their hands using soap and water. Our expectation is that the child is potty trained and is able to use the bathroom independently. The teachers and assistants will provide appropriate help as needed.



## **Inclusion Policy**

At Garrett Christian Academy Preschool, we strive to promote inclusive practices to meet the needs of all the children, families and staff at our preschool center. We welcome children with disabilities and special health care needs. We welcome children regardless of race, culture, gender, or economic differences to attend our program. Our curriculum, materials, and the environment celebrates the differences in our world. We commit to, whenever possible, make modifications to our schedule and curriculum to help children achieve success in our program. We are willing to work with children who have an IEP or an IFSP.

GCA has a non-discriminatory enrollment policy. We welcome children of all abilities by providing the highest quality of care and learning about what each child's individual needs are and meeting those needs to the best of our ability. Children's interests are reflected in the program by acknowledging and building curriculum around their interests. Children will be more engaged in the activity if they are valued and heard as an individual. Children's cultures and backgrounds are respected and valued in the program by developing a strong understanding of culture and diversity, and understanding that a child's family and culture are part of who they are as an individual. We strive to respect families' languages and culture by incorporating that into the curriculum, teaching practices and learning environment.

## **Early Intervention & Special Education Services Statement**

If a child has or needs an IFSP, Garrett Christian Academy will work with any providers including early intervention, speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. We will ensure that our schedules can accommodate their services. Providers are welcome to use our space in the building. Teachers are willing to attend meetings and make accommodations in the classroom for the child as outlined in their plan.

## **Family Conferences**

We do not have Parent-Teacher Conferences scheduled as an official event for PreK. If you would like to have a conference with your child's teacher, you may schedule that at any time. We are happy to meet with you at any time throughout the term if you have concerns.

## **Lunch and Snacks**

Children should bring a packed lunch, a morning and afternoon snack every day. There is no microwave for the children to use so all lunches should be meals that don't need to be heated. Children will wash hands with soap and water before every meal/snack.

## **Naptime**

Nap mats will be at least 1 foot apart for sleeping. Quiet music or a fan (white noise) may be used to help children relax and to block out disruptive noises. Each child should bring a nap mat from home. All nap mats should be labeled with the child's name. Nap mats will be sent home every Friday to be washed. Nap cushions will be sprayed with a disinfectant spray every day after nap. Toys and items that are personal belongings of the child must be labeled with the child's name. GCA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items that are brought into the school.

## **Law Enforcement & Media**

All staff will cooperate fully with any law enforcement or governmental agency that may be investigating allegations of injury, abuse, or molestation in connection with activities of the organization. However, responses to outside inquiries from non-investigative sources such as media, community interests, etc., must be directed to the appropriate staff member for response.

Legal counsel will be contacted for advice and guidance as soon as possible after the organization receives notice of possible abuse or molestation in connection with organization activities. Decisions concerning the ministry's responses to the allegations will be made after considering such advice.

A single organization leader will be designated as spokesperson following notice of any such abuse or molestation in connection with activities of the ministry. This spokesperson will be the only person to convey information concerning the situation, and to avoid compromising any ongoing investigation, will convey only such information as is necessary under the circumstances.

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

The staff of Garrett Christian Academy, who have reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, shall report any and all information to the director. The director will report it to their supervisor and be investigated as required.

## **Transporting Students**

No staff member is to take a child off campus, without permission from the parent and director during school hours.

## **Privacy of Student Health Information – HIPAA Privacy Rule**

Great care is taken not to disclose specific, personal, health information about the children in our care. Staff members are to be given information on a "need to know" basis. A child's health information will never be discussed with anyone other than the child's parents/guardians. This includes not discussing a child's health information with other staff members who are not on a "need to know" basis.

## **Fire Drill Procedure**

In the case of a fire drill or a real fire, the assigned meeting area for all preschool classes is the light pole to the far right of the parking lot.

