

## **Welcome To Owens Christian Academy**

**We** understand that every day is important in the life of your child, and that is why we are dedicated to excellence in every aspect of our service to the children in our care. We are committed to providing the most up to date curriculum, the most thorough training for our teachers, and a superb learning environment. The most important part of our job is to make sure our students receive lots of loving attention and they enjoy the time spent at Owens Christian Academy. Please take time to familiarize yourself with our policies and procedures and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the OCA office.

### **Mission Statement**

Owens Christian Academy (OCA) provides a Christian environment for preschoolers, ages two through seven, which encourages them to become responsible, independent learners. We believe children vary greatly in regards to their background and style of learning. A child's success depends primarily on a combination of self-concepts, Christian beliefs, parental support and student's efforts. We strive to stimulate learning both in and out of the classroom. Owens Christian Academy aims to create an understanding of the world and help each child make choices that will lead to a lifetime of learning. Our program encourages a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Our goals are to prepare your child for a successful and rewarding elementary experience.

### **Goals and Objectives**

1. We will provide activities that are multi-leveled and multi-sensory in an attempt to reach every child at his or her level.
2. We will nurture a safe and friendly learning environment.
3. We will strive to be a catalyst in each child's approach to learning.
4. We will assist children in becoming creative critical thinkers.
5. Through workshops and continuing education courses the staff will stay abreast of new educational procedures and ideas.

### **Curriculum**

At Owens Christian Academy, we believe that learning is realized through hypothesizing, risk - taking, predicting, and self-correcting. We have designed a child-centered curriculum, which utilizes units of activities focused around themes using a holistic approach. Owens Christian Academy's curriculum focuses on a print rich environment that includes: reading children's literature in all its varieties, math with a wide assortment of manipulatives, prewriting and writing activities, science and social studies projects, computer skills, and curriculum related art and music.

### **License**

Owens Christian Academy is licensed by the State of South Carolina. We meet or exceed all state standards pertaining to building, classroom equipment, staff ratios, safety and health procedures, nutrition, and curriculum. Owens Christian Academy is required to report to the appropriate state agency any suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation, or deprivation. Our state license is posted in OCA's office for your review.

### **Admissions**

Owens Christian Academy offers quality care and development for children ages two through seven. We accept children without regard to race, color, disabilities, sex, national origin, or religious belief. We require all children to meet the health requirements of the state. The Department of Social Services requires DHEC Form 1148 (South Carolina Certificate of Immunization), obtained from your pediatrician, to be presented on the first day of attendance. OCA will inform parents when the requirement has not been met. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the staff immediately of any significant changes in their child's personal information.

### **Continued Enrollment**

Once your child has been in attendance in our program for one month he or she will be assessed by our director and staff to determine if Owens Christian Academy is the best fit for your child and their individual needs. At the end of this assessment, the director shall have the right to determine whether continued enrollment at Owens Christian Academy is appropriate for your child. In the event the director determines that Owens Christian Academy is not the appropriate program for your child, she will recommend other options or placements for your child and the contract of enrollment will be terminated. The decision to terminate enrollment shall be at the sole discretion of the director and will be communicated to you.

The director also reserves the right to deny admittance or to revoke or suspend enrollment of a child, at her discretion, for reasons including, **but not limited to**, the following:

- Delinquent of tuition and PTA activity fees
- Lack of current immunization records
- Child's repeated disruptive behavior
- Parents will honor the year round school calendar; school begins August 20, 2019 and ends July 31, 2020.
- Consistent lengthy delays in picking up ill or disruptive children

### **Attendance**

The school calendar year begins the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in August and ends the July.

Attendance for K4-1<sup>st</sup> Grade is required by the State Department of Education and The Department of Social Services. Daily attendance is taken, and students' school records will reflect absences. Ten days of unexcused absences will result in failure for the year. A physician-written, medical excuse must be provided to the school if a K4-1<sup>st</sup> grade student misses more than three consecutive days of school.

### **Termination**

Owens Christian Academy requires a thirty-day written notice of termination to allow time to fill the vacancy. The penalty for not complying will result in payment of full tuition for the school year. If a parent enrolls his or her child in Summer Camp and later decides not to attend a portion of Summer Camp, full tuition is still required. Tax records and students' files will be withheld if financial obligations are not met. The notice provisions may be waived at the discretion of Mrs. Angenita F. Owens, director.

