

Parent and Student Handbook



2022 – 2023

A Ministry of
Greenbrier Baptist Church

Educating Hearts and Minds
For Jesus

Seneca Trail Christian Academy

Educating Hearts and Minds for Jesus

It is clearly understood by all parties that enrollment and attendance at Seneca Trail Christian Academy is a privilege and not a right of any individual. Every family with a child enrolled will provide a signed Statement of cooperation document, which will be placed in the student's file. The privilege of attending STCA will be forfeited by any student who is unwilling or unable to meet the criterion, standards, and regulations of STCA.

The school board may ask for the withdrawal of any student if they feel there is a situation placing the testimony of our institution at risk. This determination will be made by the pastor and the school board.

Vision

Seneca Trail Christian Academy (STCA) is under the mission and outreach of Greenbrier Baptist Church. STCA is focused on caring for and developing a love of learning in a Christian atmosphere and a readiness for kindergarten that emphasizes social skills, academic preparedness, emotional and spiritual development of the child.

Philosophy

- Children's play is important to their development.
- Children are provided with the opportunity to play, share and learn with other children in a safe, loving Christian environment with an atmosphere of acceptance and warmth.
- Parents are supported in the difficult but rewarding task of child rearing through the teaching staff, the church and parent events (special speakers (in-person and/or virtual), educational readings (online and/or handouts), etc.) throughout the school year.
- STCA responds to the needs of the community for quality care and education of children.

Goals

- To provide a healthy, nurturing, and safe environment
- To accept, respect, and appreciate each child and family. To provide age appropriate materials and equipment that supports children's learning in a fun and interesting way
- To encourage the physical development of large motor skills through outdoor and indoor play as well as fine motor development through manipulative toys, blocks, and puzzles.
- To encourage creativity by offering experiences in music, art, and literature
- To encourage interest in language through games, stories, and conversation
- To partner with parents in the care and teaching of their children.

Curriculum

The daily curriculum is structured so that children learn the skills they need to enter kindergarten in a Christian environment. The curriculum is based on child development and appropriate practice and provides for the various ages, ability levels and developmental stages of the children. The staff is in constant contact with the kindergarten teachers in the school system to make sure that the curriculum meets the standards for kindergarten preparation. Children learn from a Bible curriculum as well each week. Prayer takes place before mealtimes and at the beginning of each day.

Discipline Policy

Children are small, tough, exasperating, interesting, and loveable. To be "good" with children, we watch each face and listen to each voice. We observe what each child is like, how each is feeling, how each child plays and moves around. We get to know the weaknesses and strengths of each child and of the group. This is how good discipline begins.

The word "discipline" is derived from the word "disciple," someone who follows the teachings of another. Discipline means learning. It does not mean punishment, tears, or humiliation. It means a chance to learn how to live in a social world. Discipline is not something adults do to children. It is something they do with children.

The goals of discipline are self-control, responsibility, and self-discipline. Children need help in controlling their behavior. Most important, they need to become responsible for their own behavior and develop self-control.

Teachers are most likely to achieve the goals of discipline when they respond to the cause of behaviors as well as to the behaviors themselves. We ask, “why?” silently before reacting/responding.

Teachers may utilize a variety of discipline techniques to meet the needs of different situations:

- Let children make some decisions and choices – one good way to teach responsibility is to give the child as much responsibility as possible.
- Give reasons for rules – understanding the reasons for rules make it easier to remember and follow them.
- Be consistent in our language and behavioral response to children – consistent behavior by adults facilitates development of inner control through modeling.
- Remove children from situations they can’t handle – if a child is too young to understand, or there is no way to change the cause, it may be possible to change the situation.
- Redirect children’s behavior – often there is a way to let children do something in a better place or safer way.
- Let children learn the consequences of their actions – experience is the best teacher.

Teachers WILL NOT humiliate or demean a child in any form, verbally or physically. Such actions will be cause for immediate dismissal. No punitive action toward children will be tolerated including slapping, hitting, and/or spanking. The return of negative behavior, such as biting back, is also not acceptable. Children do not like those moments when they are out of control. They need adults, at those times, to firmly, with gentleness, exert control. Returning negative behavior deepens frustration. Firmly holding and gently verbalizing, calms, and fosters control.

