

2025-2026 Parent Handbook



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Houston, TX 77058
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dayonechristianacademy.org*



Dear Parents,

Welcome to Day One Christian Academy! We are delighted to experience this exciting year in your child's life, and we look forward to partnering with you as you raise your child(ren) to be all God has created and redeemed them to be.

Day One Christian Academy is a thriving ministry of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, and we're thrilled to help equip your child from "day one," with the academic, spiritual, cognitive and social tools they need, to be prepared and successful for kindergarten and beyond.

Our Day One Christian Academy teachers and staff are ready to help your child grow and learn. We are honored and privileged that you have trusted us to be a part of that growing experience as we help one another live life with Jesus everyday.

At Gloria Dei, we place a high priority on families. Our worship services are "family- friendly," and we offer a variety of ministries to equip families to live in the love, truth and power of Jesus, the Son of God. We invite you to check out these opportunities by going to our website at www.gdlc.org, or talk with any of the Day One staff for more information.

God bless you and your family,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Dan Schepmann".

Rev. Dan Schepmann
Senior Pastor

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Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

MISSION STATEMENT

Helping more people live life with Jesus everyday by providing a quality, early childhood education, through a developmentally-appropriate and Christ-centered curriculum, in an atmosphere of Christian love and grace.

OUR COMMITMENT

For 47 years, Day One Christian Academy has served our community as an excellent academic and Christian resource for children and families, by partnering with the home and remaining faithful to our mission. We are committed to serving the educational and developmental needs of children, while helping build a solid foundation of faith for every child.

The heartbeat of Day One Christian Academy is our children. Since we believe parents are the primary educators of their children, we are committed to support the teaching role of parents, by partnering with the home, from "Day One," of a child's life through the completion of pre-school. We recognize that the decisions you make for your children, including decisions for childcare, are not always easy ones. We consider it an honor and privilege to partner with your family.

Academically

Day One Christian Academy provides children with opportunities and experiences for cognitive development in the areas of language, math and reading readiness, science, social studies, health, art and music. Our age-appropriate curriculum encourages a love for learning, by exploration and discovery, as well as sensory and self-initiated activities.

Spiritually

Our greatest gift is to share the love we have received from Jesus Christ, with the children in our care. Because of this gift, we view our role as a sacred responsibility. We value each child as a unique and special child of God— full of curiosity, love and untapped potential. We will provide a warm, peaceful environment, with Christian values, that nurture self-esteem, emotional security, and independence for achieving the goals of Christian education outside the home. It is our desire that every child knows and experiences the love of Jesus Christ.

Emotionally

We believe children thrive when they are in a structured environment, where they feel safe, loved and accepted. At Day One, we teach children how to express themselves appropriately, set healthy boundaries and interact positively with others. In turn, they learn to respect themselves, others, and the world around them.

Physically

Day One supports a healthy lifestyle for children through active learning, rest time and balanced nutrition. We will encourage your child's natural curiosity and eagerness to learn about the Lord's creation by providing a safe, stimulating, hands-on environment, in which children can participate in indoor and outdoor play, as well as provide adequate time for rest, when needed. We also offer balanced, nutritious lunches and snacks to encourage healthy eating habits.

CURRICULUM

Day One Christian Academy uses an age-appropriate, child-focused curriculum to meet the needs of children as they interact with the world God made. Our curriculum is designed to cultivate each child's language skills, develop communication and social skills, encourage creative expression, foster a positive self-image and stimulate spiritual growth. We believe that children learn best through actively engaging with people and items in their environment.

Accreditation and Association

Day One Christian Academy adheres to the high standards set by the Texas and National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and the Texas Education Association (TEA).

Classroom Assignments

Classroom assignments are based on each individual child's chronological age, developmental age, emotional age, and physical age. Infants or young Toddlers may have the opportunity to transition to the next classroom during the school year, according to their developing skills, individual needs, and scheduling availability.

Teacher to Child Ratios

Day One Christian Academy offers a long-tenured, nurturing and quality faculty to serve the needs of the children and their families. A low child to teacher ratio is maintained, so that we may provide each child with plenty of individual attention. Children are grouped according to their skills, individual needs, specified age and square footage of each classroom space. The school meets or exceeds the state of Texas recommended ratio of the youngest child in each classroom.

Age of Child	Day One Teacher/Child Ratio	Texas Standard Teacher/Child Ratio
0-11 months	1:4 / 2:10	1:4 / 2:10
12-17 months	1:5 / 2:11	1:5 / 2:13
18-23 months	1:7 / 2:14	1:9 / 2:18
2 years of age	1:10 / 2:16	1:11 / 2:22
3 years of age	1:14	1:15 / 2:30
4 years age	1:15	1:18 / 2:35

Outdoor Play

At Day One Christian Academy, outdoor play is an essential part of each child's daily routine. The time children spend outdoors each day is just as important to learning as the time spent in the classroom. Children should arrive each day prepared to play outside. As outlined in the Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services, children who are too sick to go outside, should not be at school. Outdoor exposure offers many ways to enrich the curriculum and support children's learning and development. The school utilizes weather guidelines (page 9) to ensure that the children have appropriate exposure to the outdoors during extreme weather. Flexibility in the schedule also allows us to extend our outdoor play on fair weather days.

Quiet Time

Supervised quiet periods are required for all children, under 5 years of age, who remain at school for 6+ hours/day, or who demonstrate a need to rest. Children who do not sleep will be provided a book or quiet activity until rest time is over. Your child will be provided a mat and a mat cover to rest on. Please provide a clean blanket for quiet time. You may also provide a special stuffed animal, if desired, but it needs to be small in size and able to be stored. All linens will be sent home at the end of each week (or as needed) to be laundered and returned the next day of class.