### **Sick Days/Holidays/Inclement Weather**

- Since we pay our staff whether your child attends or not, we cannot give reductions or credits for days your child misses due to illness.
- We do not give credit for holidays whether Owens Christian Academy is closed. Our staff is paid for holidays and we cannot absorb this cost.
- No credit is given for inclement weather days when the school closes early or for the entire day.
- **Tuition is not due for the winter and spring break.**

### **Hours**

To meet the needs of our parents, Owens Christian Academy is open from 7:30am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Since the center is scheduled to close at 5:00pm, we ask for cooperation in picking up your child(ren) on time in order that staff may observe proper closing procedures. **A late fee of \$1.00 will be assessed every minute after 5:00pm. The late fee is due on that day.**

**Early Care---** We provide this service from 6:30 am to 7:30am on Monday –Friday for an additional fee \$10 per week.

**After Care---** This service is offered from 5:00pm to 5:30 pm on Monday –Friday for an additional fee of \$10 per week.

## **Parental Rights**

At Owens Christian Academy, every parent has the right to tour the premises at any time. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education. Since the education of a child is an ongoing process, our curriculum includes classroom participation as well as home activities. Parents may request a conference with the teacher or an administrator during school hours (7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.). Owens Christian Academy recognizes the importance of the home school connection, therefore we offer a parenting program designed to promote a positive rapport for parents and staff. Teachers conduct orientation and parent workshops. Specific information relative to curriculum, instructional techniques, communication procedures, teacher expectation, student recognition, behavior management, and parental involvement are shared with parents at orientation and workshops. All students will be treated as special, unique individuals. We believe at Owens Christian Academy every parent wants his or her child to be an Owens Christian Academy alumnus.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **1. Tuition**

Tuition is due every Monday. Accounts unpaid at 5:00 p.m. Tuesday will automatically be assessed a \$15.00 late fee. Full weekly rate applies to one or five day(s) attendance. Students absent for a week during the regular school year due to illness or inclement weather will still need to pay full tuition for the week. In August for current students or upon admission for new students, families will receive a notice asking them to set up their payment plan through FACTS Tuition Management Services. Parents use Auto pay as their Payment Method. They can use a debit/credit card or a savings/checking account. The former charge a fee for each payment while the latter are ACH transfers with no processing cost.

**Tuition is \$195.00 per week K-2; \$185.00 per week K-3, K-4, and Kindergarten/First.**

**The Registration/Material Fee is \$300.00 per student for K-2, K-3, and K-4 (non-refundable and non-transferable).**

**This annual fee for the following school term is due the first Monday in May.**

**The Registration/Material Fee for K-1st students is \$325.00 per student, (non-refundable and non-transferable).**

NOTE: New students, except for K-1 students, are required to pay the initial \$300 (\$50 registration fee and \$250 materials fee) upon registration. New students enrolled in the K1 class are required to pay the initial \$325 (\$50 registration fee and \$275 materials fee) upon registration. **Open Enrollment begins the third Tuesday in February.**

### **2. Visitation**

Our "open door" policy lends itself to parental visit at any time. Free and full access is granted to parents of children enrolled unless court order stipulates otherwise. We ask for your cooperation in not disrupting classroom programs. At the time of enrollment, parents should meet with the director to familiarize themselves with the policies and procedures of the center. Please adhere to classroom teachers' schedule, available on the school's website. Prior to your child's first day, parents are encouraged to visit and observe the daily routine of their child's classroom.

### **3. Personal Articles**

**Owens Christian Academy is not liable for lost or damaged articles brought to the center. We strongly recommend that all personal articles, including clothing, be marked clearly with your child's name.** All children should have an extra set of clothing kept in their bookbags, in case of accidents or water activities.

#### **4. Drop Off and Pick Up**

Parents should always accompany their child(ren) into and out of the center. Owens Christian Academy will release a child ONLY to the parent or guardian or to the person(s) authorized by the parent or guardian.

**For children picked up after 5:00 p.m., late fees will be added in the amount of \$1.00 for each minute. The late fee is due on that day.**

#### **5. Discipline**

Discipline is training to develop self-control and social competence. For consistency, there must be a joint effort between the child, teacher, and parents. Good behavior is constantly praised with a positive attitude. "Time Out" with the child facing the group, no longer than one minute per year of age, is the only disciplinary method used. **We do not administer corporal punishment.**

#### **6. Safety**

Providing a safe environment for your child(ren) is extremely important to us. We promote safety rules and regulations to minimize accidents. However, should an accident occur, parents will be notified immediately. For emergency purposes, each parent or guardian must complete a notarized authorization for medical treatment. In the event that an emergency arises, we want the child(ren) to receive immediate and proper medical attention.

