

First Presbyterian Preschool Parent Handbook



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A Message from the Director

Dear Preschool Families,

Welcome! I am so glad your family has chosen First Presbyterian Church Preschool Program. Here at First Presbyterian Church Preschool, we strive to offer an educational learning experience that will grow your child in mind, body, and spirit. This school, this Christ-filled community is a blessed place to be always. We are honored that you have entrusted our preschool to provide a rich and stimulating beginning school foundation for your child as they grow into his or her own special person! My ultimate goal for this year is to have each child feel important, loved, and respected for their individuality. I will work closely with our wonderful staff to ensure your child's "first school experience" is one that is filled with much love in a secure environment.

I am here to support you in any way I can. Along with your child's teachers, I will work with you to have open communication. I have an open door policy for any need both great and small, and I am always available to listen to any concerns, wants, or fresh idea you may have to share with me. Working together, we can provide the best possible preschool experience for your child. We are excited to begin a new year together! We pray for our students and their families and we are certainly blessed to have you as a member of our preschool family! I look forward to a positive, exciting, and rewarding school year with you and your child!

Fondly,

Jane W. Blackerby

Director

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

Proverbs 22:6

Mission, Philosophy, and Objectives

First Presbyterian Church recognizes that our Preschool has a unique function to perform. Through its curriculum, we offer a half-day enrichment program committed to Christ-centered, quality childhood education in partnership with family and church within a loving, caring atmosphere.

Under the direction of teachers who love and honor Christ, a conscious effort will be made to help each child build a healthy self-image. This entails helping the child through many experiences to discover who he or she is and to realize that he or she is a child of great worth and a child of God.

Through play, discovery, and planned activities for learning, the child matures in an understanding of who they are in a relationship with their teachers and peers. Our teachers make every effort to consider each child's uniqueness, talents, and development when planning, thus allowing each child to proceed at their own pace in the learning process.

In our efforts to promote growth of the "whole child", we strive to pursue the following objectives:

- to provide the opportunity for the child to grow and develop in honoring Jesus in all that they do.
- to provide opportunities for each child to have successful learning experiences in a secure and loving environment.
- to demonstrate respect, acceptance, and appreciation towards each child in our care.
- to provide learning experiences that promote motor, social, and intellectual growth.
- to encourage self-expression, investigation, experimentation, and to foster the inquisitive nature that children possess.
- to create welcoming classrooms and maintain small class sizes with appropriate teacher/student ratios.
- to work in partnership with parents through open and consistent communication.

We maintain a highly motivated and enthusiastic staff dedicated to providing the best care for every child attending First Presbyterian Preschool.

Curriculum

First Presbyterian Preschool offers a well-rounded curriculum that integrates Biblical principles into daily activities and interactions. Children are given the opportunity to grow at their own pace, and teachers work to meet each child at their own particular skill level for each activity. We recognize that children learn best by doing, which is why play is such an integral part of our preschool curriculum. Learning through discovery and interactions with peers is one of the most natural ways a child can grow.

“Play is the work of the child.” ~Maria Montessori

At our Preschool you will see:

- learning centers and child-oriented play activities including:

Block Play	Coloring/Writing
Housekeeping and Dress Up	Books
Puzzles	Sand/Water Play
Playdoh	Art Activities
Easel Drawing/Chalk	Motor Manipulative Toys
Table Games	Science Activities

- children practicing age appropriate fine motor skills such as cutting, pasting, and tracing.
- children practicing age appropriate gross motor skills such as climbing, sliding, kicking, and throwing during our outdoor play activities.
- children exposed to age appropriate skill activities to explore colors, shapes, numbers, letters, and words.
- children learning through song and dance.
- daily circle time where children explore topics such as the weather and calendar skills and practice a monthly Bible verse.

Monthly themes are planned by our staff and communicated to parents through newsletters and bulletins. Curriculum for each age level is naturally different from one another, and we plan activities that are appropriate for each class.

Toilet Training Policy

Our two and three year olds will be doing a lot of skill building this year and we want to be your support team in this process. Toilet training usually takes place sometime within the two to three year age range. We will support your child's efforts with positive affirmation and by making bathroom time as routine and convenient as possible.

It has been our experience that even if a child is still in the training process, he or she can usually make it through our morning routine without incident. In addition to our daily routine bathroom break, we will also watch for visual cues that your child may need to use the restroom. That doesn't mean that there won't be accidents, and that is okay. Occasional accidents are a part of the process. If bowel movement accidents become routine, you may be called to assist with changing.

Our goal is to support your child. Please communicate to us any thoughts or concerns you have regarding this important part of your child's development.