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

Non-Discrimination Policy

Day One Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin with all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational or admissions policies.

Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome to visit the program at any time, during the hours of operation, to observe their child, the program's operation, and program activities, without having to secure prior approval. Parents are asked to be sympathetic to any transition a child may be experiencing, and to delay a visit if it may be more upsetting to the child.

Hours of Operation

Day One Christian Academy is open year-round Monday-Friday, 6:30am-6:30pm

Infant hours are offered from 6:30am-6:30pm, 8am-5pm and 9am-3pm

Before School hours are offered from 6:30-9am, 7-9am and 8-9am

Preschool hours are offered from 9am-12pm

After School hours are offered from 12-1pm, 12-3pm, 12-4pm, 12-5pm, 12-6pm and 12-6:30pm.

Arrival and Departure of Children

It is strongly encouraged that parents drop off their children on time each day, so that the child can take part in their full educational program. For the safety of the children, an adult must escort their child(ren) into the building and to their assigned classroom, to be left in the presence and supervision of a Day One Christian Academy staff.

No child will be allowed to leave with anyone, unless we have prior, written authorization from the parents of that child. Children will not be released to a minor. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment form and will be asked to provide a picture ID to pick up the child. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

- For the safety of the children while outside of the building, parents will be encouraged to pick up their children from the classrooms prior to, or after playground / outdoor activities.
- In the event an authorized adult is unable to pick up the child, a written note is required in the school office, authorizing another legal adult to pick up.
- Due to liability issues, the faculty at Day One Christian Academy is not permitted to take children home from our program.

Special Programs/Events

Day One Christian Academy has evening programs that require parents to drop off their child(ren) after hours to their designated classrooms. Parents must leave their child in the presence and supervision of a Day One Christian Academy staff member inside the classroom. Parents will be required to initial the check-in log with the teacher prior to leaving their child. Parents will not be permitted to drop off their child with any other staff or classroom.

Cell Phone/E-Mail/Social Media

The safety and wellbeing of the children, through nurturing and proper supervision, is our highest priority at Day One Christian Academy. Use of cell phones, emails, corresponding through social media, or any means of communication on a personal electronic device while children are in our care, with any member of the faculty, is prohibited by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Please help us stay in compliance with this regulation by contacting your child's teacher through the school's phone system, HiMama's messaging system or staff email addresses.

Student Dress Code

Use good judgment in dressing your child for class activities. Children should come to school comfortably dressed in washable play clothes. Please send your child to school in closed-toe, rubber-soled shoes (e.g. tennis shoes). Cowboy boots and "flip-flops" are not permitted. Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Caps, mittens, and warm clothing must be worn during the cooler seasons for the daily outdoor playtime and should be labeled.

Notification of Policy Changes

Any changes to the policies will immediately be posted at www.dayonechristianacademy.org.

Confidentiality

Parents may come across confidential information regarding Day One Christian Academy program, members of the faculty, and sometimes other children. All information received from Day One Christian Academy is to always remain confidential. Breaching confidentiality may lead to termination of enrollment.

Parent Code of Conduct

It is very important to understand young children are present in our building. Some adult language/behavior is not appropriate for young children. Day One Christian Academy must follow particular rules as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. These rules prohibit inappropriate language, threatening behavior and/or any activity that compromises the well-being of the children or staff while on our property. Day One Christian Academy has the right to terminate enrollment in the event of disruptive behavior.

Social Media

To preserve the Christian witness and effectiveness of Day One Christian Academy, the enrolled families are reminded online conversations or postings that are contrary to the values and mission of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church are prohibited. Day One Christian Academy has the right to terminate enrollment in the event of disparaging, damaging or questionable remarks referencing the program.

Custody Situations

Day One Christian Academy prefers NOT to get involved with custody disputes. The school will comply with a court order exactly as written. PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS. In the event of a custody dispute in your family, please provide us with the most recent copy of the court order and complete enrollment forms with both parent's information. If a custody dispute takes place on our property, the local police will be called to handle the dispute. School faculty will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk, Day One Christian Academy has the right to terminate enrollment.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Open communication with parents is very important to a child's success and is paramount to any good working relationship. Day One Christian Academy strives to establish and maintain effective, Christ-centered communication when relating with children, parents, administrative staff and faculty.

Day One Christian Academy promotes effective communication in the following ways:

- Himama; web based childcare app
- Information posted on the school's website and Facebook Page
- Written memos placed in your child's cubby and/or weekly folders
- Informational notices posted on the Parent Bulletin Board
- Newsletters and schedules posted on each classroom door
- Electronic correspondence through Day One Christian Academy email
- Verbal communication with the child's teachers and director

Contact Information

You are encouraged to let us know when you have questions, concerns or suggestions about our program. We value open communication, as we partner with you in your child's education. Please contact the Day One administrators at any time:

Shani Vindas *Director of Day One Christian Academy*
svindas@dayonechristianacademy.org

Maritza Rosales *Assistant Director*
mrosales@dayonechristianacademy.org

Kelly Money *Finance Director*
kmoney@dayonechristianacademy.org

Steve Garrabrant *Associate Pastor*
sgarrabrant@gdlc.org

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to share their talents with the school. There are many opportunities to support the school, either in the classroom or through different committees.

Community Helpers

Individuals are encouraged to share their special talents, hobbies and career throughout the year. Let us know if you are interested in offering a presentation to a class level or various class levels.

