



Gateway
Christian
Education
Center

Parent Handbook

423 C Street Saint Albans, WV 25177

Phone: 304.727.8002 Fax: 304.721.8912

Website: www.gatewaycec.com

Director: Kayla McDaniel

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Gateway Christian Education Center is a Kanawha County Division of Health and Human Resources licensed facility with maximum capacity for fifty (50) children ages 6 weeks through 24 months and one hundred forty seven (147) children ages 25 months through 12 years of age for a total of one hundred ninety seven (197) children.

Hereafter, within this document, the Gateway Christian Education Center will be referred to as GCEC and Gateway Christian Church will be referred to as Gateway. In addition, unless it is otherwise noted, wherever this document refers to the GCEC Director, it is assumed that it also is referencing the GCEC Assistant Director.

Insurance Policy Information

Insurance Company:

Church Mutual Insurance Co., 3000 Schuster Lane, P.O. Box 357, Merrill, WI

Named Insured:

Gateway Christian Ed. Center, 423 C St. St Albans, WV 25177

Agent:

Nancy Franklin, STE 104 2333 MacCorkle Ave. St. Albans, WV 25177-2094

Mission Statement

The mission of The GCEC is to provide safe and affordable childcare and education for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. Our faith-centered program incorporates Biblical morals and values that remain with the child(ren) throughout life. Our mission is to help each child develop to his or her maximum potential in his or her social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development by:

- (1) appreciating each child as a unique individual capable of learning and contributing to the community
- (2) respecting the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each child
- (3) helping children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and positive interactions.

Civil Rights

GCEC accepts children ages 6 weeks through 12 years old and does not discriminate based on race, national origin, ancestry, and/or sex.

If you feel that your civil rights have been violated, you may file a formal complaint. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC, 20250-9410, or call toll free 866.632.9992(voice). TDD users can contact the USDA through local relay or the Federal Relay at 800.877.8339 (TDD) or 866.377.8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Philosophy on Education

The children in our care have the right to developmentally-appropriate curriculum to support their learning styles and abilities. We believe that our staff should support and encourage children's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and, where appropriate, spiritual needs. We believe that children learn best when they have positive trusting relationships with their caregivers. We believe that there should be an open line of communication with parents about children's development and needs.

The GCEC curriculum is a relationship-based program, and we believe that healthy brain development depends on secure, trusting relationships with caring adults. We believe that children learn best by modeling the behaviors of caregivers rather than just being told what to do. We firmly believe that positive guidance helps children to gain control of their behaviors, builds good self-esteem and promotes a good atmosphere for trust and conflict resolution.

Admission Policy and Procedure

Prior to admission to our center, parents/guardians are asked to schedule an on-site tour with the Director. This time allows for parents/guardians and their children to see the facility first-hand and to meet the childcare providers who will be working with their children. This time also helps to facilitate an exchange of information about the children's needs and our center's guidelines for care.

Due to state and county regulations, parents/guardians must complete and submit the following forms prior to the first day of attendance at GCEC, with the exception of the child immunization form which must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment:

- Registration Form w/Fee
- Immunization Records
- Physical Signed by Physician
- Signature Form for Receipt/Understanding of Parent Handbook
- ACH Form for Payment/Connect Certificate
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Form

In an effort to better support your child's care, the following should be provided by parents/guardians:

- Diapers/Pull Ups
- Change of Clothes (at least 2)
- Blanket/Pillow for Nap Time
- Sunscreen/Bug Spray
- Medication (if applicable w/written order from a physician)

Hours of Operation

Our center is normally open Monday through Friday, with drop-off beginning at 7:00 AM. In order to maintain correct daily meal counts and a regular routine, children should be checked in by 10:00 AM. If you are dropping off your child after 10:00 am, please call the Administrative Office (304.727.8002) to make arrangements. Until your child becomes adjusted to the drop-off/check-in routine, we do ask that you leave without a lingering farewell.

State law requires that all children be checked in and out of classrooms for the day by the child's parent/guardian or other responsible adult assigned by the parent/guardian. These check-in and check-out procedures should be completed by a teacher in your child's classroom via our ProCare application.

