



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

A ministry of Second Presbyterian Church
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Office Hours: 8:30 a. m. - 3:00 p.m. Children's Hours: 9:00 a. m. - 2:30 a.m.

Children's Circle Preschool admits children of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin.


This Handbook is dated August 1, 2023, and supersedes all previous Parent Handbooks.

Children's Circle Preschool Parent Handbook

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CLOSURE DUE TO WEATHER:
 Check **WTHR (13)** or **wthr.com**
 We will be listed as
**"Children's Circle of Second
 Presbyterian"**



Welcome to Children's Circle Preschool, a place of discovery. . .

Children's Circle Preschool (CCP) has been serving the community since 1967, offering a nurturing, Christian setting where children can develop the skills and confidence necessary to live in today's world. Our experienced staff guides children toward discovery of who they are and what they can do.

Our Mission:

The Mission of Children's Circle Preschool is to extend the Second Presbyterian Church family of faith and its Christian traditions to a weekday program for young children in our congregation and in the community. This ministry embraces excellence in education by nurturing the whole child- physically, emotionally, spiritually, socially, and intellectually.

Our Philosophy:

Children's Circle Preschool is a weekday, developmentally appropriate, activity-based Christian program. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines "developmentally appropriate practice" as *methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning*. At CCP, we meet the needs of every child in a fun, creative, nurturing environment. We believe in the value and unique qualities of each child. We strive to develop confidence, compassion, creativity, curiosity, and competence in each child. We believe a learning environment should be safe and loving as well as challenging and stimulating. We believe our role as educators is to model Christian values, respect each child, provide security and acceptance, be good observers of children, encourage independence, be good listeners, and assist and support parents.

Organization and Structure of Children's Circle Preschool:

The Children's Circle Preschool Board determines the policy and evaluates the affairs of the school. The Board is under the authority of the Session of Second Presbyterian Church.

What We Believe About Educating Young Children:

Our ideas of how young children learn are drawn from the research of Jean Piaget, Lillian Katz, John Dewey and other early childhood educators. Our basic premises are as follows:

- No two children are the same- Each child has his own "time clock. " Walking, talking, cutting teeth are all milestones that are unique to each child.
- Play is learning- We believe in the power of play. Children learn best through hands-on concrete experiences. Play allows children to navigate social situations, learn about cause and effect, problem solve, and work collaboratively.
- Today is the day that counts- we focus on enjoying the experience at hand rather than just preparing for the next stage.
- Children need choices- Teachers provide a wide variety of experiences each day. Our goal is to help children master skills while providing challenges to help them grow.
- Developing social competence is as important as the 3 Rs- Sharing, interacting with peers, and participating in group activities lay the foundation of school success. It

is our responsibility as Christians to pass on to our children the message of God's unconditional love and his presence in our lives.

Our Programs:

Nursery, Toddlers, Twos, and Young 3 Classes- These classes provide young children an opportunity to be cared for in a nurturing, Christian environment. This is so much more than babysitting as our staff provide creative, developmentally- appropriate activities including art, music, and sensory play. Using the activities planned for these young children help them learn about themselves, learn about their feelings, learn about others, learn to communicate, learn about moving and doing, and acquire thinking skills. Bible stories and Christian traditions are also part of the daily curriculum.

Preschool 3 and Pre-K Classes- Preschoolers are naturally curious about the world around them. With this in mind our days are planned around themes that are meaningful to three to five year olds. Children are introduced to activities that encourage independence and a joy of learning. Activities planned for these children will focus on social/emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, and language development. Bible stories and Christian traditions are also part of the daily curriculum. **CCP recommends that children who meet kindergarten age requirements enroll in Kindergarten or an alternate program. Exceptions will be made based on conversations with CCP Director.**

Friday Friends Classes- Friday Friends offers Preschool 3 students an optional third day at school. Friday Friends students must be enrolled in a Young 3 or Preschool 3 class. The classes dive into a theme and enjoy a day of play, art, gross motor activity, and socialization. Friday Friends classes are made up of a combination of students from all our Young 3 and Preschool 3 classes and students may have different teachers than they do in their Young 3/Preschool 3 classes.

Classroom Information:

CLASS	DAYS	HOURS	MAXIMUM CLASSROOM RATIO	AGE REQUIREMENTS
Nursery	1 or 2 days per week: M,T,W,H,F	9:00-2:30	8 students/2 teachers	9 months by September 1
Toddlers	1 or 2 days per week: M,T,W,H,F	9:00-2:30	10 students/2 teachers	16 months by September 1
Twos	1 or 2 days per week: M,T,W,H,F	9:00-2:30	12 students/2 teachers	24 months by September 1
Young 3	2 days per week: M/W or T/H	9:00-2:30	12 students/2 teachers	31 months by September 1
Preschool 3	2 days per week: M/W or T/H	9:00-2:30	16 students/2 teachers	3 years by September 1
Friday Friends	Fridays only	9:00-2:30	16 students/2 teachers	3 years by September 1
Pre-K	3 days per week: M/W/F or T/H/F	9:00-2:30	18 students/2 teachers	4 years by September 1

Health and Safety:

Medical Records- All enrollees must have the following on file before being admitted to a classroom:

- completed Registration Form
- Security password on Registration Form
- completed Personal Profile Sheet
- Emergency Medical Release Form
- Immunization Records

Illness- Children must be in good health and free of communicable diseases. Do not send children to school with a fever over 100°, excessively runny nose, diarrhea, vomiting, conjunctivitis, or persistent cough. Any child who develops symptoms will be isolated in the office area until a parent or emergency contact can pick the child up. Children must be symptom and fever free for at least 24 hours and without aid of medication before attending school.