Grounds Upkeep

Volunteers are needed to occasionally pull weeds, water plants, trim/prune/mulch plants in the front garden, playground and outdoor Chapel, and other areas to add beauty to our program. Volunteers are also needed for occasional repairs of playground equipment and/or toys.

Seamstress

Seamstresses are sometimes needed to provide mending, nap mat creating, or for simple hemming (i.e. blankets, curtains) projects.

Volunteer Coordinator

This individual(s) will coordinate volunteers for special events and program needs. Special events may include but are not limited to Joy the Comfort Dog visits, Fire Department visit, office help, and teacher appreciation.

Room Parent

This person coordinates classroom activities with the teacher and classroom parents. The Room Parent regularly communicates with the classroom teacher on any classroom or teacher needs. Needs may include but are not limited to helping the class with school events, classroom parties (plan games/activities, manage snack/lunch food sign ups, etc.), lamination cutting, and various classroom activities.

Special Events

We have special activities during the year that require a one-time commitment. These include picture day, Mystery Readers, and field trips, etc.

Library

Volunteers are invited to participate with library activities. This includes story book readers, puppet shows and assisting with shelving books.

Classroom Assistant

Volunteer and/or substitute in one of our classrooms to share in your child's school experience. Completed background and fingerprint checks are required by DFPS Childcare Regulation.

Teacher Appreciation

This team of volunteers helps recognize and appreciate the tremendous efforts of our teachers. Also, volunteers are needed to make Teacher Appreciation Week (first full week in May) extra special.

*Teacher profiles are available upon request.

MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN

Clothing

Children must have a minimum of 2-3 complete change of clothing, **clearly marked with the child's name**, sealed in a gallon-sized Ziploc bag, in his/her cubby at all times. Accidents can happen, even for the older children, when they spill their snack, wait too long for the bathroom, or get wet on the playground. We use washable crayons, markers and paint during art time, but the children's clothing may get stained from just being kids! So, please dress your children in play clothes since PLAY is what we do!

Personal Belongings

Parents must supply all bottles, diapers, wipes and diapering accessories for their child. The school provides toddler training cups. Label everything with your child's first and last name and leave all valuable items at home. Day One Christian Academy is not responsible for personal belongings that are broken or lost.

To reduce germs and illnesses, all rest time bedding, lovies, blankets and personal drinking cups will be sent home to be cleaned regularly.

6 weeks through 12 months of age

- 1) Parents are required to complete an "Infant Feeding Sheet" at the beginning of each month. This instructs us on how to feed your baby according to your directions.
- 2) Two complete changes of labeled clothes
- 3) Box of disposable diapers with child's name labeled on outside of box
- 4) Diapering supplies (diaper wipes, ointment, powder, etc., labeled with child's name)
- 5) Bottles and formula/breast milk, cereal, and all food must be labeled with child's name. Items will be prepared, refrigerated and warmed up as necessary. Breastfeeding mothers may nurse their infant in the classroom, Chapel, worship commons or nursing room. Mothers may provide breast milk for their child while in our care.

DFPS Regulations*:

- 746.2415 (b) *Soft or loose bedding (including blankets) for use in the crib is prohibited for infants younger than 12 months of age.*
- 746.2427 *Infants 12 months or younger and not yet able to turn over on their own must be placed in a face-up sleeping position.*
- 746.2428 *Laying a swaddled infant down to sleep/rest on any surface at any time is prohibited.*

*Parents must provide written documentation from a healthcare professional, stating it is medically necessary to deviate from any of the above regulations.

12 months through 3 years of age

- 1) Two complete changes of labeled clothes
- 2) Box of disposable diapers labeled with child's name
- 3) Diapering supplies (wipes, ointment, powder, etc., labeled with child's name)
- 4) Plastic, zippered bag to store bedding
- 5) If child is being potty trained, supply of pull-ups or diapers for nap time

3 years through 6 years of age

- 1) Two complete changes of labeled clothes
- 2) Water Bottle for playground time
- 3) Backpack or tote bag for carrying home class work and program information

After School Program

- 1) Blanket, and "small" pillow (if needed)
- 2) Plastic, zippered bag to store bedding

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Behavior and Guidance Procedures

We strive for a Christ-centered atmosphere of love and acceptance for every child enrolled at Day One Christian Academy. Our faculty uses a disciplinary approach, designed to encourage acceptable behavior, through a set of child guidance techniques. All techniques used will be developmentally appropriate for each individual child and on their level of understanding.

Techniques of Child Guidance

- Praise and encourage good behavior
- Set behavioral expectations, using clear and positive statements
- Redirect behaviors, rather than focus on unacceptable behavior
- Anticipate and pro-actively eliminate potential problems
- Provide reflective listening with the child
- Temporarily remove the child from stressful situations or limit the child's participation in some activities until they are able to cooperate and follow the rules associated with that activity
- Time to "Think About It" will be limited to one minute per year of the child's age

Goals of Disciplinary Techniques are to:

- Ensure that the classroom is a safe, secure environment for all of the children
- Teach the children that our society has acceptable and unacceptable social behaviors
- Teach self-respect and respect for others
- Teach children self-control and inner discipline
- Teach the children to take responsibility for their actions and the consequences of their actions
- Strengthen the children's self-esteem and feelings of self-worth

Partnership with Parents to Manage Negative Behaviors

We believe cooperation, participation, and disciplinary consistency between the school and the home is essential. In cases where behavioral issues are exhibited on a recurring basis, the following procedures will be implemented:

- 1) The faculty will discuss the situation with the child's parents and agree upon a strategy to help the child resolve the problem.
- 2) If improvement in the child's behavior is not achieved, the director will hold a conference with the teacher and parents, to explore additional options, strategies and plan a course of action. Referrals to special service providers such as a child psychologist, family therapist, social worker, or a special education consultant may be recommended.
- 3) If there continues to be no improvement, or the child's behavior worsens or endangers safety, or significantly disrupts the educational environment, Day One Christian Academy reserves the right to terminate care for the child at any time.