Behavior Management

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management for children. When children engage in positive and understanding interactions with adults and others, they develop strong self-concepts, problem-solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on how we believe children learn and develop, our Preschool will practice the following discipline policy:

We...

- **DO praise, reward, and encourage the children.**
- **DO set limits for the well-being of the children.**
- **DO model appropriate behavior for the children.**
- **DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.**
- **DO listen to the children.**
- **DO provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.**
- **DO provide logical consequences for repeated inappropriate behavior.**
- **DO treat the children as people and respect their needs and feelings.**
- **DO ignore minor misbehaviors.**
- **DO explain things to children on their level so that they understand our expectations.**
- **DO use short supervised periods of “time-out” appropriate to the child’s age. For example: two years old, two minutes; three years old, three minutes.**
- **DO remain consistent in our expectations and utilization of the behavior management policy.**

Two Year Program

Arrival Time: 9:00

Dismissal Time: 11:45

At arrival and dismissal, you are able to park in the parking lot behind the playground and walk your child to their classroom. Please sign the "Sign Out Sheet" each day to inform us of who will be picking up your child that day.

Children at this age typically engage in solitary play, but are moving toward side-by-side play as well. We incorporate child-selected and teacher-led activities into our morning routine.

Classroom Reminders

- Be kind to one another.
- Share and take turns with your friends.
- Be a good listener.
- Help clean up.
- Remember your manners: say "Please" and "Thank You"

Do for others what you would want them to do for you.

Two Year Schedule

9:00 Welcome/Free Play at Table Activities
9:20 Group Circle Time/Group Movement
9:40 Center Rotations/Art (Four Centers and a Teacher Assisted Art Activity)
10:40 Story and Snack
11:00 Playground/Fellowship Hall Play
11:25 Group Time (Songs, Creative Movement, Stories, Show and Tell, Science Experiments)
11:45 Pick-Up

Toys Bringing special toys from home is discouraged. We work on the concept of sharing, but personal toys make sharing more difficult.

Occasions Sign-up sheets will be available at the beginning of the year for the various seasonal celebrations. We also welcome you to celebrate your child's birthday with us! Please let us know several days in advance if you plan to provide a special snack for your child's birthday.

Diapers If your child is not yet toilet trained, please bring a package of diapers or pull-ups and a container of wipes on the first day of school.

Dress Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and shoes that are appropriate for the playground (no sandals/slick bottom shoes, flip flops, or crocs). Please bring an extra change of clothes in a plastic bag clearly marked with your child's name. Include a shirt, bottoms, underwear, and socks. We will exchange clothing when the seasons change.

Show & Tell We will have a weekly show and tell during the year. Information regarding show and tell will be communicated to you through your child's monthly newsletter. Show and Tell will usually occur each Thursday.

Three Year Program

Arrival Time: 9:00

Dismissal Time: 11:45

At arrival and dismissal, you are able to park in the parking lot behind the playground and walk your child to their classroom. Please sign the "Sign Out Sheet" each day to inform us of who will be picking up your child that day.

Children at this age typically engage in side-by-side play as they enjoy talking with their friends and playing cooperatively together. We incorporate child-selected and teacher-led activities into our morning routine.

Classroom Reminders

- Be kind to one another.
- Share and take turns with your friends.
- Be a good listener.
- Help clean up.
- Remember your manners: say "Please" and "Thank You"

Do for others what you would want them to do for you.

Three Year Schedule

9:00 Welcome/Free Play at Table Activities
9:20 Group Circle Time/Group Movement
9:40 Center Rotations/Art (Four Centers and a Teacher Assisted Art Activity)
10:40 Story and Snack
11:00 Playground/Fellowship Hall Play
11:25 Group Time (Songs, Creative Movement, Stories, Show and Tell, Science Experiments)
11:45 Pick-Up

Toys Bringing special toys from home is discouraged. We work on the concept of sharing, but personal toys make sharing more difficult.

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Show & Tell We will have a weekly show and tell during the year. Information regarding show and tell will be communicated to you through your child's monthly newsletter. Show and Tell will usually occur each Thursday.

Pre-K Program

Arrival Time: 9:00

Dismissal Time: 12:00

At arrival and dismissal, you are able to park in the parking lot behind the playground and walk your child to their classroom. Please sign the "Sign Out Sheet" each day to inform us of who will be picking up your child that day.

Children will be engaged in a variety of activities that give them the opportunity to work independently, in small groups, and with the teachers to gain the skills needed to be successful academically and socially. Play remains an integral part of the learning process in our preschool curriculum, and we will utilize play to address the skills needed to prepare your child for Kindergarten.

