

Parent Handbook



Building strong foundations in the lives of children, which are founded on the infallible word of God. RCSA partners with parents to educate, inspire and equip each child to realize their full potential as they grow physically and spiritually.

Dear Families,

We are thrilled to begin a new year of learning and discovery. The RSCA staff have been busy preparing a warm and inviting environment for your child. It is our goal to make each child feel comfortable and safe while they are here at school. We are a family here at RSCA and we strive to make each of our students and their families feel at home. Please know that my door is always open for you to come and discuss any questions or concerns. If I am not in the office, you can reach me on my cell at (863) 634-6345.

We are so thankful to share the love of Christ with each of you; and just like family we want to love and support one another throughout the year. The staff at RSCA believes in the power of prayer! We invite you to share your prayer requests with us so that we can join as we trust God to meet each need.

Please carefully read the Parent Handbook. This information is vital to help make your child’s experience a positive one. The policies and guidelines are for the safety and well-being of all the students here at RSCA. We appreciate your willingness to comply.

Blessings,

Mrs. Joy

Welcome

It is our belief that children from the age of one through four learn through experiences of play. Our program is designed to give each a variety of developmentally appropriate activities that allow children to learn and grow in a safe and loving environment.

We offer many opportunities throughout the day for the children to explore, create, and socialize with children their own age. The activities planned are hands-on and help to build a healthy self-esteem that will encourage them to try new skills.

As parents and teachers, we must remember that education is in the process and not in the product we have in our hands. We will give positive praise for each effort and encourage each stop along the way.

Our school will provide enrichment of the social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language, creative, and spiritual development of each child.

We must remember that children are only young for a short time. Treasure these little ones; they are God’s gift from heaven. The Lord has entrusted us to care for them and train them in the way they should go. The foundation is the part we focus on. The foolish man built his house upon the sand and when the storms came it could not withstand the wind and rain. The wise man, which built his house upon the rock, had a firm foundation. The wise man’s house was able to withstand the strong wind and pounding rain. How true this is for our lives, as we look at the many challenges our children will face in the world today. We want to send them out with the assurance that God’s love is eternal and that we can depend on Him for each step we take.

**Our Philosophy**

Rock Solid Christian Academy is Christ-centered in its approach to educating the child. The staff at RSCA is dedicated to using their talents and experience to lead each child through enriching activities in a loving Christian environment.

Our program is designed according to your child’s best interest while providing a foundation that is based on the Word of God and will help your child develop spiritually. We accomplish this by sharing the unconditional love of Christ through example; Bible teachings, music, learning scripture verses, and applying them to our daily lives. Our program will also offer your child experiences that enrich and enhance their cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. The daily schedule will offer opportunities to create, explore the environment, and learn problem solving and personal interaction skills through first-hand experiences.

**Biblical Principles and Family Values**

The teachers and staff at RSCA believe and teach biblical morals and standards that are found in the Bible. We are all sinners saved by His grace but strive to live a life that honors Christ and sets a good example for our students each day.

You may rest in knowing that alternative lifestyles are not taught in any form. We teach using materials, books, and curriculum that are biblically based. Our teachings promote good manners and high moral standards. Your child will learn principles that come directly from the word of God. The stories and examples used by our staff will always include materials that are built around family values and biblical truths. Your child will learn scripture verses and songs that help to build a strong foundation in the Bible.

**Biblical Truths We Teach:**

1. God is the Creator and ruler of the universe. Genesis 1:1, 26, & 27
2. God created marriage between one man and one woman. Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19: 4-6
3. Jesus Christ
* His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, and Luke 1:35)
* His sinless life (Hebrews 4:14, & 7:26)
* His Miracles (John 2:11)
* His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9)
* His resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4)
* His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19)
* His personal return in power and glory! (Acts 1:1, Revelation 19:11)

**Admissions:**

Rock Solid Christian Academy (RSCA) does not discriminate based on race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin. RSCA does reserve the right to deny admittance, continued enrollment, and /or to terminate a student who;

* May be considered a health risk to other students, a hindrance to the Christian school atmosphere, or whose behavior interferes with or creates an unsafe classroom environment for the students and/or staff at RSCA.
* Account becomes delinquent.
* If the actions of a parent/guardian negatively impact our ability to fulfill our role to provide a Christian education and atmosphere and carry out our ministry and mission

RSCA further reserves the right to determine admissions based on prior school references, academic evaluations, and a parent-student interview.