Biting

Biting is not unusual in early child development and may occur for multiple reasons. Proper communication helps determine why a child is biting. The faculty and administrators will partner with parents who are dealing with biting to establish a consistent approach to solving the issue.

Grievance Procedures

Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns with their child's teacher first. If further discussion is needed, parents are welcome to contact the director, Shani Vindas. If parents are unsatisfied after conferring with the director, they are welcome to express their concerns to Gloria Dei's Associate Pastor, Steve Garrabrant at sgarrabrant@gdlc.org.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Community Service Projects

Day One Christian Academy believes in teaching children to be good stewards of the community at an early age. Parents and children will have the opportunity at various times throughout the year to share God's blessings with those who are struggling or not as fortunate.

Whatever you did for the least of my brothers, you did for me. Matthew 25:40

HiMama

Day One uses the web-based app, HiMama, for program and parent needs. As a parent using HiMama, you have access to real-time updates about your child's day, a messaging center for easy communication with your child's teacher, and information about your child's daily schedule and activities.

Field Trips

Children in prekindergarten participate in Day One Christian Academy sponsored field trips, upon approval from the director. Written notice will be given to parents through notes sent home and posted on the classroom door. Parents must sign a permission form to acknowledge the field trip date, location, any associated fees (or other requirements), prior to the date of departure.

Non-academic events will be restricted in scope and location and must comply with school policies to be considered a school-sanctioned field trip. Events that are not school-sanctioned are considered a private party and are required to occur outside of school hours.

Transportation

Transportation to and from field trips must be provided by the child's parent(s). Children that do not meet these terms, as stated, will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. The school will not transport children, except in emergency situations. Day One Christian Academy follows the Texas Transportation Code.

Section 545.412 in the code requires: *Children 4 years of age and weighing less than 40 pounds are required to be restrained in a forward-facing child safety seat; Children 4 years of age (weighing over 40 pounds) through 7 years of age (regardless of weight) and less than 4'9" in height are required to be restrained in a forward-facing child safety seat, booster seat or safety vest/harness according to the manufacturer's instructions; Children 4-7years of age and at least 4'9" in height are required to be restrained in a booster seat according to the manufacturer's instructions or a properly fitting safety belt.*

For more information, please visit <https://www.dps.texas.gov/section/media-and-communications-office/child-passenger-safety-information>

Texas law states:

- Children should never be left in a vehicle unattended more than 5 minutes.
- Vehicles transporting children shall be in safe operating condition and drivers shall have a current Driver's License.
- Children shall be loaded and unloaded at the curbside of the vehicle, or in a protected parking area.
- A child shall not be taken on field trips unless a parent/guardian has signed permission forms.

Water Activities

Children participate in various water related activities including, but not limited to, rain/snow exploration, bubble discovery, gardening and sprinkler play. Parents will be notified in advance of water play activities. Use of wading pools (2 feet of water or less) and swimming pools (2 feet of water or greater) are prohibited at any Day One Christian Academy activity or event, both at and away from the school facility.

Birthdays

Most children enjoy celebrating special events with their school friends. Parents who wish to provide "something special" are required to make arrangements with the teacher several days in advance. Special treats brought into the facility to share with other children are encouraged to be nutritious (rather than sugar-loaded) and MUST meet the needs of any classmate requiring a special diet. Special prizes are required to be age-appropriate and will be sent home in each child's cubby. Balloons are a significant contributor to choking children and are NOT allowed in the school's facility.

Celebrations/Classroom Parties

Teachers reserve the right to host a classroom party throughout the year with prior approval from the Day One Director. Room Parents are to assist the teacher in planning and preparing classroom parties and celebrations.

Smoke Free Environment

Day One Christian Academy recognizes the hazards caused by exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. It is the policy of Gloria Dei and Day One to provide a smoke-free environment for all employees, volunteers, and guests. This policy covers the smoking of any product, and it applies to employees, volunteers, members, and guests.

- Smoking is not allowed inside the buildings on the Gloria Dei campus.
- Smoking is not allowed on the playgrounds, sidewalks nor driveways surrounding the facility.

Animals in the Classroom

From time to time, Day One may have visits from Joy the Comfort Dog or have classroom pets that are in compliance with the requirements by Texas Child Care Regulation. Classroom pets may include; fish, bird, frog, turtle, lizard, snake, hermit crabs, gerbil, hamster, rat, and a guinea pig. All animals are kept in a safe and sanitary environment. Any animal larger than a small rodent is vaccinated as required by the Texas Health and Safety Code. Staff and children must use good hygiene and hand washing before and after handling an animal and/or items used by the animal. Parents prohibiting their child to interact with an animal must do so in writing to the school office.

Outside Employment

Employees of Day One Christian Academy are discouraged from outside employment with parents of the organization. Doing so changes the relationship between faculty and the family. Any outside employment that is determined to compromise the integrity of the program, may result in the disenrollment of the child.

