

Effort Christian Preschool

A ministry of Effort Baptist Church



2009-2010 School Year
Parent/Student Handbook

Table of Contents

Effort Christian School and Preschool

Welcome	4
Effort Baptist Church Core Values	5
Effort Baptist Church Mission and Vision	5
Effort Christian School and Preschool Mission Statement	6
Philosophy of Christian Education	6
Effort Christian School and Preschool Governing Body	7
Admission and Enrollment	7

Instructional Programs

Preschool Programs	8
Preschool Teachers	8
Preschool Curriculum	9
Chapel	9
Communication	9
Parent/Teacher Conferences	9

Hours, Attendance, Illness

Preschool Hours	10
Arrival	10
Dismissal	10
Pickup Authorization	10
Preschool Attendance	10
Illness	11
Injuries	11
Medication	12

Lunches/Snacks

Peanut and Tree Nut Free Policy	12
Lunch	13
Snacks	14
Birthdays	14

Dress Code and Code of Conduct

Preschool Dress Code	14
Preschool Code of Conduct	15
The Matthew 18 Principle	16

Parental Involvement

Volunteers	17
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Tuition and Donations

Tuition and Childcare Payments	18
Donations and Gifts	18

Miscellaneous

Drills	19
Field Trips	19
Inclement Weather/School Closings	19
Lost and Found	20
Show and Tell	20
Withdrawal Procedure	20

Welcome to Effort Christian School and Preschool!

Your child's educational and spiritual development is important to us, and we believe that your association with us will be a pleasant and rewarding experience. Our faculty and staff stand ready to help you in any way we can, so please don't hesitate to ask for assistance or guidance.

You have made a wise decision to provide a Christ-centered education for your child; one which will help to promote Christ-centered living, as well as, the development of your child's unique God-given gifts, both natural and spiritual. Although parents/guardians are their child's primary educators, the objective of the school is to assist parents/guardians in this educational process. Working together, we plan to help your child learn to make good decisions and to grow in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord"-Ephesians 6:4. Effort Christian School and Preschool is accountable to God for the time your child is entrusted to our care. Let us agree to pray for one another and to resolve in every situation to demonstrate our Christian love for each other.

Bring up children in the way they will go and when they are old, they will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:3

Effort Baptist Church Core Values

You are not judged by anyone – You are welcomed no matter what...no matter what you've done or who you are. We are here to help you get well. (Matthew 7:1,2)

Extravagant care and prayer – We are here to guide you to spiritual and psychological health by connecting you to healthy people and to a healthy God. We will do whatever it takes to help you get healthy. (Luke 10:25-27)

Bible study, teaching and preaching that's easy to understand and apply. (Every parable Jesus ever uttered.)

Worship without Rules – You choose how you worship. We worship God in different styles, but we worship with no rules or barriers. (Psalm 100:1; Habakkuk 2:20)

The Call of the All – The call of God into ministry and mission is to all the saved. No one is excluded. (Acts 2:17-19, Galatians 3:28, Romans 16: 1,7)

A belief that God's invasion into people's lives and society's social structures can change the world. Joy comes from seeing God transform persons, families, and cultures. (Matthew 12:28-30; John 15:7; I John 4:4; 1 John 5:4,5)

The missing matter most. (Luke 15)

Effort Baptist Church Mission and Vision

To be a Great Commandment and Great Commission church.

The Great Commandment

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart... soul...and mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” Matthew 22:36-40

The Great Commission

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to do everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19-20

Effort Christian School and Preschool Mission Statement

ECSP is founded upon the firm conviction that Christian education will make a difference in the lives of children, both now and eternally.

ECSP's ministry goals are:

- To provide families within our community a Bible-centered academic education that challenges students to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in thought, word, and deed.
- To encourage students to draw closer to God and to practice Biblical principles.
- To strive for academic excellence and Biblical knowledge, resulting in the discipleship of others.
- To act as an extension of both the church and home, while remaining a primary institution for learning.

Philosophy of Christian Education

We believe the very essence of a student's Christian education is not only academic, but should include the integration of scripture and the application of Biblical truth in every aspect of life.