Safety and Emergency Plans of Action

- Children will never be left alone or unsupervised.
- There will be a minimum of two staff members present during the hours of operation.
- Each employee is certified in CPR and First Aid.
- Fire evacuation and severe weather plans will be posted in each area that is used by the children.
- Fire drills will be held in accordance with local fire safety regulations and at varying times. A record of drills is kept in the office.
- In the event of an emergency when evacuation is necessary, the children of STCA will be taken to Mr. Banton’s house or Mr. Terry’s house in Ronceverte and Fairlea by way of vehicle.
- Parents will then be called and informed of when to pick up their children.

Safe Conditions Policies

Transportation Safety Policy

STCA will only provide transportation to field trips, in cases where the child has no other adult to attend with them. We will only transport a child if we have a permission slip signed by a parent

or guardian on file. Only qualified adults that are licensed drivers will transport children. Drivers will follow all pertinent laws and will not use cell phones at any time while in the vehicle. Children will always be in proper seats and seat belts. Children will not be left unattended. Upon returning from each trip, the van will be inspected to ensure that no child is still on board.

STCA has insurance that covers transportation of children for our center.

Safe Conditions Policy

The following steps will be taken to ensure that children are safe while at STCA. Children will be actively supervised with the required number of qualified adults (adults who have completed a comprehensive criminal history check, drug screen and negative TB test and have completed all required trainings). STCA will not care for children in areas that are being remodeled, repaired, or painted. The director is responsible for maintaining all interior and exterior surfaces, including walls, floors, ceilings, equipment, toys and furnishings, in a safe condition, free of sharp points or jagged edges, splinters, protruding nails or wires, loose parts, rusty parts, or materials containing poisonous substances.

STCA will take the following steps to maintain the facility:

- Clean the facility daily.
- Keep the facility in a sanitary condition always.
- Sanitize toys, furniture, and other equipment used by children, daily, weekly and when they become soiled or contaminated.
- Wash all soiled items prior to sanitization.

Child Abuse Protection

The Staff of STCA are mandated by law to receive Child Abuse Detection and Prevention training. The staff are required by law to immediately notify the local child protection agency if they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

Parent/Guardian Communication

- Family conferences will take place for all children two time per year. Topics discussed will include interests, development, strengths, and areas of individual need.
- Parents of children in the program will have daily opportunities at morning drop off and pick up to discuss the events of his/her child's day. Written communication may also be in your child's binder, so please make sure to check it daily.
- Parents may also communicate to the director and staff during school hours by calling the main office
- Special conferences may be requested by the director or child's parents as needed.
- To further foster whole family relationships, parents or guardians of children enrolled at STCA are welcome to visit at any time, by scheduling a time that works best for both the teachers and them.

Admission/Enrollment/Termination Policies

Eligibility for Enrollment

- Children that are 1 years or older before August 15th and are potty trained, or working on potty training, are eligible to be enrolled at STCA, provided enrollment space exists.
- We prefer children to be potty trained but understand that all children develop at their own pace. We will work with the child, and parents, on a training plan.
- We enroll children who are at a stage of growth and development, which enables them to benefit from the educational program.
- The parent is responsible for submitting all enrollment forms for the child's attendance.
- We cannot provide service to any child whose needs cannot be met or whose behavior endangers other children.
- STCA is committed to supporting all children and families but realizes there are children who may be better served through the support of other local agencies. Parents will be notified if concerns arise.

Caring for Children with Special Needs

Childcare programs must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are committed to meeting the needs of all children, regardless of special health care needs or disabilities.

- Children with special needs will be accepted into our daycare under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- All families will be treated with dignity and respect for their individual needs and/or differences.
- STCA will be responsible for ensuring that confidentiality about special needs is maintained for all families in the program.
- STCA will ensure all health forms and other important information regarding the individualized needs of the child will be completed by the health care provider and/or other providers for the child.
- Children with special needs will be educated in the least restrictive environment as possible. To accomplish this, STCA may work in coordination with other agencies and/or health care providers as needed. No contact with outside organizations will be made without written parental consent. Inclusion of staff on IEP (Individualized Education Program) and IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) meetings is desired to ensure the childcare program provides the most supportive and least restrictive environment.
- It is important that parents keep STCA apprised of any changes or needs that their child may have regarding their special need.