During a fire or fire drill it is most important to stay calm and maintain order for the safety and well-being of the children. Every fire drill will be conducted as if it were a real fire. The safety of the children is the most important issue. As soon as the alarm sounds children will be escorted quickly and calmly out the nearest exit.

The director or an assigned staff will bring the attendance book and be the last to leave the building. The last assigned staff will check the bathrooms and play areas to make sure the building is empty. Attendance will be taken immediately at the assigned meeting area. Staff will remain with the children at the assigned meeting area until confirmation has been given that it is safe to re-enter the building.

## **Storms**

In the event that a severe storm/tornado/etc. warning is issued, the children will be kept indoors away from the windows.

## **Lockdown**

In the event a lockdown is necessary, all staff and children will remain indoors with all doors and windows locked until notified by authorities that the area is secure and it is safe to lift the lockdown. During a lockdown staff will only open the door for local law enforcement authorities or persons whom they recognize as the parent/guardian of a child in our care.

## **Re-enrollment**

Enrollment in the PreK program does not guarantee admission into the school for the following academic year. All students, including those enrolled in PreK, must apply for admission the following year. Priority may be given to returning students, but placement is not guaranteed.

# Garrett Christian Academy

## FAQ

### **Do you offer meal plans?**

No, students are required to pack their lunch. Please note that no microwave is available for use.

### **Do you have a bus?**

At this time, we do not offer any transportation services. Parents are welcome to work out their own carpool arrangements,

### **What security does the school have?**

Doors are locked and require a key or badge to enter. We also have security cameras.

### **What curriculum do you use?**

We use Abeka for PreK3 through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and BJU Press for 4<sup>th</sup> grade through 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Do you require school uniforms?**

At this time, we do not require school uniforms. We ask that our students dress modestly. Avoid excessively tight and low-cut clothing. No crop tops, short shorts, flip flops, or hats. Students often play outside so we encourage play-appropriate clothing.

### **Do students participate in standardized testing?**

Yes, in the spring we do the IOWA and CoGat Assessments (Kindergarten through 8th grade)

### **What are your class sizes?**

Each classroom has eighteen or less children and one teacher. Some classrooms have a teacher's assistant.

### **Do you offer financial aid?**

Yes. If you think you may be eligible for financial aid, contact [morgan.schrock@garrettchristian.org](mailto:morgan.schrock@garrettchristian.org) and request a financial aid application. The amount of available student financial aid is determined each year by the GCA budget and donations. After the amount is determined, we review each application and allocate an amount of student aid for qualified families if funds are available.

### **Do you offer any extracurricular activities?**

In the past we have offered various extracurricular activities including Lego club, chess club, piano lessons, guitar lessons, and swimming classes hosted at the CARC. These vary each year so feel free to ask us for more information!

### **How do you handle snow days?**

We follow Garrett County Public Schools for cancellations, delays, and early dismissals. In the event that GCPS has a Virtual or Asynchronous Day, GCA will be canceled or may choose to utilize a "Work from Home Day."

# Enrollment Paperwork Checklist

## New Students:

- ☐ Immunization Form (MDH896)
- ☐ Health Inventory (OCC1215) - be sure the doctor includes weight, height, blood pressure, etc.
- ☐ Medication Administration Form (OCC1216) - if any medication will be taken at the school
- ☐ Lead Test Form - needed for new students (within the ages of PreK3 and 6 years) and a second test is needed for returning students ages 6 and below.

## Returning Students:

- ☐ Medication Administration Form (OCC1216) - if any medication will be taken at the school
- ☐ Immunization Form (896) - only needed if updates have been made since last time you turned in a form.
- ☐ Lead Test Form - needed for new students (within the ages of PreK3 and 6 years) and a second test is needed for returning students ages 6 and below.

*All forms can be found on our website at [www.garrettchristian.org/enrollment-process](http://www.garrettchristian.org/enrollment-process) .  
Questions about paperwork can be directed to [morgan.schrock@garrettchristian.org](mailto:morgan.schrock@garrettchristian.org)*