WEATHER GUIDELINES

Children will remain inside during inclement weather such as sleet, hail, thunderstorms, severe heat/cold, or other such conditions. The school will adhere to the following:

- ❑ **Cold Temperatures / Wind Chills** When temperatures dip, outdoor activities may continue, provided children have adequate cold-weather clothing, including warm coat, hat and long pants. Parents will be notified if their child does not have proper clothing, and asked to bring the items to the school. When temps are 24°F or below, including wind chill factors, outdoor activities will be discontinued.
- ❑ **Hot Temperatures / Heat Index** When temperatures ranging, 94°F to 104°F, including heat index, outdoor activities may be limited to >15 minutes, up to, and not to exceed 1 hour. Children will be kept in shaded areas, and out of the mid-day heat as much as possible. Water will be served prior to, during and after outdoor play. Sunscreen will be applied prior to outdoor play when provided by parents. If temperatures reach/exceed 105°F, including the heat index, children will stay indoors.
 - DOCA will utilize Gloria Dei large indoor spaces to engage in Physical Activities when outdoors is not an option.
- ❑ **Ultraviolet Radiation (UV) and Air Quality (Ozone) Indexes** The school monitors the index values from the National Weather Service to assure a healthy environment for outdoor play.

Inclement Weather Policies

Day One Christian Academy will be open most days during inclement weather. In case of serious emergencies such as storms, fire, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified (within a reasonable time period) and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

Day One Christian Academy will be closed: if the route to the school is blocked; if Nassau Bay is affected; if Clear Creek ISD is closed; if Galveston County is making storm preparations. Notice of closing will be posted on the school's website and Facebook page, as well as Gloria Dei's web site at www.gdlc.org, notifications through HiMama and/or may be confirmed with the school director. There is no weather closure credit offered in these situations as they are an act of God, and out of our control.

FOOD SERVICES

Day One Christian Academy snacks and meals comply with the Nutrition and Food Service requirements regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Breakfast and lunch is included in the monthly tuition of each child participating in the Before and/or After School Care programs. The monthly snack and meal menu is posted on the Parent Board and the school web site.

- ❑ Breakfast will be served to children present prior to 8:30am.
- ❑ Snacks are served to all classrooms, mid-morning and mid-afternoon.
- ❑ Lunch is served to children 6 months through 24 months starting at 11:30am and to children 2 through 6 years of age starting at 12pm.

Food Allergies

Due to an increase in nut allergies, Day One Christian Academy is a **nut free facility**.

If your child has been diagnosed with any food disorders or sensitivities, please notify the school director in writing. **If your child has been diagnosed with a food allergy, notify the school director immediately and complete an Emergency Care Plan.** Notification of allergies will be posted in the classroom and made available to Food Services. Food provided by parents, and brought into the facility, and/or shared with other children, **MUST** meet the needs of all children who require special diets.

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

Acceptance and ongoing enrollment of any child at Day One Christian Academy is contingent upon approval from the director, who is responsible for assuring the overall welfare of the program. The director will also consider enrollment for children with special, medical conditions or developmental needs, after a screening process is complete.

Should your family decide to join ours at Day One Christian Academy, the following enrollment paperwork **MUST** be submitted 48 hours prior to your child(ren) starting our program:

- 1) Completed Registration Form
- 2) Copy of official state birth certificate
- 3) Copy of health insurance card
- 4) Current immunization record
- 5) Physician's Report for Health with signature of physician
- 6) Parent Handbook Policies Agreement
- 7) Policy and Tuition Agreement
- 8) Simply Giving Enrollment Form
- 9) Volunteer Form

Summer Enrollment

- The Summer Program is automatically included in the schedule of any child enrolled in the program. Parents may decline this option and their Simply Giving account will be placed on hold until the new school year begins.
- The Summer Program is available for children not enrolled in Day One with prior approval from the Director, based on availability. Summer only students must comply with all admission and enrollment policies. The Registration Fee for summer only admission is \$100.00.
- All Summer fees are non-refundable.

**Children 3 years of age and older are required to be toilet trained to advance into the next age level. Children older than 3 years of age and not toilet trained are required to provide a note from their pediatrician.*

TUITION AND FEES

Day One Christian Academy is a non-profit ministry of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. Tuition rates are established annually to cover program expenses, and are subject to change, as conditions require. All tuition rates are available online at dayonechristianacademy.org

Tuition Payments

Families are required to enroll and pay monthly tuition fees through *Simply Giving*. An additional 5% administrative fee will be assessed for families not enrolled in *Simply Giving*. This automatic bank draft offers the option for drafting payments on a monthly/bi-monthly basis. You may also pay for drop-ins, application and enrollment fees, or make contributions/donations.

Tuition is calculated each school year and divided equally on a monthly basis, so that partial weeks and/or months are not pro-rated. All fees for the current school year are required to be paid prior to attending the first day of the new school year.

Tuition Discounts

A 10% tuition discount is offered when a sibling is enrolled in the program. A 3% discount is offered to families paying in full for annual tuition. Qualifying families will receive only one of the following:

- Discount offered to the eligible sibling whose tuition is the lowest.
- Discount offered to the parents of children whose family is actively serving in the military.

The greater of the discounts will be applied to the monthly tuition. Documentation of financial responsibility will be required from grandparents and/or legal guardians prior to receiving discount.

Annual Registration Fees

A \$75.00 Application Fee is required with Registration Form. Upon acceptance, a \$225.00 Enrollment Fee is required to secure your child's placement. Placement is secured for up to 90 days from anticipated start date. Application and Enrollment Fees are non-refundable and are not discounted. All fees must be secured within two weeks of acceptance.

Families enrolling mid school year are required to pay 50% of the Enrollment Fee after registration for the new school year begins, and 25% after June 1st. Fees paid after June 1st are required, in addition to the upcoming school year's fees.