Enrollment Forms

Forms to be completed and submitted to the daycare supervisor prior to admission include:

1. Registration Agreement
2. First Aid Permission / Emergency Info
3. Social Media and Photo Release
4. Child Information Form
5. Parent Notice

6. Medication Consent (if needed)
7. Proof of immunizations and a physical exam (well child check-up)
8. Handbook Acknowledgement Signature Form

Waiting List

In cases when enrollment space is unavailable, children will be placed on a waiting list. Enrollment will then take place as space becomes available. Priority will be given to families with currently enrolled children.

Registration Fee

Upon registration, the family must pay the \$200.00 registration fee. This fee is non-refundable should the family decide to not attend.

Termination of Care

STCA reserves the right to terminate childcare for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay invoices as they are due
- Failure to complete required forms, as required
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property by a child and/or parent that is not corrected by an improvement plan set by the director and the parents.
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- False information given by parent either verbally or in writing
- Disciplinary reasons as outlined previously

STCA also understands that life circumstances may arise that would require families to remove a child from our care. In that instance, we request the following:

- Two week advance written notice stating when care will be ending
- Payment for the last two weeks of care
- If the child is pulled without a two week notice, payment is to be made immediately for the final weeks.

Operational Policies

Advisory Board

- STCA has an Advisory Board made up of members chosen by Greenbrier Baptist Church.
- The Board meets Monthly to review the financial report, enrollment information, and other information as presented by the STCA principal.
- The Advisory Board assists the STCA in areas of policy, budget preparation and management, staffing decisions, and other facility operations.

Hours of Operation

STCA is open

Monday – Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Special Holidays

- STCA will close for the following special holidays:
 - Labor Day 09/05/2022
 - Columbus Day 10/10/2022
 - Thanksgiving Break 11/19/2022 – 11/27/2022
 - Christmas Break 12/22/2022 – 01/02/2023
 - Martin Luther King Day 01/16/2023
 - President's Day 02/20/2023
 - Easter Break 04/08/2023 – 04/16/2023
 - Memorial Day 05/29/2023
- There may be additional days throughout the year when STCA will close (weather related), but notice will be given whenever possible.

School Breaks

The childcare will close during all STCA school break seasons.

Emergency Policies

Bad Weather

STCA will make every effort to be open in bad weather. We will close when STCA believes it is necessary (i.e. extremely low student numbers, power outage, and/or for the safety of staff and families).

Relocation of Children in the Event of Building Emergency

- In the event of a major emergency, such as a fire or other event that would make the building unsafe, the children will be relocated to a safe facility.
- The children will be moved to the home of the Principal and Pastor in Ronceverte and Fairlea.
- Parents will be notified that they must pick their children up immediately from the home.

Child Attendance, Arrival, and Departure

Arrivals and Departures

- Drop off is 7:30 – 8:15. Please notify the director if your child will be later than the arranged time of their arrival
- Parents/guardians are required to sign children in and out each day they are in attendance

- For your child's protection, only persons authorized by the parent/guardian are permitted to take the child from the facility.
- Parents/guardians must list the names of anyone allowed to pick up the child as well as the names of anyone denied permission on the Emergency Information Sheet.
- Individuals listed in the child's file may be asked for photo identification to confirm their identity.
- If someone other than the listed individuals will be picking up your child, you must notify the director. Staff will ask for photo identification before the child is handed over to them.
- In the case of court-ordered custody decisions that would affect drop off or pickup, documentation must be on file.
- Under no circumstances will the facility allow a child to leave without these provisions.
- Please notify STCA if, due to some emergency, you are unable to pick up your child on time.
- Overtime charges will apply after the scheduled pick-up time of 5:00 pm.
 - After 5:00 PM a one-time fee of \$10.00 per child.
 - Then billed at \$20.00 per hour and prorated by time spent past 5:00 pm.
- If a child has not been picked up by 6:00 pm, and there has been no contact by the parent/guardian, or another authorized person, the local Department of Child Services will be called with a report of child neglect

Reporting Children's Absences

STCA staff plan the day based upon the number of children expected. We ask that parents notify STCA as early as possible if their child is going to be absent, late, or if they plan to pick up their child unusually early.

Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs

STCA prohibits the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs on the premises while children are in our care.

Payment and Fee Schedule

All tuition payments are due at the end of each month, regardless of your child's attendance. STCA reserves the right to change these fees with 30 days' notice.

Childcare Fees for fulltime students

\$500.00 per month, whether the child is in attendance the full time or a portion of the time.

Childcare fees for part time students

Will be billed at \$35.00 for a full day (over 4 hours) \$20 for half day (up to 4 hours) and spots will only be available if there are no students wanting a full-time position.

Other Fees

- STCA will assess a late payment fee after 10 days of nonpayment. This fee will be \$25.00 and will be assessed every additional 10 days.
- \$35.00 returned check fee (Subject to change, based on the bank charges)

Billing for:

- Invoices will be billed by the 16th of each month, and payments are due by the 1st.
- If the bill is unpaid by the 10th, a late fee of \$25.00 will be added to the amount due and will be assessed every ten days until the outstanding balance is paid.
- Any late fees will be included on the next invoice, if not paid prior to when it is printed.
- If the account becomes 30 days overdue, the child's enrollment will be suspended, and not allowed to attend until the bill is paid.
- Billing will continue during this time.
- If the bill is not paid within 30 days of the suspension, the child will be removed from enrollment and their place could be filled with another child.
- There is no reduction in fees if parents choose to send their children less than the specified number of days.

Late Pick-up Fee

- Failure to pick up your child/children by the end of the day at 5:00 p.m. then there will be
 - One-time fee of \$10.00 per child.
- Continued failure to pick your child/children by 5:00 p.m.
 - Parents, you will be billed a \$20.00 per hour and prorated by time spent past 5:00 pm.
- Please make every effort to pick up your child at the specified time.
- It is understood that circumstances may come up to prevent getting to the facility on time. If you are unable to pick up your child on time, please notify the director.
- If you will be more than one hour late, please make arrangements with someone on your pick-up list to pick up your child to avoid a call to CPS for a child neglect report.

Medical Policies

Immunizations and Physical Exam

- Every child must be current on immunizations and verification of a physical exam (well child check-up). These records must be provided prior to your child's first day of attendance.
- Without this documentation, your child may not attend.
- If your child receives new immunizations and/or has an updated physical, please update the record on file in the STCA office.
- Immunizations exemptions for medical or religious reasons must have proper documentation on file to be approved by state consultant.

Medication

- Medication can be administered while in attendance provided a prescription is documented (pharmaceutical container and/or physician's signed instructions).

- Over the counter, non-prescription medication CANNOT and WILL NOT be given without a written physician's order. This order must be updated annually.
- A physician may write an order giving blanket permission for the child to have any over-the-counter medication, but it must state the amount of medication to be given.
- Medication will only be administered if the child's name is written on a medications form with the amount of dosage (including the appropriate measuring device) and time to be given along with the parent's/guardian's signature.
- Notify staff members of all medication, so that it may be locked in the medicine box or refrigerated as needed.

Communicable Diseases

- Staff members are trained in the signs and symptoms of illnesses and in proper hand washing procedures to prevent the spread of communicable disease.
- Every means will be taken to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.
- Please do not send your child if he/she is ill or has been ill in the last 24 hours. If your child is too ill to go outside or participate in activities with their class, they are too ill to attend.
- You will be called to remove your child if any of the following symptoms exist:
 1. vomiting
 2. severe coughing
 3. temperature of 100 or higher
 4. diarrhea
 5. suspicious rash
 6. difficult or rapid breathing
 7. lice (may only return when deemed "nit free")
 8. red, encrusted, or runny eyes
 9. lethargic behavior
- Parents are expected to have the child picked up within one hour of being notified that the child is ill to minimize the spread of illness.
- Every effort will be made to separate a sick child from the rest of the class while they are waiting to be picked up.
- Children should be free of all symptoms for 24 hours, without medication, or have a note from the doctor stating that return is permissible before returning to STCA.
- Please do not give your child medication and send them to STCA if they have been ill through the night.
- Parents should have a backup plan of care established if a child is sent home from STCA with an illness.
- If a staff member has a communicable illness, parents will be notified. A substitute caregiver will be assigned in his/her place as needed.