It is our goal to fostering the development of faith in our students by stimulating cognitive, moral and ethical thinking, along with modeling grace-filled relationships and providing experiences that allow students to put their faith into action in every dimension of their life. All of these collectively are part of the Christian educational process.

The vision we share with our students and the attitudes with which we equip them will enable them to become principled adults whose lives are lived in relationship with God, and who bless their fellow humans by their commitment to love and justice. We believe that Christian education is for Christian life. It is the call for our students to be conformed to the model of Christ in the whole of their existence, in the whole framework of their beliefs, in the whole complex of their feelings and attitudes, and in every spectrum of their actions. (Ps. 119:105, Pro. 22:6, 2 Cor. 5:20, 2 Tim. 3:16, Acts 1:8, Matt. 5:14-16, Rom. 12:2, 1 Peter 3:15)

Effort Christian School and Preschool Governing Body

The School Board is the governing body of Effort Christian School and Preschool. It consists of appointed voting and non-voting members.

Voting members include:

Chairperson: Jodie Wright

Church Council Representative: Sherron Haley

Church Member at Large Representative: TBD

Finance Committee Representative: TBD

Preschool Parent Representative: Amy Ondek

School Parent Representative: Jennifer Merriman

Secretary and Personnel Committee Representative: Lisa Himes

Non-voting members include:

Office Administrator: KK Peterson

Pastor: David Clay

Preschool Director: Samantha Buonomo

School Director: Joyce Parr

The School Board meets regularly. All parents of ECSP students are welcome to attend regularly scheduled monthly meetings if they wish to discuss issues or concerns. To attend, please contact the chairperson or secretary ahead of time by either email at schoolboard@effortchurch.org or calling the Effort Baptist Church office at 589-8962.

Admission and Enrollment

Effort Christian School and Preschool is an outreach of Effort Baptist Church. Effort Christian School and Preschool seeks to admit students who are committed to spiritual, personal, and intellectual growth. All children of parents who desire a Christian education for their children are welcome to submit an application. ECSP makes no distinction concerning an individual's gender, race, color, or ethnic origin because we acknowledge that there is no preferential treatment with God (Romans 2:11). It extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available at the school.

Applications are available at www.effortchurch.org and should be returned to the Effort Baptist Church office to the attention of either the preschool director, Samantha Buonomo or the school director, Joyce Parr. Please contact the appropriate director at 589-8962 for questions or for additional information.

Instructional Programs

Preschool Programs

2 Year old program:

This program is geared toward children who will be two before September 30th of the present school year. It focuses on learning through play. The colors and shapes are introduced, through calendar and curriculum. There is an added focus on social/emotional development. This class is a great first step into preschool, it gives children a chance to learn transitioning, and develop self help skills in a loving and nurturing environment. This is a two day per week program, your child does not need to be potty trained for this class.

3 Year old Program:

This program is geared toward children who will be three before September 30th of the present school year. This class focuses on colors and shapes, in addition to the alphabet. Self help skills, such as separating from family, learning to share, and following directions, are emphasized in this class as to prepare a student for Pre-K. A student must be potty trained. This class is offered as a full day, or half day program, you may choose from 2 days, 3 days, or full week.

4 Year old Program

This program is geared toward children who will be four before September 30th of the present school year. This class focuses on Pre-K skills, such as solid oral language, ability to listen, a desire for independence, and an ability to play well with others. Academically it will focus on basic letter and number recognition. As the letters are introduced the sound will be emphasized. There will be a focus on fine motor skills, through pre-writing, and art activities. This class is offered as a full day, or half day program, you may choose from 2 days, 3 days, or full week.

Preschool Teachers

The teaching staff at ECSP is highly qualified and thoroughly dedicated to helping each student toward positive spiritual, mental, and physical growth. We see ourselves as partners with parents/guardians in helping children learn to trust God as well as grow academically.

Preschool Curriculum

Our preschool curriculum is designed to help children learn good social skills and to stimulate their intellectual abilities preparing them for Kindergarten. We provide children with a variety of toys, materials, and activities to foster their creativity and practice problem solving skills.