Drop-In Care

Parents/caregivers may request unscheduled care with a Day One Administrator to receive approval for a "drop-in." Drop-ins will be accepted on Mondays and Fridays only depending on availability. The fee for drop-in care is \$10/hour per child. Drop-in care may not be substituted for days of scheduled care, vacation time, weather closures, holidays or any other sanctioned calendar days. Drop-in fees will be automatically drafted from your Simply Giving account at the end of each month.

Holiday Care

Childcare is available during most holidays. Holiday Care is already included in the tuition fees of any child enrolled for a minimum of 6 hours on any scheduled day. Holiday Care must be scheduled for any child enrolled for 5 hours or less on any scheduled day at a rate of \$10/hour per child.

Withdrawal or Change in Enrollment

Tuition must be paid for the two weeks following receipt of written notification of withdrawal or change of enrollment from a parent or legal guardian, even if the child is no longer attending the program.

Late Pick-up Fee

A penalty of \$1/minute will be charged to the account of parents consistently picking up their child after their scheduled pick-up time. Late pick-up fees will be automatically drafted from your Simply Giving account the first business day of the following month.

Refunds

All tuition fees owed and registration fees when paid are non-refundable. In the event there is an overpayment on your account, a refund will be issued, but only after the balance on your account is zero, and there are no outstanding claims.

Vacation Credit

Children enrolled full-time (for a minimum of 6+ hours/day and attend 12 months of the year) are eligible for a one-week vacation credit after attending the program for one full year. Vacation credits must be requested in writing or by email. This amount will be deducted from the next tuition amount drafted from your *Simply Giving* account. Vacation credit may not be transferred between siblings.

Referral Credit

We greatly appreciate your loyalty and are confident that you will be so pleased with our program that you will tell your friends and acquaintances about us! Should a referred family enroll their child, a credit of \$200 will be applied to your Simply Giving account, once the referred families have been enrolled at Day One Christian Academy for a minimum of 6 months.

FSA Reimbursement

All requests to complete FSA reimbursement forms need to be submitted to the Finance Director in writing or by email.

Tax Receipts

All requests to receive a Day One Christian Academy tax receipt for tuition paid, needs to be submitted to the Finance Director in writing, or by email.

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church / DOCA's Federal Tax ID Number is # 74-1589358

HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Day One Christian Academy is designed for **well** children. To prevent and control the spread of communicable illness among children and faculty, strict health policies must be followed. Cooperation between staff and parents is essential to maintain a safe and healthy environment.

Immunization Requirements

Day One Christian Academy follows immunization requirements as specified by the Texas Department of Health for children and employees. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child's immunizations are current.

Failure to keep children current on immunizations may lead to termination of enrollment. To obtain a list of current requirements, please visit <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/>. <http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/>. Occasionally, Day One Christian Academy may have children enrolled who have not received immunizations due to personal belief. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children.

Vision and Hearing Screening Requirements

The Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36, requires all children in prekindergarten, enrolling in a private or DFPS licensed child care center, to have a screening or professional exam, for possible vision and hearing problems, within 120 days of admission. Day One Christian Academy provides screening children 4 years of age and older as well as any other child we feel early screening may be necessary. Parents of children, who do not pass the screening, are required to seek further testing from a medical professional. Children, who are absent, or decline to be tested, are required to provide proof of testing by an alternative medical professional.

Support for Children with Special Needs

Day One is not qualified or equipped to accept all children with special needs. Day One will evaluate each child to determine whether we can serve them. Day One will partner with families who have children that require special services. Day One will allow the child's therapist/doctor to enter the classroom to observe their behaviors as well as provide a space for intervention with prior communications. The Day One Director can provide information on services provided by the local school district and additional community services.

Minor Health Problems

In case of a minor injury, the faculty will administer basic first aid. All injuries, or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification, will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day. If an injury is more significant (e.g. bites that break skin, head injury), the faculty will notify the parent by phone. All injuries occurring at the school will be documented and filed in the child's permanent file. Parents are required to sign a copy of the incident report.

Administration of Medications

The parent may provide medicine and must complete the required medication forms. Staff with a Medication Administration Training may administer medications in accordance with written instructions from the parents or the child's physician. Written authorization from parents or physicians must be updated regularly. Staff will document all medication given to a child noting the time and dosage for each administration. The staff member administering the medication is required to sign the medication authorization form.

Medications must be stored in the DOCA Front office. Medication cannot be left in the classrooms nor the child's personal belongings that reside in the classroom. The school will not give medication to children who are enrolled for less than 4 hours, except in the event of an emergency. Medications should be administered to the child by the parent, prior to bringing the child to school. A copy of the pharmacy instructions may be required to accompany the medication.

Prescription medicine must be in the original container and include:

- 1) Child's name
- 2) Type of medicine
- 3) Dosage and administration requirements
- 4) Physician's name
- 5) Purpose of medicine
- 6) Prescription number and date
- 7) Expiration Date, indicating the medication has not expired.

A physician's authorization is required for any alternative dosage from medication label, and/or if age of child is not included in dosage amount on label. A physician's authorization is required for medication to be shared between siblings. A physician's authorization and instruction of usage is required for any medical equipment, including nebulizers and epi pens.

Illness Exclusions and Criteria

Upon arrival, faculty will visually screen children for obvious symptoms of illness. Children displaying symptoms of contagious illness and/or who are not well enough to participate in daily activities, **including outdoor play**, will not be admitted. Parents are required to inform faculty about any symptoms of illness that the child has been exhibiting at home, and if the child received any medication before arrival.