If an adult other than you, the parent/guardian, will be picking up your child, this person must be listed on your child's emergency card and this adult must provide a valid picture ID to the center at the time of pick up. Your child will not be released to anyone not listed on their emergency card. The only exception would be to a representative from Child Protective Services (CPS), the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), or the Birth to Three program.

While we care deeply for the children in our care, we respectfully request that you pick up your children no later than 5:45 PM to allow our staff time to get home to their own families. If you are going to be late picking up your child(ren), please call the center ahead of time, and speak to one of the Directors, as a \$1.00 per minute per child late fee may be incurred. Please also note that successive and/or continual late pickups may result in us having to terminate our childcare services for your child(ren).

Holidays and Closings

Our center will be closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Week of Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)
- Week of Christmas

Our staff are required by state and county licensing regulations to maintain their childcare certifications and to complete their Continuing Education hours at least annually. To assist them with this, and to provide them with the most up-to-date childcare information possible, there may be times throughout the year when a specific classroom or the entire center needs to close. When this happens, parents will receive a written notice at least two weeks prior to the closure.

Severe Weather Guidelines

While we make every effort to operate normally during periods of inclement weather, as a general rule, if Kanawha County Schools are closed or on a delay, the GCEC will operate on a two-hour delay. This allows proper time for the roads to be cleared and our staff to report for their scheduled work shift safely. If the decision is made to close the entire center due to inclement weather, a notice will be sent out via ProCare and published to our Facebook page.

Tuition Rates and Payment Policy as of

Ages 6 weeks to 24 months	\$225 per week
Ages 25 months to 36 months	\$210 per week
Ages 37 months to 48 months	\$200 per week
Ages 48 months+	\$130 per week
After School (K-5)	\$110 per week
Summer Program (K-5)	\$165 per week (one time \$100 registration fee)

Private Pay families are eligible for the following discounts:

- 10% military discount with proof of military ID (parent/guardian)
- 10% first responder discount (police, fire, and EMS – parent/guardian)
- Multi-child discount
 - 10% off second child
 - 20% off the third child
 - Discount is removed from the oldest
- Parents/guardians will be given a thirty-day written notice of any rate changes
- When a child moves up into a new class, the rate change will occur the first full week after the child has transitioned into the new room.

If you are eligible for more than one of the above discounts, please contact the center's administrative office to determine which one of them would be the most beneficial for you.

Charges are applied on Monday of the week of care, and full payment is due by Friday of that same week, with late or declined payments subject to a \$25.00 fee per occurrence. Payments can be made via credit card or ACH withdrawal only – we do not accept other forms of payment. Credit card payments are subject to a 3% merchant fee added to your tuition.

Unfortunately, we do not offer tuition fee reductions or credits when your child is absent from a regularly scheduled day, or if our center is closed due to an emergency. If your child(ren) is(are) absent for any reason other than approved vacations, it is expected that you will still pay the appropriate tuition on time.

Please keep your receipts for your tax purposes. If you need copies of receipts, you can contact the center administrative office, and we will provide them to you for a nominal administrative and processing fee.

Conflicts of Interest

GCEC employees are not allowed to provide childcare outside of our center to any child enrolled in any of our programs and/or services. Each GCEC employee's primary responsibility is to our center, and to your children while they are here in our care. To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, we respectfully ask that you not approach any of our staff with requests for outside childcare, whether paid or unpaid.

Rest Time/Bedding

State licensure requires that all children have one hour of planned rest time daily. Naptime for children aged five and younger is scheduled between 12:00 noon and 2:00 PM each day, although that time may vary slightly depending on other activities planned for the day. If your child has laid down and rested for at least one hour without sleeping, he or she will be provided with quiet activities while others sleep for the remainder of the quiet time. So as to maintain the integrity of this quiet time for all children, we ask that there be no drop-offs/pick-ups during nap time unless prior arrangements are made with the Directors.

Clean bedding for your child(ren) should be brought in on Monday and taken home on Friday to be washed over the weekend. If you are unable to clean your child(ren)'s bedding over the weekend, please contact the center's office to make other arrangements.

