



CHRIST
EPISCOPAL
SCHOOL

CHRIST EPISCOPAL SCHOOL 2017-2018 PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM EMPHASIS

Our early childhood program is dedicated to the development of the whole child. The curriculum is carefully planned to stimulate growth in all areas of a child's development, including emotional, cognitive, language, fine motor, large motor and social. Careful attention is paid to nurturing self-esteem and building independence.

Learning is inquiry based and viewed as an interactive process. Children learn through active manipulation and exploration. A typical preschool day consists of a rich variety of activities, including developmentally appropriate lessons in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies; guided play; story time; music; creative movement; fine motor activities; outdoor play; art; and cooking. The program also includes weekly lessons with our music teacher, librarian and school chaplain. In addition, PreK children enjoy computer, Spanish instruction and Physical Education.

Preschool activities are planned around thematic units. All preschool and prekindergarten classes use the team-based cycle of instruction in planning and implementing lessons, which is the beginning of our school-wide LIFT program: Learning Integration for Tomorrow. Some examples of the thematic units include lessons on seasons, holidays, community helpers, transportation, Mother Goose rhymes and farm life and incorporate classic children's literature with the study of letters and numeracy.

Special activities are also vital components of our program. Field trips are taken to supplement the thematic units. Holiday celebrations and parties help us enjoy those special times. We enjoy holiday music as a group in December and a Spring Sing and art show in April or early May.

Low teacher student ratios enable us to give children individual attention.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Both children and parents benefit from parent involvement in school. We hope that you will be able to attend all of our programs and accompany us on field trips. You are also encouraged to join in events that include the entire school community. Watch for the dates of our Fall Family Picnic, Truck Touch, Holiday Musical, Bingo Night, annual Book Fair and Spring Sing/Art Show/Garden Party. These are wonderful opportunities to become more connected to our school community.

Parent volunteer opportunities are vital to the spirit of the community in our school. Each class will need a room parent to help organize holiday parties. Our Parents Association offers many wonderful ways to get involved in our school. If you are interested in volunteering, contact your Preschool Parents Association representative, your child's teacher, or Preschool Director.

REQUIRED FORMS

Required forms, which can all be acquired on-line on the school web site, must be handed in prior to a child's first day. **Children will not be admitted to their class until all forms are on file.** *Returning students must provide current Emergency Information and Responsibility Release forms.* If you have any questions about the forms, please check with the main office or Preschool Director.

SEPARATION

The process of separation occurs in all phases of human life. All separation experiences require individuals to leave the familiar and move to the unfamiliar. At times, this movement may create feelings of loss or anxiety. Starting school may create short periods of unhappiness for some children. Preschoolers may appear frightened or angry. Other children cry or strike out at the teacher. Some children appear to adjust quickly but encounter feelings of anxiety weeks later.

Being able to successfully separate from parents is a gratifying experience for children. Preschoolers enjoy being with other children and they thrive on the opportunities that our preschool offers. Eventually, learning to separate helps children become autonomous and self-reliant individuals.

Parents are encouraged to work with the school staff to make the separation process as simple as possible. Generally, you are encouraged to give your child a kiss or hug, and say good-bye. We utilize carpool procedures for this very reason. This brief transition offers children a strong message of your confidence in their ability to cope. Once the children arrive, teachers interact with children in a warm way to help them feel connected. Teachers will then engage children in activities.

Consult your child's teacher and/or the Preschool Director if you find that you need support in dealing with separation issues.

PRESCHOOL BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT

The Preschool Back-to-School Night is in early September. This evening gives us time to introduce you to our program, show you our wonderful materials, give you a chance to browse in the classroom and enable you to visit with other preschool parents. This evening is for parents and caregivers only. Our goal is for each child to have at least one parent or caregiver present.

PRESCHOOL SUPPLY LIST

There is a preschool supply list. There was an opportunity to sign up for a prepackaged supply list this past spring. This list of items should be brought in at the beginning of the school year. If you have questions about this please ask your child's teacher. Thank you for your help.

Your child will also need to carry a backpack to/from school. A larger sized one, rather than those cute smaller types are preferred, as we sometimes need to fit a lot of items inside them.

BEFORE SCHOOL CARE FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

Before school care for preschool children begins at 7:20 a.m. Preschool students are taken care of by a staff member within the Church building. Students who are waiting during this time are provided with books, coloring activities, small motor/movement games and toys and creative play in order to provide some consistency and routine before school.