Our teachers communicate and listen carefully to children's responses. Small class sizes allow us to provide lots of individual care. We understand that children develop at their own rate.

Children in our preschool program learn about Biblical principles. They learn to respect others, appreciate the world in which they live, and establish self-confidence. They leave our school with a strong foundation on which to build their academic and spiritual future.

Chapel

Chapel provides opportunity for Effort Christian School and Preschool students to participate in a collective worship service. It is a time of spiritual enrichment and exposure to a variety of Christian experiences. The aim of all chapel time is to magnify Jesus Christ. Chapel is an important part of ECSP. Parents are always welcome to attend. Chapel is held in the Sanctuary on Wednesdays and Thursdays at 9:15 a.m.

Communication

We will do our best to keep communication open with our parents/guardians. We will send home weekly newsletters and other information that pertains to our classroom activities. You may contact your child's teacher at any time, however, please do not use classroom time to discuss lengthy issues. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

Preschool Parent/Teacher Conferences

We will hold parent conferences twice a year for all preschool classes. We will schedule one in January and a second one in May. This is a time to learn about your child's daily activities and how they are progressing.

Hours, Attendance, Illness

Preschool Hours

Preschool hours are 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

Full day Preschool hours are 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM.

Preschool Extended Day hours are 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM.

Arrival

Please arrive on time to make an easy transition into the classroom. A child may feel hesitant to enter the classroom after group activity has begun.

Dismissal

Please arrive by 11:55 AM and wait for your children in the gathering space. We will dismiss at 12:00 PM. For afternoon pickup, please arrive by 2:55 PM.

Pickup Authorization

We will not release your child to anyone that is not authorized by you. If your child will ride home with someone else other than his usual ride, please notify the teacher with a note. Please let the teacher know if you will be picking your child up early.

Preschool Attendance

Regular attendance is important to your preschooler's educational experience. If your child is absent, please let your child's teacher know the reason when he/she returns.

Illness

Please do not bring your child to preschool with a contagious illness. Children with the following symptoms should not come to preschool:

- Earache
- Elevated temperature – over 100 degrees F
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Persistent or serious cough
- Red, runny, or crusty eyes
- Skin rashes – undiagnosed or suspicious of being contagious
- Swollen glands or sore throat
- Thick colored mucus from eyes or nose
- Unusual lethargy or sluggishness
- Upset stomach
- Wheezing chest

A child must be symptom free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school or preschool. If your child is seen by a doctor and put on antibiotics for a contagious infection (like strep throat), please keep your child at home until he/she is fever free and has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours. If a child contracts or is exposed to a contagious disease (like chicken pox, flu, impetigo, lice, pink eye, ringworm, strep throat), you must report this information to your child's teacher or director immediately. A notice of possible exposure to the disease could be given to other parents/guardians of children in the classroom. Confidentiality will always be maintained.

If your child's runny nose or cough is an allergy, please explain to his or her teacher. Please help us to teach children to wipe their noses when runny and to cough or sneeze into their elbow.

Injuries

If a child is injured on campus, the child should report this injury to a teacher, a director, or the church office staff immediately. When a child has been injured, we evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis. When appropriate, we will apply ice packs to bumps and band-aids to cuts and scrapes, etc. If the injury is more serious, we will notify the parent/guardian. Accident reports are completed for all injuries.

Medication

We discourage the taking of medication while at preschool unless there is a special reason or serious situation. If medication is necessary, or there is a special circumstance, please talk with the director. Certain documentation may be needed. We do not administer Tylenol or Advil. Medication outside of its proper container will not be accepted. All medication will be secured and dispensed by a non-medical staff member.

In the event that a child needs to have an inhaler or epi-pen on hand, it must be left at the school and accompanied by a doctor's note or prescription. No student is allowed to take medication of any kind by himself/herself or have any medication in his or her possession.

Lunches/Snacks

Peanut and Tree Nut Policy

We are a totally nut-free school, and this means that products made from or containing tree nuts or peanuts may not be sent to school. Products produced in a facility that produces nut products are allowed. For example, a granola bar processed in a plant that processes nut products is okay. A granola bar that has peanuts, one of the tree nuts listed below, or a peanut butter topping is not okay.