Child Observations/Assessments/Transitions

GCEC participates in a program of child observations and regular assessments titled *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* for ages Birth through Five. The main purpose of this program is to support learning and development for both individual children and classrooms of children; to identify children who may need additional services; and to aid in effectively communicating progress or concerns with parents.

Assessments are conducted once a child is enrolled at GCEC, as well as when the child reaches milestone ages. All assessments are confidential, and any information about a child's development will only be shared with the child's parent/guardian, the child's teachers, and the GCEC Directors. These assessments also help determine when your child is developmentally ready to transition into a new classroom. We do our best to slowly transition children into their next class over the course of a week. Parents/guardians will receive notification at least one week prior to the move with information regarding when the move will occur, the new teachers, and information about the new classroom.

Lastly, each child will have a portfolio that travels with him or her from class to class until he or she goes to Elementary School, or until he or she unenrolls from GCEC. Within these portfolios are copies of the child's assessments, observations from teachers, copies of parent teacher conferences, and any other important information for the child's teacher.

Once your child reaches elementary school age, and if your child's chosen elementary school is one of our approved bussing locations (Central, Anne Bailey, Lakewood, Alban, and Andrew's Heights), we will do our best to get your child enrolled in our kindergarten through fifth grade afterschool program, pending availability.

Supervision of Children / Security Cameras

Our teachers supervise children as per the DHHR Licensing Regulations and Manuals. These times include, but are not limited to, daily lesson times, nap times, field trips, while on the playground, during arts and crafts, when accompanied to the bathroom, mealtimes, while being transported, and while transitioning from one area/activity to another.

GCEC has cameras throughout the building and grounds that record both video and audio. However, for the privacy and protection of our children, this footage cannot be shared with parents/guardians or other outside sources or entities without a court order.

Accidents and Incidents

All teachers on staff with GCEC are required to be trained in CPR and First Aid, and we take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the children in our care. Should your child be involved in an accident or injury during the day, (everyday scratches and minor injuries that sometimes occur during routine play), an accident/incident report will be provided to the parents/guardians via the ProCare app and will contain as many details and pictures of the incident as applicable.

Every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian in the event of an emergency. For this reason, it is imperative that parents/guardians always have up to date emergency contact information in their child's file.

In the unlikely event that your child becomes injured beyond minor scratches and scrapes and must be transported by ambulance to a hospital for medical treatment of any kind, you or your emergency contact will be notified. *Please be assured that one of our staff members will remain with your child until you arrive.* We will transport to the closest medical facility to our center, which is Thomas Memorial Hospital, located at 4605 MacCorkle Avenue SW, South Charleston, WV. 25309 (304.766.3600)

Food Policy / CACFP

Meals for the children are provided by the GCEC. Breakfast is generally served from 8:00-8:30 am, lunch from 11:00-11:30 am, and a snack is served from 2:00-3:00 pm for the entire center. All meals meet USDA/CACFP standards for nutrition, and menus are posted in the classrooms for review. If your child has any allergies or follows a special diet, accommodation requests may be made at the center's main office and should be accompanied by medical documentation. When a special accommodation is made, the GCEC will supply an alternative meal for your child.

Due to the large number of food allergies among our children, for legal reasons children **CANNOT** bring outside food and drink into the center with them. The one exception to this rule is for a class party or other scheduled event within the center when store-bought and sealed products may be brought in to be shared.

Clothing

Be sure to dress your child for comfort and play while they are within our care, with clothes that are easily washable as some activities during the day can become messy. While the supplies we use in the center are kid-friendly and washable, there is no guarantee that they will not stain some fabrics.

Children should always wear shoes while here at the center.

Children should always have at least one extra change of clothes at the center, and we ask that you check your child's cubby daily for dirty clothes that need to be taken home and laundered.