Children may be denied admission for the day, based on the following symptoms:

- Forehead or armpit temperature of 100°F or above
- Two or more vomiting episodes within 24 hours
- Two or more diarrhea episodes within 24 hours
- Drainage from eyes
- Persistent wheezing or coughing
- Breathing difficulty
- Lethargy that interferes with regular classroom activities
- Illness and/or injury resulting in a greater need for care than the school can provide, without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.

Children who become ill while at school will be removed from classroom activities until a parent or designee arrives. A parent or designee is expected to pick up the child **within one hour** of being notified. In the event of severe illness or injury, or if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, Day One Christian Academy may call for an ambulance and obtain emergency care through a clinic, hospital, or private doctor, as directed on the Emergency Authorization Form, and at the parent's expense.

Children **must** remain at home for 24 hours:

- after fever has broken, without fever reducing medication
- after vomiting or diarrhea has ceased.
- until they are symptom-free, if they have been sent home sick from our program.

Communicable Illness

Parents are required to notify the school if their child has been exposed to a communicable illness. This will allow the faculty to take appropriate precautions to prevent the spread of the illness. If we find that your child has been, or may have been, exposed to a communicable illness, we will notify you. Children are required to stay at home until they are no longer contagious.

Communicable Disease Outbreak

In the event of an outbreak, the director will notify the Health Department and Child Care Regulation to report the situation and receive instructions/guidelines to follow for the specific illness or outbreak. Day One Christian Academy faculty and parents will be notified of the situation within 48 hours, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and Child Care Regulation.

Public Health Emergency

Day One Christian Academy will open as a childcare center, as allowed by state and CDC regulations.

Re-Admission Following Communicable Illness

Children excluded from the program for a communicable disease may be re-admitted, only when they are absent for the amount of time specified by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and/or the Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services (HCPHES) www.hcphes.org. This ensures that their presence will not endanger the health of the other children and that they are well enough to participate in all regularly scheduled activities. A note from a physician or local health authority may be required upon re-admission, regardless of the reason of the absence, verifying that the child is no longer contagious.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Our highest priority is to ensure the safety of your children by enforcing these guidelines:

- Staff will be with your children at all times, until they are released to parents, legal guardian, or authorized person(s) identified on the release portion of the enrollment forms.
- Staff will monitor individuals entering and exiting the facility.
- For the safety of the children, while outside of the building, parents are encouraged to pick up their children from the classroom, prior to, or after playground activities.
- All doors accessible to Day One Christian Academy staff remain locked at all times, with the exception of the main school entrance door.
- Children should use walking feet and always remain with a parent/guardian.
- Please be aware of your surroundings AT ALL TIMES and report anything suspicious you may witness to the school office or the Nassau Bay Police Department immediately.

Keyless Entry System

Each family has an assigned code for the Keyless Entry System (KES) at the main school entrance. This code will be changed on a yearly basis, or any time it is felt that the number has been compromised. Please use the following guidelines to ensure safety:

- DO NOT share your code with others.
- DO NOT allow your child to enter your code.
- DO NOT open the door for individuals you do not recognize (as a parent of a child).
- DO NOT allow your child to open the door.
- DO NOT compromise the safety and security of the children.

Cameras

Day One Christian Academy has closed circuit cameras for the safety and security of the children enrolled in the program. Cameras are located in the front lobby, hallways, playgrounds and classrooms. The recorded footage is saved for six weeks and used for supervision purposes.

- Per Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code (HRC) Section 42.04271
 - Inspect any video recording of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving the parent's or guardian's child, provided that:
 - 1) Video recordings of the alleged incident are available.
 - 2) The parent or guardian of the child does not retain any part of the video recording depicting a child that is not their own.
 - 3) The parent or guardian of any other child captured in the video recording receives written notice from the facility.

Photographs/Video Taping

Pictures are used for the benefit and enhancement to our educational programs. Photos taken of the children will be for classroom, Day One Christian Academy and/or Gloria Dei Lutheran Church purposes only (i.e. HiMama, Parent Chapels, Field Trips, Facebook and Memory Book). If you wish for your child not to be photographed, please indicate with the director. Please refrain from taking pictures of children, other than your own, without prior consent.

Required Drills

The Gloria Dei Lutheran Church facility is equipped with a fire sprinkler system. Day One Christian Academy practices regular fire, severe weather, crisis lock down and evacuation drills, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Traffic Flow and Parking Lot

The following traffic patterns have been deliberately designed to provide the safest conditions for our children. It is the responsibility of each and every parent to maintain a safe environment for the children by adhering to the following traffic regulations:

- The speed limit in the parking lot is 10 MPH at ALL times.
- Traffic on the north side of the building (school side) is ONE direction only.
- Vehicles are prohibited from entering the EXIT only driveway
- Do not park along the RED curb zone. This is for emergency vehicles only.
- The YELLOW curb zone is for short term (5 minute) parking only.
- Proceed SLOWLY and constantly watch for children darting into the parking lot.

IN CASES OF EMERGENCY

Emergency Response Plan

Day One Christian Academy has a response plan in case of an emergency. Parents are encouraged to read this information carefully. In the event a parent is present in the building during an emergency, the school will ask parents to participate accordingly. During any emergency the most important course of action is to remain calm.

In all emergency response situations, the Director, in coordination with the administrative staff of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church will notify any emergency personnel or governing authorities as each situation dictates. In all situations, the director may delegate any portion of his/her duties to the faculty, other staff members, volunteers or emergency personnel as he/she deems necessary.

Building Evacuation

The following is the evacuation plan in case of a fire, chemical spill, or explosion: If the school becomes damaged, children will be taken to Gloria Dei's Student Center across the parking lot. If evacuation of the area is required, parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately. Children will be cared for until a parent or designated adult arrives.