Why are we nut-free?

Peanut allergies are unique. Most people with food allergies -- even severe allergies -- can manage their allergies by simply not eating foods that have their allergens in them. They read labels, don't eat food if they don't know its origins, and ask questions to stay aware of cross-contamination. People with peanut and tree nut allergies follow all these steps, but there are two limits to this approach.

First, it's possible for people with these two allergies to react to traces of nut dust in the air (from peanut shells, for example). Second, nuts are full of natural oils that leave residues. While these residues can be removed with common household cleaners, it can be difficult or impossible to clean tables in the middle of lunch, for example, or for school cleaning staff to know to clean oils off of tainted walls, computer keyboards, pencils, paintbrushes, or doorknobs during the school day.

It is because of these issues, and the reality that peanut and tree nut allergies can be life-threatening, that ECSP will be nut-free.

Here is a rule of thumb for reading labels: Under federal law, peanuts and tree nuts have to be clearly identified in a food label if they're used as an ingredient. When checking ingredients or checking labels for "contains," foods containing the items listed below fall under our Peanut and Tree Free Policy and cannot be brought to school or preschool:

- peanuts

OR

a particular type of tree nut such as:

- almonds
- beechnuts
- brazil nuts
- cashews
- chestnuts
- ginkgo nuts
- hazelnuts
- hickory nuts
- macadamia nuts
- pecans
- pine nuts (pignoli or pinon)
- pistachios
- walnuts

A recent study, conducted by the University of Michigan, showed that 50 percent of patients react to the equivalent of one-fiftieth (1/50) of a peanut, a very small amount. The allergy is even more serious because the food does not have to be ingested to have fatal effects.

We appreciate your attention to this policy that is designed to keep our students safe.

Lunch

Students will need to bring their own lunches and snacks from home. Parents need to provide their children with lunches consisting of healthy food, a drink box or bottle that fits in the lunch box, and a cold pack when necessary. There is no cold storage available for students. Please send lunches and snacks that can be eaten without preparation. Microwaves are not available for student use. **WE ARE A PEANUT AND TREE NUT-FREE SCHOOL. Please refer to our policy above for clarification.** Due to food allergies, sharing or trading food items are not permitted.

Snacks

Preschoolers should bring a nutritious snack to school everyday. These should be brought in a lunch box labeled with your child's name. Please do not send in anything that would perish quickly and require any preparation, heating, or be excessively messy. Due to food allergies, sharing or trading of food items is not permitted. **WE ARE A PEANUT AND TREE NUT FREE SCHOOL. Please refer to our policy above for clarification.** Please talk to your child's teacher for appropriate snack ideas.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is very special to us. We will recognize your child's special day. Your teacher will inform you of their classroom plans. If you plan to ask the teacher to hand out invitations at school, please make sure to include the whole class.

You may provide a birthday snack to honor your child and share with classmates. Since some of our students suffer from life-threatening food allergies, store bought snacks are preferred. Please make sure all food items conform to our Peanut and Tree Nut Free Policy. Please refer to our policy above for clarification. You may also talk to your child's teacher for appropriate snack ideas.

Dress Code and Code of Conduct

Preschool Dress Code

Preschoolers should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and suitable for running and playing. Avoid drawstrings since this may be a safety hazard. Clothing should be marked with your child's name. Shorts should be worn under dresses and skirts. Play clothes should be worn to preschool because clothes may become soiled due to art, outdoor activities, or other messy learning and play activities. Dresses with ruffles or bows and pants with difficult belts or fasteners should be avoided. Clothing which the child can manage without adult help is best. Children who are potty training or children who struggle with fastening their pants/shorts should wear elastic waist pants/shorts.

We recommend preschoolers wear tennis shoes or rubber soled shoes to preschool because they are best suited for climbing, running, and playing outside. Our playground has several items on which children can climb. Shoes that are not securely fastened are a safety hazard. Please no flip flops.

Please send in a complete change of clothes, labeled with your child's name to be kept at preschool in case your child has a toileting accident or a spill. If an accident occurs, please send in a clean complete change of clothes, labeled with the child's name, the next day your child returns to preschool.