As an immense help to the staff, parents of these preschool students should please be reminded to have their child attend to bathroom needs before this early morning arrival time.

PRESCHOOL ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Preschool (for 2's and 3's) begins at 8:30. Children who need care before 8:30 may be enrolled in our Before School Care Program which operates from 7:20 until 8:15 (see previous section above for description).

Preschool families are encouraged to utilize the morning carpool drop-off for preschool students between 8:15 - 8:30 a.m. for convenience and ease. NEVER let your child walk down to the preschool alone when there is no preschool staff present to escort your child.

There are three separate dismissal times—noon, 1:00 or 3:00. During each of these dismissal times, students will leave school through a carpool system. Students will be brought to the far end of the Church Building where staff members accompany the children to their cars.

Children who remain at school for Extended Day (3:00 – 6:00p.m.) should be picked up via this program's specific guidelines.

LUNCH BUNCH

This daily program is provided from noon until 1:00. Children bring lunch from home or order it through the school's hot lunch program. Students eat together in the supervised, pleasant surroundings of their classrooms.

Lunch takes place from 12:00 until 12:30. Lunches should consist of healthy, child-friendly foods that children can easily eat. In order to insure a safe and orderly lunch time, please do not send

food that needs to be heated. Heated foods need to be sent in thermos containers which can be kept warm until lunchtime. Ice packs are often used to successfully keep cold foods from spoiling until this time of day.

Once the students have finished eating, and depending on the weather, they have time to play either indoors or outdoors. Children who order milk for lunch must preorder it. Those who leave at the end of Lunch Bunch will be picked up in the carpool line (see above Dismissal Procedures).

STAY AND PLAY PRESCHOOL

STAY AND PLAY preschool is provided from 1:00 until 3:00. This program also practices the importance of play and building socialization skills. The children will rest for 30- 45 minutes each day.

Each child will need a small pillow, a medium sized blanket, and a special soft toy. All of these items must be brought to school to be stored inside a plastic bag with a zip-like closure.

EXTENDED DAY

Preschool students may also participate in the CES Extended Day program which is provided from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Children will be given a healthy snack followed by outdoor play, sports, and games. We provide activities such as music, games, and art projects. All of this fosters positive social skills.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between school and home is a vital part of each child's preschool experience. In the Two's, Three's and PreK classes, the teachers send home monthly class calendars and separate letters/notes of information in order to keep families informed about class activities. Be sure to read the weekly *Cardinal* for news and information about school-wide events and activities.

Parent/teacher conferences will be held in the fall and optional during the spring to let you know how your child is doing, to share information and to address questions or concerns. Should you have questions or concerns at any time, please feel free to talk with your child's teacher. E-mails generally work best, since teachers are with students from the moment that they arrive at school.

At the end of the school year your child will receive a completed classroom assessment which covers appropriate growth in the developmental areas, such as social/emotional, fine/gross motor, cognitive, language development and attentional skills.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health issues are an important concern to the preschool staff. Young children are particularly susceptible to illness, especially when they spend time in close contact with other young children. Teach your child proper hand washing techniques. Hand washing is the best way to prevent spreading germs and disease. Every effort will be made to encourage the health and well being of all children and staff members. **Children should be kept home from school if:**

- they have had a fever within 24 hours.
- they are too ill to play outside.
- they have a persistent cough (not allergy or asthma related).
- they have a green or yellow nasal discharge.
- they have had vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours.
- they have been on an antibiotic less than 24 hours.
- they have any condition which is contagious to others.

If parents faithfully follow these guidelines for the benefit of all the children, we will have fewer sick children and teachers. Please call the school office if your child has a communicable disease such as strep throat, chickenpox, or head lice. We will alert other parents to watch for symptoms in a confidential and respectful manner.

Our staff is very concerned about safety issues and accident prevention. However, if your child has a significant accident, you will be called immediately. Notes regarding more minor injuries will be sent home via their backpacks.

Please note that staff may only dispense medication with doctor's directions on file. Please hand deliver medication to the main office. All medications are kept in safe locations. The first dose of a new medicine must be given before school.

Although "developmentally appropriate" for a child of 2 years to use biting when angry and frustrated, every effort will be made to teach the child that "we do not bite friends, we only bite food." Parents of both the bitten child and the biter will be notified by the school on the day of the incident.