Reoccurring Medical Issues

- If a child has a medical issue that is reoccurring, such as a rash, runny eyes, or an allergy, STCA must have documentation from a physician stating that the issue is not contagious and that the child may attend when symptoms are present.

- Please refer to the Communicable Disease section for suspicious rashes or conditions.
- If documentation of the medical issue does not exist, the condition will be treated as a potential communicable disease and the child will be excluded until documentation is presented.

Accidents

- Parents/guardians will be notified of accidents as soon as possible.
- The staff member who has observed the accident will fill out the accident report. A copy will be kept for the files and a copy given to the parents/guardians.
- In non-life-threatening instances, the staff will provide on-site first aid.
- If the child requires medical attention, the parent will be called, informed of the injury, and asked to pick up the child.
- If the injury requires immediate medical attention, 911 will be called.

Parental Responsibilities

Meals and Snacks

- A snack is served at approximately 9:15 each morning. Please provide a snack for your child daily.
- Donations of healthy snacks to share with the group are also appreciated. Suggestions for healthy snacks are fruit, yogurt, pretzels, string cheese, raisins, peanut butter, Sun butter (alternative for peanut butter for those allergic), vegetables and hummus. Goldfish crackers are also allowed.
- Parents are welcome to bring a special snack for their child's birthday, other special events, or just for fun, BUT the State Board of Health requires that all foods be commercially prepackaged. No homemade foods are allowed. Items may be purchased at a bakery with the logo and address on the box.
- Hot lunch is an option with a charge of \$3.50 per lunch \$1.50 for an extra entree. Parents are to sign their child up for hot lunch thru My school works. The lunch has to be paid online before it will be added to the lunch count. Parents you have until 9:00 a.m. each day to sign your child up for hot lunch.
- Lunches must be packed cold however; warm lunches may be brought in stainless steel thermoses that keep foods at 140 degrees or warmer. Please remember that younger children usually eat small portions. All opened and uneaten food must be thrown away at the end of lunch.
- Water will always be available as well throughout the day.
- Juice pouches/boxes that are not 100% fruit juice are not an acceptable substitute for milk or water.
- If your child has a food intolerance or allergy, please send a doctor's order stating that the child has the intolerance/allergy and a list of acceptable drink or snack substitutes.

Naps/Rest Period

- Children will participate in a rest period after lunch each day.

- Children are not required to nap but will be asked to stay quietly to help their bodies rest. Quiet activities will be provided for them after a period of time.
- Please provide a small pillow, blanket, and a security item (stuffed animal), if needed.
- Each Friday, the child's nap items will be sent home to be washed and returned on Monday.

Field Trips/Car Seats

- Car seats are required when we must transport a child on the van for field trips. Car seats must be provided by the parents.
- Permission slips are required for each field trip.
- A separate permission slip will be needed if we will be transporting your child.
- Children who do not have a signed permission slip on file may not participate in the planned field trip.

Files

- Keep all information (addresses, phone numbers, work phone numbers, immunizations, emergency phone numbers, etc.) current.
- If information is requested for the child's file, and is not received, care may be discontinued.

Clothing

- Dress your child in clothing that is comfortable for a variety of active, and sometimes messy, activities as well as outdoor play. We do go outdoors as often as possible.
- Each child should be able to handle fastenings with minimum of help.
- Accidents happen. In case of a toileting accident, crafting accident or spill, please provide a complete set of clothing that is appropriate for the season (i.e. no shorts for winter weather).
- Mark your child's name clearly on all articles of clothing.
- If your child is sent home in a change of clothes that belongs to STCA, please wash and return it as soon as possible.
- Flip-flops or shoes without a heel strap may not be worn (Please have a pair of tennis shoes for outdoor play). Also, dress shoes with heels have been known to cause accidents and are often painful by the end of the day so we ask they not be worn.
- Tennis shoes or some other comfortable shoes are preferred for daily activities and playing, both in and out of doors.
- Please have your female child wear leggings/shorts under her dresses.
- As the weather changes, be sure to send sweaters, jackets, coats, gloves, hats, boots, etc. as warranted.
- Children will be expected to go outside to play (even if just for a short period of time) when the weather permits. Please have your children wear the appropriate clothing for the season.
- Children without proper clothing for outdoor play (i.e. winter coat, jackets), will not be allowed to participate.