#### **7. Potty Training**

It is NOT essential for children entering the two year-old class to be potty trained, but it IS essential for children entering the three year-old class to be potty-trained.

#### **8. Medication**

Owens Christian Academy will not administer over-the-counter medication. **A Medication Authorization Form must be signed by the physician with written step by step procedures for dispensing the medication in its proper dosage.** The medication must be in its original container, clearly indicating the child's name, physician's name, and the proper measuring utensil. Any adverse reactions to medication will be reported to the parents immediately. **All medication must be taken home each Friday.**

#### **9. Illness**

Owens Christian Academy stresses safe hygiene and sanitation practices in accordance with DHEC and OSHA standards. We are aware that our facility provides parents the opportunity to pursue their careers; however we must ask that you consider how your child's illness may affect the other children and staff at the center. If you are unsure as to whether you should keep your child(ren) at home, please contact your pediatrician before bringing your child(ren) to the center. Children who develop symptoms will rest in a designated area isolated from the group until a parent arrives. Children with a temperature of 100 or higher and/or other contagious symptoms cannot stay at the center.

Parents will be notified by the school if their child becomes symptomatic. Immediate pick-up will be required to reduce the spread of the illness throughout the center. According to state regulations, children must be free of abnormal temperature and show no signs of illness for a recommended 24 hours. If your child(ren) is exposed to a communicable disease while attending the center, we will notify you promptly. Likewise, we request that you report to us when your child(ren) is exposed to a communicable disease outside the center. Owens Christian Academy notifies the Health Department of any communicable diseases. For the health of your child(ren) and the other children attending the center, any child who has contracted an infectious disease or skin disease, a physician authorization is required for the re-admittance of the child. We do not care for mildly ill children.

## **10. Evacuation Plan/Emergency Preparedness**

Evacuations due to fire, or threatening situations that may pose a health or safety hazard, are handled exactly like a fire drill. Children and teachers exit the building through assigned doors, roll is taken, and teachers supervise children in the designated areas until it is safe to return to the building. Upon re-entering the building, roll is taken again. Tornado drills are conducted in the following manner: toddlers and K-4's will enter the classroom bathroom and squat down floor against the walls. K-3 and K-1st will enter the hall outside their classroom and squat down on the floor against the walls.

Emergency plans for severe weather and emergency evacuation are posted in the classroom. Parents will be notified of emergency evacuation and school closing via local news channels and the calling post. (OCA uses the Calling Post messaging system to communicate with parents by delivering messages via through the phone system.) Owens Christian Academy follows emergency procedures used by Charleston County School District.

## **11. Menus/Breakfast**

Please review the weekly menu posted in each classroom. Our menus meet state and federal guidelines for nutritional requirements by age. If your child has allergies to any of the foods listed on the menu, please notify the staff immediately. Outside food is not permitted due to Department of Health and Environmental Control or DHEC regulations and issues associated with liability. Food from home is only permitted under doctor's order for a specific diet. We understand that children have likes and dislikes, but it is our goal to provide a well-balanced meal to the children in our care.

## **12. Breakfast / Morning Procedure**

Breakfast is served between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. daily. All students who arrive between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. should report to K-3 classroom. All students who arrive after 8 a.m. and do not plan to eat breakfast should report directly to their classroom.

## **13. Birthdays or special events**

For birthdays or special events, parents are welcome to send special treats to the center. Please let the staff know in advance, of your plans.

## **14. Conferences**

Parents are encouraged to visit with their child's teacher to exchange information and concerns whenever necessary. If you would like to schedule a special conference, please notify your child's teacher.

## **15. Volunteering**

OCA is a private Christian program; therefore, there are no public funding sources, so parental support (including volunteerism) is vital to meet the needs of the school.

**Parents are required to volunteer at least 15 hours for the school year.** It is very crucial that you become involved with your child's educational development. A parent or guardian may designate another family member (aunt, uncle, grandparent, cousin, etc.) to serve as a volunteer. If a parent or guardian elects not to volunteer or secure a designee to volunteer, a \$150 (\$75 for the first semester and \$75 for the second semester) fee will be assessed to accounts. First semester fees will be assessed on December 17<sup>th</sup> and second semester fees will be assessed July 15<sup>th</sup>. All volunteer hours (a full 15 hours) must be completed by July 15<sup>th</sup> so as not to accrue fees. Please contact OCA office or PTA Board member for suggestions.