Parents are required to provide the following documentation on/ before the first day of attendance. To remain in compliance with the state of Florida, your child will NOT be able to attend RSCA if any of the documents are missing from and/or expired in their student files:

* Online Registration
* Student Information Form (Medical and Emergency Contact Info.)
* Parental Acknowledgment/Agreement Form (initialed, signed, and notarized)
* Birth Certificate
* Florida Certificate of Immunization (Shot Record) or Religious Exemption Form
* Physical Form DH 3040
* VPK Certificate (Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Certificate)

You will be notified in advance of your child’s records expiring, so you can make an appointment with their physician. Failure to provide current documentation in a timely manner will automatically withdraw your child from enrollment.

When you registered your child at RSCA you chose either our Half-day or Full-day program. Due to high enrollment, we are not able to allow half-day students to stay full day. A request to change enrollment status during the school year is based on availability. Such requests may be given to the director for consideration.

**Financial Information**

RSCA is a not-for-profit school. The monies collected are used to operate this school. Because of this, it is very important that everyone pay on time. The Registration Fee is due at the time of registration. The Supply Fee is due no later than August 1st.

The weekly fee is due on the Monday of each week and is considered late after Wednesday of the same week. The payment is due in its entirety even when your child is absent. RSCA is closed for the following weeks through out the school year and do not require payment as follows:

* Thanksgiving Week
* Christmas Break
* Spring break Week

**Start Up Fees:**

* Registration $100.00 per child
* Supply Fee $125.00 per child

The following is a break down of weekly rates by age group per child:

* Toddlers: $175.00
* Three’s: $155.00
* VPK Full Day: $130.00 (with certificate) / $185.00 (without certificate)
* Half Day: $95.00 \*excluding VPK ½ day students

**Delinquent Accounts:**

If your account becomes delinquent, you will be given a date upon which you have until to make a payment. Failure to bring your account into a current status will result in the withdrawal of your child until the account is paid in full. We fully understand that our economical situation is difficult at this time and pray that better times are ahead. However, our school cannot function without meeting the budget requirements necessary to operate and fulfill our obligations.

**Hours of Operation**

RSCA is open from 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Children may begin arriving at 7:15 a.m. School starts promptly at 8:30 a.m. Children are to arrive no later than 8:45 a.m., please make sure your child is on time for school. If you are going to be late, you must notify the director in advance. Children will NOT be accepted late if prior arrangements have not been made.

Students who are not picked up by final dismissal times will be charged a late fee of $10. In case of an emergency, exceptions may be made. Please notify the school if you have an emergency and will be late.

RSCA observes all federal holidays and is closed periodically for Teacher Workdays. A school calendar will be given in advance so you’re aware of the days our school will be closed. Please take note of these dates and make the necessary arrangements for childcare.

**Half-Day Program:**

Children attending our half-day program may begin arriving at 7:15 a.m. and picked up no later than 11:30 a.m. Children attending RSCA for VPK hours only are to arrive at 8:30 a.m. and pick up time is no later than 11:30 a.m.

**Full-Day Program:**

Children who are attending our full-day program may begin arriving at 7:15 a.m. and picked up no later than 5:30 p.m.

**Nutrition**

Please make your child’s teacher aware of any food allergies or restrictions!!

**Breakfast:**

Parents are responsible for providing breakfast. Children arriving between 7:15-8:00 a.m. may bring their breakfast from home to eat. If arriving after 8:00a.m. we ask that children have already eaten at home.