If a child in the Preschool 3's or Pre-K class bites another individual within the school setting, he/she will be removed immediately from the group. A phone call will be made to the parent. The child will then be expected to be picked up by the parent and taken home from school for the remainder of that day.

PREK UNIFORMS

PLEASE REFER TO OUR MAIN SCHOOL HANDBOOK FOR DETAILS REGARDING SCHOOL UNIFORMS

CLOTHING

Preschool is beautifully messy! Please send your child to school in play clothes that can get dirty and that can get paint on them! Keep in mind that if your child dresses up for a special event, such as school picture day or Christmas chapel, and you send in play clothes, we will help your child change after the event.

Preschool teachers love Velcro! Please keep in mind that sneakers are best for preschool and Extended Day. Although some girls love to wear party shoes, we think they are unsafe, especially on stairs, and they are not designed to provide support while running.

Please be sure to dress your child for the weather and **label all clothing!** The students play outside every day, except in a steady rain. Occasionally, we even take rain walks! Please send raincoats in the event of wet weather. Umbrellas are not necessary and can be dangerous with young children. In chilly and cold weather, dress your child in layers. Girls who insist on dresses must wear either leggings or tights underneath them when it's cold. Hats and mittens are a must in the winter. If there is snow on the ground, please send snowpants or snowsuits and boots. We love to romp in the snow and build snow people.

There are times when children need a change of clothes. If your child comes home in unfamiliar clothing, please wash and return them to school as soon as possible. For our Pre-K classes, we have accumulated a collection of gently used uniform like clothing for these occasions. If you wish to have your child change into their own clothes, send in a change of clothes in a plastic bag marked with his/her name. All children in the Twos and Threes' classes need to provide a change of clothes in a Ziploc bag marked with their name.

FIELD TRIPS

We really have fun when we take field trips! If you join us for a field trip, please make other arrangements for the care of siblings so that you will be able to give your preschool child and your assigned group your full attention.

Maryland state law requires that children use safety seats until they turn 8, weigh 65 pounds or reach 4-foot-9.

If you are not accompanying us on a field trip, please leave your child's labeled car seat on the front porch of the Church Building along the main school driveway. If you are driving on a field

trip, young children may **NOT** ride in the front seat of a car. Never place a young child in front of an air bag. *When calculating how many children your car can hold, please do not include the front seat as a space.*

SNACK

CES is an **allergy aware** preschool. *Please do not send in crackers, snacks or sandwiches with nut products to school.* Teachers will inform parents if a serious allergy is present in their class. Also, when you send in snack with your child, be sure to *check the ingredients to make certain the product has not been processed in a peanut produced factory.*

Students enjoy a snack time every morning. Snack always begins with a blessing and is a time for wonderful conversations. The Preschool 2's and 3's class families provide healthy snacks on a weekly assigned schedule. A list will be provided by the teachers or a parent volunteers. The students in our PreK class each bring in a daily snack of their own to enjoy at snack time. We also cook on a regular basis and enjoy our cooking creations at snack time.

Preschool and PreK students love to celebrate birthdays and we welcome special treats on these occasions. Involve your child in planning the special treat. Children's favorites include ice cream, cookies, Rice Krispie treats, donuts and fruit salad. You may send in party plates, cups and napkins, if you choose. Please check with your child's teacher in advance to schedule the birthday celebration. Parents are asked not to distribute food directly to children as some of our students have food allergies. The teacher will oversee the distribution of food.

If your child has a food/seasonal allergy please set up a meeting with the school's Health Technician BEFORE school begins. All information is kept confidential. We have the experience and training to meet the needs of most children.

And remember.....**CES is an allergy aware Preschool.**

WEATHER RELATED DELAYS AND CLOSINGS

Please refer to the CES Handbook for complete information regarding late openings and early closings. We follow the Montgomery County Public Schools for delayed openings and closings. Please note: When school opens 2 hours late, PreK will open at 10:00 a.m., the same time as the entire school. *Half-day students do not attend school on late school opening days.*

DISPOSABLE HOUSEHOLD ITEMS WE COULD REUSE

There are many disposable items that we love to have donated to our preschool. Such items include margarine tubs, shirt cardboard, aluminum tins, fabric scraps, buttons, magazines, catalogs, computer paper, small jewelry boxes and baby food jars. (All sizes welcome!) We also welcome unisex clothing in good condition in preschool sizes.