If the weather permits (temperature 40 degrees or above), children older than one years old may go outside daily for gross motor activities. *Note – during the winter months, we ask that your child have the following items: coat, hat, mittens/gloves, and appropriate shoes.*

If your child is currently potty training, or preparing to potty train, please make sure we always several pairs of training pants or underwear and at least two changes of clothes on hand. If your child is not yet potty trained, you should provide enough disposable diapers (25) for one week. (the general rule of thumb is five diapers a day for every day your child is in the center for a week)

Health and Physicals

State Licensing rules require that Immunization records be submitted to the Director within thirty days of your child's first enrollment, and that your child has a current immunization record on file – updated every six months for children under the age of two and updated every two years for children over the age of two. In addition, your child's most recent wellness visit needs to be documented in their file as well.

Failure to submit initial immunization form and/or to maintain up-to-date immunization/wellness visit records may result the suspension or termination of service.

Illness Policy

GCEC staff observe children daily and watch for changes that may indicate injury, infestation, or illness and record any observed changes in the child's file. These include, but are not limited to, behavior or appearance that is unusual, skin rash, itchy skin/scalp, or a complaint of not feeling well.

The center will contact a parent/guardian of a child who has a fever of 100.5 or higher and ask that the parent/guardian consult a licensed health care provider. For the health and safety of your child, and all the others in the center, we also reserve the right to send your child home for any of the following symptoms, (unless a licensed health care provider determines that they do not indicate a communicable disease): diarrhea, signs of dehydration, vomiting, undiagnosed rash, difficulty breathing, mouth sores, infestation such as scabies or head lice, abdominal pain that is persistent, or lethargic behavior.

If your child has a serious communicable illness, an illness that prevents your child from participating within the class, or an illness that results in greater need for care than our staff can provide, we ask that you keep your child at home until the situation is resolved medically. Children will not be permitted to return to the center until they are symptom free – with no medication – for at least 24 hours. If your child begins to exhibit any of the previously listed symptoms at night, please keep your child home the next day.

Medications

All requests for the administering of medication must be in writing and accompanied by a Medication Administration Form signed by both the parent/guardian and at least one of the Directors. Medication must be kept in the original container with the pharmacy label that contains the child's name, the prescribing doctor's name, the expiration date, the amount of medication to be given, and the time(s) of day the medication is to be given. Medication will be kept in a locked container in the center when not in use, and no medication should be left at the center over weekends or breaks.

Over-the-counter diaper cream is considered by the DHHR to be in the same class as sunscreen, and it can be administered to your child with your written permission.

Toys / Electronics / Cell Phones

Children are not permitted to bring outside toys with them to the center.

The use of electronics within any GCEC program is limited to the electronic devices used to maintain and supervise what is being used/seen/heard, with the exception of our afterschool program – these children may bring their school-issued tablets to complete schoolwork at the center when needed. Personal cell phone usage is not permitted by any child. A parent/guardian may call the center's office if there is a need to speak with your child.

Vacation Policy

While we understand that you may take your child out of the center for various reasons throughout the year, such as vacations, family trips, extended holidays, emergencies, etc., we do request that you bring your child to the center each day that your child is registered and committed to being here. This helps us ensure proper child/teacher ratios in each of our classrooms. If your child is absent, you will still be charged your normal weekly rate.

Discipline Policy

The purpose of discipline is to help guide children develop self-control. When children begin to learn self-control, they become responsible for their own actions which, in turn, improves their self-esteem and self-sufficiencies, and helps set a pattern of positive social interactions for life. It is our goal to assist all children in developing problem-solving skills so that the need for teacher intervention for discipline is kept to a minimum.

One of the challenges we face as child development professionals is to help children recognize and accept all of their feelings, some (or most) of which they do not understand. While children cannot control the flow of feelings, we can help them to channel those feelings into empowered behavioral choices. Helping young children resolve angry feelings in a healthy way helps their emotional development at this formative age.