**Snacks & Lunch:**

Parents are responsible for providing 2 nutritious snacks and lunch each day. If your child’s lunch needs to be kept cold, be sure to include an ice pack. We do not have space to refrigerate lunches. Please send in all the utensils your child will need. We warm food in the microwave for **up to** **one minute**. This means food that has already been cooked. We do NOT cook frozen meals, Ramen Noodles/cups, or assemble any type of “kit” meals. If sending in soup, be sure that it is in a microwavable safe container. Do NOT send soup in the can that requires a can opener.

\*Children have access to cold water throughout the day.

**Birthday Parties/Special Events:**

Birthday parties are allowed at preschool but need to be planned with your child’s teacher. The State Health Department requires that all items sent into the school be store bought and may **NOT** be homemade. This is unfortunate but necessary due to children who may have food allergies or are sensitive to certain foods or ingredients. Please keep this in mind if ask to send in treats or food items for other special celebrations.

**Parental Involvement**

This year we will offer several opportunities for parents to get involved and participate in your child’s education. Your child’s teacher will notify you of special events and days that you may join us to volunteer or chaperone. We look forward to these opportunities to get acquainted with you. All volunteers must see the director for a Volunteer Form. The staff at RSCA highly regards the safety and well-being of our students and assures you as parents and family members that all measures are taken to provide the safest environment possible. Please carefully read the following guidelines for volunteers, chaperons, and parents who participate in any events or attend programs, field trips, or are on the RSCA campus.

* The use of tobacco products of any kind is prohibited.
* The use or consumption of any alcohol or controlled substance or to be under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance are prohibited while on the RSCA campus.
* Profanity or inappropriate language
* All visitors are required to dress appropriately and in a modest manner.

**Confidentiality Policy:**

The administration and staff at RSCA are committed to the privacy of the records and information that pertains to your child. All information is kept in confidence. The director is responsible for keeping records of all the children on file. Your child’s records are not made available to anyone other than the enrolling parents or guardians. The staff and family may need to discuss matters concerning family issues or medical information. These discussions will remain confidential and will only be discussed with the director. The protection of your privacy is very important to our staff.

**Parent Conferences:**

It is our goal to keep open lines of communication between the staff and each family, concerning their child’s progress throughout the school year. The teachers will perform two developmental assessments during the year. The first one will be in late September and the second in May. These are designed to be sure that your child is progressing in all developmental domains. The assessments also help us target any areas of concern. The teachers will make the parents aware of the results of each assessment. Parents should feel free to schedule a parent/teacher conference at any time. Please remember that it is very important for you to keep your child’s teacher informed of any changes that are going on at home. Sometimes even the smallest of changes can affect a child’s behavior. For example, moving to a new home, a death in the family, separation, or divorce.

**RSCA Discipline and**

**Behavior/Expulsion Policy**

RSCA is on mission to partner with families to educate and inspire young children as they grow physically and spiritually. The early education classroom is equipped to provide a safe environment for children. Safety is our first priority and our staff is committed to insuring the safety of all of our students. RSCA reserves the right to dismiss a student from our school in the event that the safety and well being of our staff and students becomes at risk.

RSCA believes that Discipline is an integral part of the educational process. Respect for authority is biblical. Regardless of age, a submisssive spirit and teachable attitude are essential to maintaining a healthy learning environment. When situations arise that require attention, we view them as opportunities for the growth and maturation process. We stirve to search beyond the problem to a reasonable solution that brings about a constructive change.

The staff will **NOT** under any circumstances use corporal punishment as a means of discipline on your child. Examples of such punishment include, but are not limited to;

* Hitting, spanking, or shaking, rough and/or harsh handling of children.
* Isolating a child in an adjacent room, hallway, closet, play area, or in any other area the child cannot be seen or supervised.
* Using or withholding food or beverages as punishment.
* Any form of emotional abuse, including, rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, isolating, or corrupting a child.
* Toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child.
* Abusive, profane, or sarcastic language or verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks in front of the child, or about the child or child’s family.