Once a fee has been assessed, volunteer hours may be completed in lieu of payment (first semester only).

## **16. Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited on the premises by staff, parents, and visitors. A visitor is one who intends to enter the school building on behalf of an enrollee or prospective student.

## **17. Uniforms**

Uniforms should be worn every day during the school year and at Summer Camp unless otherwise advised. Uniforms consist of navy pants or jumper, and plain light blue or burgundy tops. Uniform tops should be free of writing and art, including cartoon and animated characters. No jeans are allowed.

## **18. Field Trips**

Several field trips will be planned during the school year and Summer Camp.

Owens Christian Academy burgundy t-shirts or sweat shirts must be worn on field trips during the regular school year. OCA's light-blue t-shirts must be worn on field trips during Summer Camp.

Once signing up for field trips, parents are responsible for advance financial obligations.

## **19. PTA / Executive**

The PTA (Parent -Teacher Association) will accomplish its mission by pursuing funding to support OCA operations, participating in community projects, purchasing new and advanced curriculum, and providing overall support to the students, families, and staff of OCA. Several fundraisers are planned throughout the year. **A calendar of events will be given at Open House in September.**

Owens Christian Academy PTA is a non-profit organization with 501 (c)(3) exempt status. It is a requirement that each family pays \$25 annually. Contributions are tax-deductible. For exemption purposes, all checks should be made payable to OCA PTA and NOT to OCA.

**PTA purchases sleeping cots for all new students. Parents must pay a \$35 cot fee. All checks should be made payable to OCA PTA and NOT to OCA.**

PTA meetings are held the first Monday of every month at 5:00 p.m. OCA Executive Board meets to establish policy, set goals, and evaluate the Owens Christian Academy PTA. OCA Executive board meets the last Monday in every month at 5:00 p.m.

## **20. Homework**

Homework is an important part of your child's school experience. **Homework assignments are given Monday through Thursday to all students. All homework assignments should be completed on Friday.** All submitted assignments will be corrected and sent home on Friday.

Supporting good work habits is imperative to student success; student success requires a joint effort between parents and the school. Parents MUST assist their students with homework.

## **21. Weekly Progress**

A weekly report will be sent home every Friday to address concerns and provide parents with information. **Please sign and return the weekly report every Monday. Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the contents of the document.**

## **22. OCA Website**

The OCA website is maintained for the purpose of providing information about the school and school events. A monthly menu and newsletter will also be available. The website's address is [www.owenschristianacademy.com](http://www.owenschristianacademy.com)

## **23. Calling Post**

OCA uses the Calling Post messaging system to communicate with parents by delivering messages via through the phone system.

**24. Release of Children:**

Children are delivered /picked up daily from the K-3 class room. Parents/ Guardians sign the child /children in and out daily. Children are only released to those listed on the pickup list and a picture identification is required to receive the child. Parents must notify the school in writing or by phone the day of the pickup or delivery of a child.

**25. Tracking Children:**

As stated in the above paragraph, children are signed in and out daily by the parent/ guardian or the person picking up or bringing that child/children to our school. Teachers also take roll daily and the tracking sheet is used to track each child from the time the child enters the building until the student leaves the facility. The tracking sheet is used every hour to keep account of every child throughout the day. The tracking sheet is carried outside for playtime or evacuations (fire drills, safety hazards, field trips, etc.)

**26. Emergency Medical Plan:**

Added to our emergency policy it must read: "If hospital care is necessary, EMS will be contacted and the child will take to the hospital choice listed on the emergency card signed by the parent/guardian. The person in charge of the school will escort the child with records to the emergency location and will stay with the child until the parents arrive."

**27. Confidentially:** All students records to include name, **address**, and other information about the child or family and information that may identify a child is kept and locked in a file cabinet upstairs in the director office. Staff members are prohibited from given out any information concerning a child or their family.

**28. Provisionally Hire:** We elect not hire provisional employees to provide care to enroll children when an unexpected staff vacancy occurs. All staff must have clearance with state and federal background check results, central registry, medical and health assessments, high school diploma/college degree, professional training, and a signed facility agreement regarding all center policies and DSS Regulations from South Carolina Department of Social Service Child Care Licensing.

**Revised by OCA August 14, 2019**