GCEC operates under the following guidelines:

- No child will be permitted to excessively disrupt the classroom or harm another person or damage property.
- No employee may physically punish a child at any time – this includes, but is not limited to, shaking, striking, spanking, swatting, thumping, pinching, popping, shoving, punching, spitting, biting, hair pulling, yanking, slamming, excessive exercise, or any cruel treatment that may cause pain
- No employee is to put anything in or on a child's mouth as punishment
- There is to be no restraining of a child by any means other than a firm grasp around a child's arms or legs and then only if necessary for the child to regain control of him/herself
- No employee may subject a child to psychological punishment of any kind, including, but not limited to, verbal abuse such as ridiculing, shaming, frightening, humiliating, intimidating, or making negative remarks about gender, race, religion, or cultural backgrounds
- No employee is to use harsh or profane language, to yell or to scream, to threaten to punish or withhold care, or to punish entire classroom or group of children for one child's actions
- No parent is permitted to punish another parent's child
- Employees may not seek parental permission to use physical punishment on specific children, nor may employees undertake any other actions prohibited by state licensing

In order to provide the best quality learning environment for the children in our care, we will use the following discipline practices:

- GCEC and Gateway staff will strive to model acceptable behaviors.
- A child exhibiting unacceptable behavior(s) will be redirected to an area or activity where the child can use acceptable behavior(s)
- When redirecting a child's behavior(s), at least one teacher will stay with the child until the child becomes interested in the new activity, and it looks like a positive outcome will result.
- Children will be spoken to in a positive manner, especially when being disciplined, and children will be

asked and encouraged to exhibit the desired and acceptable behavior(s).

- Staff will help children to develop the child’s language skills so that he or she can express him/herself in a positive manner.
- We believe in a limited use of ‘time-out’ for out-of-control behaviors only. Should a child become angry or out of control to the point of harming him/herself or others:
 - Staff will place the child in an area away from others, but well within the sight of a staff person, to allow the child to regain control of his/her behavior.
 - The generally accepted use of the ‘time-out’ method is one minute for each year of the child’s age.
 - If a child’s behavior becomes a safety concern, or reaches a point as to be physically or emotionally harmful to the child, to other children, or to any of the GCEC staff, the director will schedule a conference with the parents/guardians to develop a plan of action to help the child bring unwanted behaviors to an acceptable level.

We recognize that children are curious individuals who seek to discover. However, we must teach them boundaries in many of areas of life since children do not usually possess the cognitive intellect to have boundaries of their own. To that end, you will be notified if your child acts out in a way that could be perceived as sexual in nature or intent, and you will be directly involved in the development of an action plan to redirect this unacceptable behavior. Please note that aggressive or continued sexual behavior or actions may result in a review from our Board of Directors and/or dismissal from our center.

Termination of Services

If for any reason previously stated in this document, or otherwise, GCEC decides to terminate care for your child(ren), GCEC will strive to give you – the parent/guardian – at least two weeks’ notice prior to the termination date.

We respectfully ask that should you decide to permanently remove your child(ren) from our care, that you give us at least two weeks’ notice prior to the termination date.

Abuse and Neglect

West Virginia law mandates that all suspicion(s) of child abuse or neglect must be reported immediately to the DHHR by all mandated reporters, which includes all GCEC employees. As defined by Federal and State Law, child abuse and neglect is “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”

If you have suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Please call the following number:

**Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-352-6513**

Emergency Plans

Gateway and the GCEC seek to provide a safe, loving, and hazard-free environment for all of our families, staff, and visitors. Toward that end, we plan for emergencies, practice how to react to emergencies, and pre-empt emergencies whenever and wherever possible. If an emergency occurs, however, we will endeavor to act in the best interests of those at risk and we will seek to maintain the safety of all people at our center until the emergency is dealt with successfully, diffused, and/or the period of risk has expired.

Emergency responses have been categorized into three main types which are:

- Lock-down and/or shelter-in-place emergencies, which require everyone to stay inside, away from doors, windows, and other points of entry:
 - hazardous weather
 - chemical release
 - weapons
 - fire
 - violent person(s)

- Building evacuation and re-entry once building is deemed safe:
 - Fire
 - Smoke
 - bomb threat
 - minor sink and/or toilet flooding.

- Building evacuation with no re-entry:
 - long-term utility failure
 - situations that cause property damage.