Classroom Reminders

- Be kind to one another.
- Share and take turns with your friends.
- Be a good listener.
- Help clean up.
- Remember your manners: say "Please" and "Thank You"

Do for others what you would want them to do for you.

Three Year Schedule

9:00 Welcome/Free Play at Table Activities
9:15 Group Circle Time/Group Movement
9:40 Center Rotations/Art (Four Centers and a Teacher Assisted Art Activity)
10:40 Story and Snack
11:00 Playground/Fellowship Hall Play
11:30 Group Time (Songs, Creative Movement, Stories, Show and Tell, Science Experiments)
12:00 Pick-Up

Toys Bringing special toys from home is discouraged. We work on the concept of sharing, but personal toys make sharing more difficult.

Occasions Sign-up sheets will be available at the beginning of the year for the various seasonal celebrations. We also welcome you to celebrate your child's birthday with us! Please let us know several days in advance if you plan to provide a special snack for your child's birthday.

Dress Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and shoes that are appropriate for the playground (no sandals/slick bottom shoes, flip flops, or crocs). Please bring an extra change of clothes in a plastic bag clearly marked with your child's name. Include a shirt, bottoms, underwear, and socks. We will exchange clothing when the seasons change.

Show & Tell We will have a weekly show and tell during the year. Information regarding show and tell will be communicated to you through your child's monthly newsletter. Show and Tell will usually occur each Friday.

Conferences Two Parent/Teacher conferences will be held during the year. Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns to the classroom teacher throughout the year as well. We are here to work in partnership with you as your child prepares for Kindergarten.

Combination Classes

As our class formation is heavily dependent on student enrollment, we are often in the situation of needing to form combination classes. These combinations may be two and three year olds or three and four year olds together. We will never create a class that combines all three ages, as that would not offer the best experience for any of the children involved.

Great care is taken to provide differentiated instruction in combination classes. We are able to meet each child's needs since we incorporate whole group and individual instruction into our daily schedule. Should you have any questions about combination class grouping, please feel free to contact the Director.

Financial Policies

Tuition:

Annual Non-Refundable Registration Fee: \$50.00 if paid by May 31st.
\$75.00 if paid after May 31st.

Two Year & Three Year Program

2 Days a Week \$1,170.00/Year \$130.00/Month

Three Year & Pre-K Program

2 Days a Week \$1,755.00/Year \$200.00/Month

Annual Supply Fee: \$15.00 is required for each student and should be paid by October 1st.

Tuition for preschool is calculated for a full school year (September-May). Monthly payments are offered for your convenience. The monthly payment does not represent payment for a particular month.

If your child is absent, or if the Preschool is closed for holidays, snow days, conference days, teacher workdays, etc., tuition is still required. Checks should be made payable to: **First Presbyterian Preschool.**

If you choose to pay by the month, tuition is due on the first class day of the month. **If tuition is not received by the 10th of the month, a \$15.00 late fee is charged.** If the account is not paid in full by the 1st of the next month, your child may not attend class until the tuition and late fee are paid in full.

If you need receipts for tuition payments, please let us know. End of year statements are also available, by request, for tax purposes.

Returned Checks: A service fee of \$25.00 will be charged for each returned check. After the second returned check, tuition payments may only be paid in cash or by money order.

Late Pick-Up: A \$5.00 fee will be charged per 10 minute intervals. After continued late pick-ups, a meeting with the Director will be scheduled.

Scholarships: A limited amount of money is available for scholarships on an "as needed" basis. If during the school year you have an unexpected emergency or need of this supplemental service, please speak with the Director to set up a time for a conference. A written statement will be submitted to the Church board for approval.

General Policies

ABSENCES

If you know your child will be absent or late, please notify the preschool as soon as possible. The Director may be reached at 248-2140 ext 205.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The staff of the Preschool will comply with the provisions of the Child Abuse Reporting Act. Suspected cases of abuse and neglect will be reported to the Director. The Director will report suspected cases to the Department of Social Services.

CALENDAR AND CLOSINGS

The Preschool calendar is designed to coordinate with the schedule of Davidson County Schools. In the event of inclement weather, we will follow the decision of Davidson County Schools regarding closings or delays. On delay days, we will begin school at 10:00am regardless of whether it is a one or two hour delay. In the event of a three hour delay, the Preschool will be closed for the day. Should we experience an abundance of inclement weather days, we may adjust our calendar to provide make up days for our students.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The staff will keep a file indicating how to get in touch with parents, who to call if parents are unavailable, and the name of the child's physician. Current parent work numbers and home numbers must be kept in each child's file. If your work or home number changes, please be sure to get that new information to the Director.