Please send appropriate clothing and outerwear for weather conditions. During the winter, please send your child with mittens and head covering. We will be playing outdoors as long as the temperature allows. Sweaters and jackets should be labeled with your child's name. If your child needs to wear sunscreen, please apply it before bringing your child to preschool.

Preschool Code of Conduct

A very important part of the preschool experience is helping children learn how to get along and enjoy being with other children as well as following the direction of an adult other than their parent/guardian. Our preschool teachers focus on the positive behaviors of children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible.

At Effort Christian School and Preschool, the emphasis is discipline will always be in love and with grace. More than anything else, we want each child to know that he or she is loved. The following strategies will be used to help preschool children who exhibit disruptive behavior:

- Encouraging children to "use their words" when having a disagreement with another child
- Redirecting behavior
- Separating a child from the group – one minute away for each year of age
- Counseling children individually about their behaviors
- Making parents/guardians aware of disciplinary concerns

Corporal punishment is not used at Effort Christian School and Preschool.

The Matthew 18 Principle

We, at ECSP, strive and encourage others to obey the teachings of Christ. Those teachings include the 2nd greatest commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22: 37-39). In spite of our efforts, there are times when people have different views or perceive situations differently. Jesus, in His perfect wisdom, knew we would need instruction for these situations and provided this wisdom in the verses Matthew 18: 15-17. When differences of opinion cause conflict, it is our policy to practice “The Matthew 18 Principle.” Using this scripture passage as our guide, we have listed the appropriate steps that are to be taken by students, parents/guardians, teachers, and staff in the event of a misunderstanding or disagreement:

1. Keep the matter confidential. “With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor...” (Proverbs 11:9a). Only share the problem with those directly involved in an effort to ensure confidentiality.
2. Keep the circle small. “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, *just between the two of you*” (Matthew 18:15). The first step and most often the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem is for one of the two people involved to initiate a face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two-people level.
3. State your concern clearly and concisely. “...tell him his fault...” (Matthew 18:15). Jesus tells us to be forthright and to love honestly. Sometimes it is difficult to be straightforward and tell someone the very heart of the matter. But restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly yet clearly presented. Going to the person is not an option; it is a command.
4. Be forgiving. “If he listens to you, you have won your brother over” (Matthew 18:15b). This implies that once the matter is resolved we should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us.

As mentioned earlier, most problems are resolved at the two-people level. Forgiveness and restoration are the normal and happy conclusions. However, there are unfortunate times when an individual will not “hear” you or will openly disagree with your version of the problem. The next step is:

5. You and the other individual should go **together** to share the matter with the appropriate director. “...take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses’ ” (Matthew 18:16). Each person should come to the meeting with a humble and prayerful attitude, willing to submit to the Lord’s will and also be willing to submit to discipline or correction if needed

In summary, "The Matthew 18 Principle" requires that parents talk to teachers about student problems before talking to anyone else including the appropriate director, other students, or parents. If unresolved at the two-people level, the matter is prayerfully and in an orderly fashion moved upward in the school organizational structure.

A Christian school is a ministry in Christ's name. Everything that is done in the context of the school must be done His way. Satan would love to destroy the normal flow of friendships and peace found in Christian school education through gossip and slander. But if all of us follow Christ's way of "The Matthew 18 Principle," the Christian education experience for students, parents, teachers, and staff will be one of consistent harmony. "Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble." (1 Peter 3:8).

Parental Involvement

Volunteers

Effort Christian School and Preschool welcome parent/guardian involvement. Please make arrangements in advance with your child's teacher, preschool director, or school director for volunteer opportunities.

Parent Volunteer requirements are as follows:

- * All parents/guardians who volunteer for us, or attend field trips, must follow the dress code and abide by the ECSP standards of conduct.
- * Those who volunteer on a continued regular basis or teach a special supplementary class must undergo a background check.
- * Parent Volunteers will maintain confidentiality in regards to children and agree to not discuss with other parents/guardians or community members things regarding teachers, students, or classroom procedures. We respect the right of privacy for the children. Please be aware of this when you are helping in the classroom. Children sometimes are the source of much information outside of the classroom. If you have any concerns, please direct those to the teacher or the director.