Should any of the above occur, parents/guardians will be notified either by ProCare or by phone call with a message stating the situation and the detailed emergency plan that is in place.

If we must leave the property, one of the following will occur:

- If we must leave the property but can stay in the local area, the children will be transported to Saint Albans High School and await parents there.
 - St. Albans high School, 2100 Kanawha terrace, St. Albans, WV 25177

- If we must leave the property but cannot stay in the local area, the children will be transported to Hurricane High School and await parents there.
 - Hurricane High School, 3350 Teays Valley Road, Hurricane, WV. 25526

Please note that in all the above situations, the numbers listed in your child's emergency contact records will be called in priority order.

Master Schedule

Ages one through four years old

7:00-8:00	Arrival
8:00-8:30	Breakfast
8:30-9:30	Diaper Changing/Pottyng/Hand Washing/Free Play
9:30-11:00	Small Group Activities- Art/Circle Time/Bible Time/Center Play/Gross Motor
11:00-11:30	Lunch
11:30-12:00	Diaper Changing/Pottyng/Hand Washing
12:00-2:00	Naptime/Rest Time
2:00-3:00	Snack/Diaper Changing/Pottyng/Hand Washing
3:00-5:00	Small Group Activities- Center Play/Gross Motor Activities/Free Play
5:00-5:45	Table Toys/Manipulatives/Prepare for Departure

Every class has a classroom specific schedule that details each area more in depth

Teacher-Child Ratios

CLASSROOM	TEACHERS	# OF CHILDREN	AGES
Newborns	1	4	6 weeks- 6 months
Infants Class	1	4	6 months – 12 months
Waddler Class	1	4	12 - 15 months
Tots Class	1	4	15 - 18 months
Toddler Class	1	4	18-24 months
Little Twos Class	1	7	24-30 months
Big Twos Class	1	7	30-36 months
Little Threes		10	36- 42 months
Big Threes		10	42-48 months
Fours	1	12	48 + months
Pre K	1	12	4 - 5 years
After School	1	16	6 - 12 years

Transportation Regulations

For more information on the DHHR regulations and our center's responsibilities regarding the transportation of your child(ren), please contact the GCEC office at 304.727.8002

Diaper Changing and Toilet Training

- Staff shall clean the child's perineal (urinary and anal) area with disposable wipes.
- After removing a soiled diaper and before putting a fresh diaper on a child, staff members shall wipe their own hands with a pre-moistened towelette or a damp paper towel.
- Both the child's and the staff member's hands shall be thoroughly washed after each diaper change. If disposable gloves are used, they must be discarded immediately, and hands washed.
- Changing tables and surfaces shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use by cleaning to remove visible soil, followed by wiping with an approved disinfectant solution.
- Soiled cloth diapers and/or soiled training pants shall be stored in a labeled container with a tight-fitting lid or in a sealed plastic bag that is sent home with the child at the end of the day.
- Feces from soiled cloth diapers or training pants shall be disposed of by dumping in a toilet.
- Soiled disposable diapers shall be promptly disposed of.
- Toilet training chairs, if used, shall be emptied into a toilet, and thoroughly cleaned and sanitized in a utility sink after each use.
- Hand washing sinks shall not be used for rinsing soiled diapers or clothing or for cleaning toilet training equipment.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

If a parent or guardian has a concern that needs to be addressed regarding their child, another child, their child's teacher, another child's teacher, another GCEC staff person, or anything related to the GCEC, that parent/guardian is encouraged to call the center and discuss it with one of the GCEC directors. Hopefully, by discussing it openly, a timely and appropriate resolution can be reached. If you do not feel as if your concern has been properly addressed after this discussion, you should send a written letter detailing your concern to the attention of the GCEC Director, Kayla McDaniel, and ask for a formal meeting to further discuss the matter. Ideally, this meeting should take place as soon after the initial phone call/verbal discussion as possible. If, after this meeting, you feel as if your concern has still not been adequately addressed, you may ask that the GCEC Director forward your concern to the GCEC Advisory board for review. The GCEC Advisory Board will then provide you with a written response within 10 days of the request from the GCEC. Their response and decision will be final.



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