The following are the procedures followed at RSCA;

**Discipline Procedures:**

1. Make sure the child understands the guidelines.
2. Redirect the child into a positive behavior, always giving sincere praise when behavior is acceptable.
3. If behavior continues, the child will be directed to “safe space” for a time to calm down and think about making positive choices.
4. If the behavior escalates to the point that it is reoccurring, we will notify the parent to schedule a conference to discuss a plan of action.
5. In the case that a child commits a serious offense, RSCA reserves the right to suspend or terminate the child from further participation in our program. This expulsion can take place without any given notice.

**Examples of Serious Offenses:**

* Lack of Parental support
* Aggressive behavior towards students or staff
* Chronic biting
* Excessive inconsolable tantrums

**Safety Policies/Procedures**

**Pick-Up Procedures and Emergency Contacts:**

A form has been provided for pick up /emergency contacts for your child. This form **MUST** be completed and on file at the preschool. All emergency contact information is to be kept current. We must be able to always reach someone in the event of an emergency.

 We will ask for photo identification if we do not know the person picking your child up. These policies are to protect your child and will be followed without exceptions.

At 8:45 a.m. All glass doors will be locked and remain so until half day dismissal (11:30a.m.). If arriving after the said time, please report to the Preschool office. However, the inside doors to the downstairs preschool areas remain locked throughout the day.

The office staff will need to register each person picking children up from **downstairs classes**. This process takes a few minutes and requires a fingerprint to be entered into our Procare System. This will allow parents/family to enter inside locked doors as well as take attendance. This process is completed on the computers located in the foyers.

**Your child MUST be checked in and out daily on the computer! VPK parents, you MUST sign your child in and out daily in the VPK binder located in your child’s class.**

**Shoes:**

Children arriving without proper shoes will **not** be permitted to stay at school.

Due to children going up and down stairs in VPK classes, and having mulch on our playgrounds we ask that children **NOT** wear the following shoes to school:

* Flip Flops
* Open toed Sandals
* Sandals that do not fasten around the child’s foot.
* Crocs (of any style)
* High heels

**Fire Drills/ Lockdown:**

Fire drills and Lockdowns are a part of our safety procedures. We perform them once a month. This is necessary so that teachers and students know how to respond in the event of an emergency. We will prepare the children by discussing the procedure in advance so that they are not afraid.

**Extreme Weather:**

In the event of extreme weather, hurricane, etc. we will follow the county school closings and dismissals. Please tune in to the local news station for the announcements of school closures. We will also post to our school Facebook and Instagram pages with updates and plans of action.

The staff at RSCA also has in place a severe emergency evacuation plan. If severe weather occurs while your child is here at school, we will take every precaution to keep students safe.

**Health Policies and Procedures**

**Minor Illnesses or Injury**

If your child is suffering from a minor illness or sustains a minor injury while at school, we will make him/her comfortable until a parent is contacted and arrives. An accident report will be filled out and kept in your child’s file.

**Serious Illness or Injury**

RSCA is not medically equipped to keep a seriously ill child at school. If your child is suffering from an illness that is contagious, we require that they do NOT attend school until they are well. Such illnesses include fever, chronic cough, diarrhea, and/or vomiting. A child must be symptom free (without the use of medications, ie: fever reducer) for a 24-hour period from the time of the last symptom occurred. Children that develop any of the above symptoms while at school, a parent will be contacted so arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up as soon as possible.

In the event of a major injury while at school, RSCA will contact a parent and 911 if needed.

**Medication Policy**

If your child needs medication while at school, the parents MUST fill out a medication authorization form. The medication is to be given to your child’s teacher. All medication must be labeled with the child’s name and remain in its original container/packaging. All medication is kept in the preschool office. Please DO NOT send any kind of medication in your child’s lunchbox or place in their cubby. This includes diaper rash cream, OTC or prescribed. \* If bringing in an EpiPen for your child please be sure to leave it in the original packaging. Do Not remove any of the EpiPens, many come in sets of 2 and are required to remain together.

Potty Training Policy: Toddler’s

When to begin the potty-training process?