ILLNESS

Please do not bring your child to Preschool if they have had a fever over 100 degrees, vomited, had diarrhea, or have shown other signs of illness within a 24 hour period. If your child becomes sick at school or has been left sick with us, we will call you to come for them. If your child is absent due to illness, please call us so we can keep an account and, if necessary, notify other parents about communicable diseases. **Your child must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

IMMUNIZATIONS

North Carolina state law requires the following:

"A certificate of immunization should be presented to the child care operator for each child who attends the facility. The child care operator should check the certificate to ensure the child meets immunization requirements." The law further states, "If a child's immunization record lacks evidence of required vaccination, the parent or guardian must be notified about the deficiency."

Our Preschool policy is to uphold this law without exception. Therefore, if an immunization record is incomplete, the Preschool must notify the parents/guardian in writing that

the file must be completed and/or updated. Written verification of proper immunization must be received within 30 days of notice.

SAFE CHILD PICK-UP

Safety is our number one priority when it comes to your child. To ensure the safety of each and every child, we have several policies in place. You will complete a Safe Child Pick-Up form at the beginning of the school year which will give you the opportunity to name those adults who are allowed to pick up your child from preschool. **If you have any custody papers, please provide us with a copy of those as they may affect who is allowed to pick up your child.**

We also ask that you sign the "Sign Out Sheet" when you drop off your child each day. This will let us know who to expect for pick up each day. If it is someone we are unfamiliar with, we may ask to see a photo ID. Please understand that this is solely for the safety of your child.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Please use great discretion when using social media with picture or words concerning the Preschool, the staff members, and its students. Public abuse of the above stated will not be tolerated and actions will be taken at the discretion of the Director.

FACEBOOK

FPC Preschool maintains a public Facebook page for parents to access. We share pictures for you to observe the daily activities and fun events of our preschool students.

PLAYGROUND

If you and your child wish to play on the playground after preschool hours, these procedures must be followed. If we see that safety is of concern on the playground, then you will not be able to use the playground after preschool. Below are the guidelines that we follow, and we ask you to follow while using the playground due to liability incurred by the preschool and church. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

- Children must be supervised at all times.
- Slides- Children should go down the slides on their bottoms. They should refrain from sliding backwards, on their bellies, or walking up the slide.
- Refrain from chasing and excessive running. The size and layout of our playground does not allow for this type of play.
- Mulch is to walk on, not to be played with because it can cause splinters.
- If the sandbox is used, please make sure the cover is on securely before leaving.

Registration Policies

WAITING LIST

In order to place a child's name on the waiting list, a parent must contact the Director and provide current information about the child. The parent will then be informed of the child's position on the list. Priority for the children on the waiting list will be as follows:

1. Children of the Preschool Staff.
2. Children currently enrolled at the Preschool.
3. Children whose families are members of First Presbyterian Church.
4. All other children placed on the waiting list.

Within each category, the date the child was placed on the waiting list and the date care is needed is also given priority.

If a family is offered a space they have requested and it is refused, the family may remain on the waiting list but will go to the bottom of the list in their category.

Program placement is dependent upon the age of the child by August 31st of the year in which they wish to enroll.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the next school year is held in February and March. All current children are given the opportunity to enroll first. Persons on the waiting list will be called when a space is available for their child.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

The Preschool requires a written notice of a child's withdrawal from the program, submitted to the Director two weeks or more prior to the child's last day. Tuition will continue to be charged until such written notice is received.

If parents withdraw their child from the Preschool before the end of the school year, but plan to be enrolled for the coming year, they will need to pay the current year's tuition balance or the child will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list.

The Preschool may discontinue a child's enrollment if the parent fails to provide current physical and immunization records, if there is habitual abuse of the program policies, or if tuition is not paid.

Snack and Peanut Free Policy

In an effort to provide the safest possible environment for the children in our care, First Presbyterian Preschool has operated under a peanut free policy since August 30, 2007.

In our program, we have children in our classrooms who have peanut allergies. We enforce a policy that **no peanut butter, products containing peanuts, or cooked in peanut oil** can enter our classrooms. **If ever in doubt, please read the labels.**

SNACK FEE

Students of First Presbyterian Preschool are asked to pay an annual snack fee as follows:

2 day/week students: \$18.00

3 day/week students: \$27.00

Prior to this year, we have utilized snack donations from parents to provide snacks for our children. We found that we often received an abundance of one type of snack or that the vast majority of snacks were shelf stable goods.

We would like to offer a wide variety of snack options including fresh fruits, vegetables, cheeses and yogurt. By allowing the Preschool to purchase snack items, these items can more readily be incorporated into our daily snacks. **The snack fee breaks down to \$0.25 a day.**