Lock Down

During a lock-down, parents trying to enter the school will only be allowed entry if it does not threaten the safety of the children; and persons already in the school facility will only be allowed to exit if it does not threaten the safety of the children or until an all-clear is issued, signifying that the lock-down is over.

Shelter-In-Place

A shelter-in-place requires a lock down of the entire Gloria Dei facility to protect the children from threats usually associated with, but not limited to, chemical or environmental disasters. A shelter-in-place is designed to maintain a safe environment within the building by preventing outside air from entering the facility. The shelter-in-place prohibits Gloria Dei staff or Day One Christian Academy faculty to allow anyone (including parents and personnel) to enter or leave the building until further instructions are received from emergency personnel, law enforcement and/or civil authorities.

Follow-Up Once Situation is Contained

Once law enforcement and/or civil authorities have given clearance, the school will contact parents/legal guardians. Law enforcement and/or civil authorities will coordinate a written statement with Gloria Dei's chief of staff and operations and/or the director of Day One Christian Academy.

Emergency Medical Treatment

In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), Day One Christian Academy will call 911. When appropriate, the faculty will administer CPR or first aid measures. Reasonable efforts will be made to notify a parent immediately. **All children are required to have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency.**

Conditions that require immediate medical care include, but are not limited to:

1. Concussion
2. Difficulty breathing
3. Unconsciousness
4. Laceration, either significant in size or bleeding
5. Injury to an extremity with obvious deformity
6. Head trauma associated with vomiting or altered consciousness
7. Severe allergic reaction

If a child ingests or comes in contact with a substance thought to be harmful, the faculty will contact the Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The following policies are required by Child Care Regulation, per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501. A copy of these standards may be reviewed in the school office, or online at www.dfps.state.tx.us, or by contacting the local Regulation office at 713-940-3009.

Day One Christian Academy encourages parents to view our compliance history with Child Care Regulation. Parents may view our most recent inspection, posted on our parent communication board, on the child care Regulation web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us, or by contacting the local child care Regulation office at 214-583-4253.

Texas Family Code

Texas state law requires the staff at Day One Christian Academy obtain annual training focused on the prevention, recognition and reporting of child abuse and neglect. The staff must immediately report to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation from CPS or the police.

If parents feel they need assistance with possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Call the National Parent Helpline at 1-855-427-2736 or visit www.getparentingtips.com.

Contact the Child Abuse Hotline (800) 252-5400 or the DFPS website at www.dfps.state.tx.us if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

Texas Penal Code

Texas state law mandates that any area within 1000 feet of a childcare center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Any of the following indicators observed in children attending Day One Christian Academy should be immediately reported to the Director. The person who made the initial observation will make a confidential report of the suspected abuse to the proper authorities. The person reporting the problem is immune from liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise occur. Immunity extends to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report. Reports, records and working papers used or developed in an investigation are confidential.

Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators:

Unexplained Bruises and Welts:

1. on face, lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks, thighs
2. in various stages of healing
3. clustered forming regular patterns
4. reflecting shape of article used to inflict bruise
5. on several different surface areas
6. regularly appear after absence, weekend or vacation

Unexplained Burns:

1. cigar, cigarette burns, especially on palms, soles, back or buttocks
2. immersion burns
3. patterned like electric burner, iron, etc.
4. rope burns on arms, legs, neck and/or torso

Unexplained Fractures:

1. to skull, nose, facial structure
2. in various stages of healing
3. multiple or spiral fractures

Unexplained Lacerations or Abrasions:

1. to mouth, lips, gums, eyes
2. to external genitalia

Behavioral Indicators:

1. wary of adult contacts
2. reports of injury by parents
3. apprehensive, extremes, aggressiveness or withdrawal
4. frightened of parents
5. afraid to go home

Physical Neglect

Physical Indicators:

1. consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress
2. consistent lack of supervision, in dangerous activities or long period
3. unattended physical problems or medical needs
4. abandonment

Behavioral Indicators:

1. begging, stealing food
2. extended stays at school (early arrival and late departure)
3. constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep easily
4. states there is no caretaker

Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators:

1. difficulty in walking or standing
2. torn, stained or bloody underclothing
3. pain or itching in genital areas
4. bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas
5. venereal disease, especially in pre-teens

Behavioral Indicators:

1. withdrawal, fantasy or infantile behavior
2. bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
3. poor peer relationships
4. reports sexual assault to caretaker

Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators:

1. speech disorders
2. lags in physical development
3. failure to thrive

Behavioral Indicators:

1. habit disorders (atypical sucking, biting, rocking, etc.)
2. conduct disorders (antisocial, destructive, etc.)
3. neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play)
4. psychoneurotic reactions (hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobias, hypochondria)
5. behavior extremes (compliant, passive, aggressive, demanding)
6. overly adaptive behavior, inappropriately adult, inappropriately infant
7. developmental lag (mental, emotional)

Emergency Contact Information

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

18220 Upper Bay Road
Houston, TX 77058
(281) 333-4535
gdlc.org

Day One Christian Academy

(281) 333-3323
dayonechristianacademy.org

Methodist Hospital Clear Lake

18300 Houston Methodist Drive
Houston, TX 77058
(281) 333-5503

Nova Vita

18220 Upper Bay Road
Houston, TX 77058
<https://novavitamentalwellness.com/>
(713) 489-4436
contact@novavitamentalwellness.com

Nassau Bay Police Department

1800 Space Park Dr
Houston, TX 77058
(281) 333-2212 – Office
(281) 333-4200 – Non-Emergency