 RSCA believes that there is no right or wrong age to potty train a child. However, problems tend to arise when the adults **do not** pay attention to the child’s lack of readiness. It should only be determined on an individual basis, much like learning to walk. No two children will potty train in the same manner nor in the same time frame.

When you feel that your toddler is ready to begin the potty-training process, we ask that you discuss this with your child’s teacher in advance. Once both parents and teacher have observed signs of readiness, we can begin the process. It is encouraged that the process begins at home on a weekend that can be completely devoted to potty-training. Once your child has been successful for one full week, he/she may wear undies to school. Your child’s teacher will gently remind your child to go in and potty throughout the day (i.e.: before going outside, before/after lunch, and nap time). Children will have potty accidents; this is a normal part of the process. If your child does have more than two in a short period of time, we will put him/her in a pull up. We will try again the next day. Patience is very important during this time.

We request that the following guidelines are followed when children are potty training or wearing underwear at school:

1. Your child MUST wear loose-fitting clothing that is easy for the child to pull up and down.
2. NO overalls, pants that require the use of a belt, T-shirts with snaps between the legs, or pants with snaps and zippers that the child cannot get in and out of.
3. A complete change of clothing, underwear, and socks are to be kept in your child’s cubby in case of accidents.
4. Bring an extra pair of shoes. These get wet too.
5. Keep a small supply of pull ups at school until your child has shown naptime dryness for a week. Your child will be put in a pull up during nap time until he or she has shown that they can stay dry during that time.

Children moving up to our PreK 3 program are required to be potty-trained. No need to stress if your toddler is turning 3 years old and shows no interest in the potty. Most children that haven’t already started the process do so closer to their 3rd birthday.

**Potty Policy for Three- and 4-Year Old’s**

Children enrolled in PreK 3 and PreK 4 (VPK Program) must be completely potty trained (and do not require the use of pull ups). We do understand that toileting accidents may occasionally occur, and in those incidents the teacher will help the child change their clothes, encouraging independence as much as possible.

RSCA defines a potty-trained child as one who can do the following:

1. Communicate to his/her teacher that he/she needs to go to the restroom.
2. Alert him/herself to stop what he/she is doing, to go and use the restroom.
3. Pull down his/her clothes and get them back up without assistance.
4. Wipe him/herself with little to no assistance.
5. Wash and dry hands
6. Postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom.
7. Awaken during nap time should they need to go use the bathroom.

It is not uncommon for a child who is fully potty trained to have a setback when he/she is in a new environment. Preschool faculty are aware of this and will assist the children when necessary. Please dress your child in clothing that they’re able to unfasten and change easily. We do ask that a complete change of clothing (socks and shoes) always be kept in your child’s cubby. Parents will be notified if their child has a toileting accident.

We understand that each child arrives at this milestone differently, therefore we will allow 2 weeks from the first day of school for your child to demonstrate accomplishment of this goal. However, if the situation is not manageable within the classroom environment, we will discuss the issue with the parents.

**Preschool Life 101**

**Please carefully read the items your child will need to bring in:**

* A complete change of clothing to keep in your child’s cubby. (Be sure that it is seasonally appropriate and easy to take on/off for going to the potty.) \* No rompers, overalls, or hard to button bottoms.
* Blanket for naptime (a small, thin blanket that can be easily folded into mat.) RSCA provides each child with a mat and a mat cover. \* No pillows please, space is limited.
* Lunch box with an ice pack (if needed)
* Sippy cup (younger toddler’s)
* Sleeve of diapers/pull-ups and a large pack of wipes (Toddler End)

\*\* We ask that you please label ALL your child’s items with his/her first and last name.

**The following items DO NOT send in:**

* Toys and other personal items.
* Back-packs (they do not fit in our cubbies)

**Things to think about when shopping and/or getting your Preschooler dressed each day….**

* Diapers and/or Pull-ups must be able to refasten, NO “tear-away”.
* Bottoms are easy on/off due to diaper changing and going to the potty on their own. \* Please do not send your little one in wearing a belt, rompers, or overalls. They’re difficult for children to unfasten in a timely manner.