Tuition and Donations

Tuition and Childcare Payments

Effort Christian School and Preschool is a ministry of Effort Baptist Church. All expenses are paid out of tuition and registration payments. We have been able to offer a relatively low tuition compared to many other private schools.

Every family is given a contract agreement to sign stating the total amount of tuition due for the entire school year. Parents have the option of paying in full or electing a payment plan.

The installment plan allows you to make nine equal monthly payments beginning August 1st and ending with the April 1 payment. Consecutive payments are due on the 1st of each month and considered late after the 10th day of the month. Payments need to be made by the first of each month, beginning with the month of August.

Please make checks payable to Effort Baptist Church. A late fee of \$25 will be added to your account if the tuition payment is not received by the 10th of each month. Please use the notes section of your check to let us know what you are paying for. There is a \$25 charge on all returned checks.

You may make your tuition payment by way of the following:

- Mailing your payment to Effort Baptist Church, 7820 Thomas Jefferson Pkwy, Palmyra, VA 22963
- Placing your payment in one of the locked black boxes located in the Family Life Center and the Sanctuary
- Making your payment to the Effort Baptist Church office

Any tuition payments not received by the 10th of the month will be considered past due. You will be expected to contact us if your account becomes past due. This will allow you to resolve the matter in a way that will not jeopardize your child's position in the school. If your tuition becomes past due by two installments, we will allow until the 15th day of the month to clear your account. If it is not brought to a current status, your child may be withdrawn from the school.

Donations and Gifts

Effort Christian School and Preschool is a non-profit entity. The tuition is kept as low as possible to make a Christian education available to those who desire a Christ-centered education for their children. Because the tuition and fees may not cover all of the operating

expenses, gifts are welcome. All cash gifts and gifts-in-kind are income tax deductible, as long as they are not designated for an individual. For information regarding proper procedure, contact the church office 589-8962.

Miscellaneous

Drills

We will conduct fire drills and other safety drills on a regular basis as required.

Field Trips

Field trips of an educational nature are vital to the curriculum enrichment emphasis at Effort Christian School and Preschool. Each class will be going on field trips during the year. For each trip, every child must have a permission slip and a medical release form signed by the parent or guardian. Transportation is usually by van, bus, or parents/guardians providing transportation for their child. Parents will be notified in advance of any extra field trip expenses (admission fees, souvenirs, food, etc.). Since these fees are generally paid in advance, there will be no refund on field trip fees.

Inclement Weather School Closings and Delays

When severe weather or other circumstances create hazardous conditions, the regular school and preschool schedule may be suspended or delayed to ensure student safety. We follow the Fluvanna County Public Schools' closing schedule. When Fluvanna County Public Schools are delayed, however, we will open at 10:00 AM regardless if it is an hour or two hour delay. The following radio and television stations carry the announcements for Fluvanna closings:

WCHV

WINA

WVIR

WRVA

WWBT

WTVR

Lost and Found

The best way to insure the return of your child's belongings is to always put his/her name on items of clothing, lunch boxes, etc. Items marked with a name will be returned to the student. If your child finds something on the school grounds, which does not belong to him/her, then it must belong to someone else and should be turned into the teacher where it can be properly placed so the owner will be able to find it. Please make sure your child brings home things only belonging to him/her.

Lost and found items not claimed within thirty days will be donated to the Effort Baptist Church yard sale or donated to our Liberia mission.

Show and Tell

We will have show and tell in each preschool classroom. Your child's teacher will let you know which day it will be. Please do not bring toy weapons.

Withdrawal Procedure

If withdrawing a student, you will be refunded or charged on a cost-per-day basis. Thus, if you withdraw during the school year, you will be charged for the total days your child was enrolled.

Notify the director in person of your plans to withdraw your child. If you fail to notify us, it will be assumed your child is still enrolled, and you will be charged accordingly.

In the event you withdraw your child from the program and do not give adequate notice, the next month's tuition will be charged.