Toys & Electronic Devices

- STCA is well stocked with a variety of toys and materials for the children to play with.
- Personal toys are often the cause of arguments among children.
- No toys shall be brought to STCA from home except when permission is given from their teacher (i.e. show and tell) or as a security item for napping.
- If your child brings a toy, they will be asked to put it in their backpack until time for show and tell or the end of the day.
- Electronic devices (phones, gaming systems, tablets, laptops) are not allowed.

Lost and Found

- Items often get misplaced or put in the wrong backpack. Please put your child's name on items that the child may remove (coats, sweatshirts, gloves, hats, etc.).
- Check with your child's teacher if an item comes up missing.
- STCA is not responsible for items that the child has misplaced.

Pandemic Procedures

The health and safety of our children, families, and staff are our top priority. In an attempt to mitigate the spread of this virus in our childcare community, the following changes, in alignment with CDC and the FSSA recommendations, will be implemented as follows:

Illness Policy and Monitoring

Students will have their temperatures checked daily. Once upon arrival and then after lunch, or before, if a staff member notices any change with your child's behavior and/or coloring, or if your child complains of not feeling well.

1. Any student with a fever of more than 100.4 must remain out of school for 24 hours after the fever has broken without fever-reducing medications. We will not allow a doctor's note for returning before the 24 hours.
2. Students with a cough and a fever will be required to be seen by a medical professional within 24 hours. Students must remain out of school for 24 hours and a negative covid-19 test.
3. Parents will be required to contact the STCA within 24 hours to inform the school what the illness may be and/or if the child is being tested for COVID-19.
4. If a doctor has cleared your child to attend sooner, then the child will need to bring a Doctors excuse with them when they return to childcare.
5. If the child, or anyone in the home, was in direct contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or has been diagnosed themselves, STCA must be contacted immediately by phone at 304-647-4878.
6. If anyone in the home has been tested for COVID-19 and awaiting results, the child should remain at home until the results have been given. Again, the director should be notified of this circumstance immediately, as well as the results of any testing.

7. The health department will inform both the parents and STCA staff of the recommended quarantine period and give directions on any possible closings of a classroom or program and the length of time for either.

Keeping Healthy

STCA will take every precaution for your child to stay healthy and ask that the parents help with this.

1. Consistent handwashing and cleaning of the center will be performed throughout the day.
2. Students and staff will be required to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer several times throughout the day. This may cause a child's hands to become more dry/raw than normal. We ask that you use lotion on their hands nightly to help keep the child's hands from becoming overly raw.
3. We need your help in keeping students and staff healthy. It is the responsibility of the parents to be open and honest with staff about any illnesses the child or parent may be experiencing. If we find that this is not the case, students will be asked not to attend STCA.
4. We ask that all families practice social distancing as recommended and/or required by State and Federal guidelines.
5. During a time of a pandemic, STCA will only care for the allowed students in accordance with the state, federal and local government.

Closing of STCA

If STCA is informed of a child or parent testing positive for COVID-19, they will first contact the Greenbrier County Health Department. Any, and all, direction for additional cleaning and disinfecting, quarantine recommendations and/or closures will be made by the health department after talking with those affected. STCA has every intention of remaining open during these uncertain times but may close as directed by state or local officials at any time during the pandemic.

Tuition Payments During a Pandemic

Payment of care is taken on a circumstance basis depending on the situation and pandemic. STCA will keep all families updated of any tuition changes due to the closing of the facility.

Greenbrier Baptist Church

GBC has a pastoral staff to serve you. If you are not part of a church family, please consider making yourself a part of the family at GBC. Everyone is welcome.

Service times:

Sunday mornings

11:00 am to 12:30 pm