Allergies- Regulations prohibit us from giving most medication. We can administer emergency care if needed. Please list any allergy information on your child's Personal Profile Sheet and discuss them with your child's teachers. Please make the Director aware of any life-threatening allergies and the need to have medication at school. Medication must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

Accident/Incident Reports- We do all we can to keep your child safe at school, but sometimes accidents occur. Should your child be hurt, you will receive a copy of an Accident/Incident Report describing the injury, how it occurred, and the steps taken to comfort your child. It is CCP policy not to disclose the name of a child who may have caused injury to another child or who was injured while attending school.

Child Protection- A Child Protection class is mandatory for all staff. Indiana law mandates that Child Protective Services be contacted if there is any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

Medical Emergency- In the event of a medical emergency, the office staff will attempt to reach the parents or emergency contacts. If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the Director, or a person acting on her behalf, will call 911 and accompany the child to the hospital. Parents are responsible for medical costs incurred.

Fire, Tornado, Earthquake- Emergency procedures are posted in all classrooms and reviewed regularly by CCP staff. Drills are conducted regularly.

Security Procedures- The Facilities Team of Second Presbyterian helps CCP manage and maintain security. Security protocols in place are:

- CCP hallways are secured with security doors which are closed and locked during the school day.
- Individual locks on classroom doors
- Radio communication between CCP staff and the Facilities Team
- Lockdown procedures that are reviewed with staff regularly
- A shelter agreement with a nearby church/school
- Staff are First Aid, CPR, and AED trained
- Security cameras placed throughout the building and around the property

Confidentiality- CCP staff will maintain confidentiality with information about children in our care. All forms and information about children are kept secure. Class lists with phone numbers and addresses are distributed.

Closure Due to Weather- Should CCP need to close or delay opening due to weather, our status will be posted on WTHR (13) or www.wthr.com . We will be listed as "Children's Circle of Second Presbyterian Church. " A two-hour delay means that drop off will begin at 11:00.

What to bring:

CCP will provide each child with a tote bag- please use this bag. Please pack only essentials for the school day- lunch box, spare clothes, diapers and diaper cream (for younger students), small rest mat or towel, small lovey if needed.

Clothing- Send your children in comfortable clothing that can get dirty. Dress your child for the weather understanding that we will play outside unless it is below 32° or raining. Closed toe or athletic shoes provide the surest footing on our playgrounds. Please send a spare set of clothes in your child's bag everyday (including socks and underwear). Label everything clearly!

Comfort Items- Special items from home (blankets, stuffed animals, etc.) can help children adjust to school. Please limit "loveys" to one item and label "loveys" clearly so they make the trip home each day.

Rest Time Items- All classes will take an age appropriate amount of time to rest each day. Not all children will sleep, but a quiet part of the day is important. Nursery students will rest in a crib and sheets are provided. We advise sending in a blanket, crib sheet, or nap mat for Toddlers and Twos to cover the small cot they will rest on. We recommend rest items that a child can manage on his or her own (a towel or nap mat) for our Young 3, Preschool 3, and Pre-K students.

Lunch- CCP will provide each child with a reusable, covered container which holds just the right amount of food. The container fits in most lunch boxes with room to spare for an ice pack and a drink. To limit the number of hands touching your child's lunchbox, please send a lunch that your child can manage independently. **CCP is a NUT FREE school- NO nut products.** We also ask our families to avoid juice boxes and squeeze yogurts, as they can be very messy. Please cut foods so they do not present a choking hazard.



Birthday Celebrations: We will celebrate children's birthdays and parents are welcome to send in birthday treat for the class. Communicate with your child's teacher before sending treats. All treats must be store-bought with ingredient label on packaging. Smaller items like cookies or individually bagged items like fruit snacks will be easier to transport in from drop-off.

Daily Routines:

Dropping off your child- Drop off begins at 9:00 each morning. Families will walk their children to their classroom each day. Teachers will share daily drop off routines with each family. There will be an opportunity to chat with teachers and help children transition to the classroom. If your child is having issues with separation, we do recommend a quick and positive drop off. A quick hug and kiss before saying goodbye is best. Lingering can create a tougher drop off. We are happy to let you know how your child is doing after you leave.

Picking-up your child- All children should be picked up by 2:30 each day. Children may only be picked up by an adult (18 or older) and will be picked up at the classroom door. You will have a chance to hear about your child's day. If your regular pick up routine will be different, please notify the teachers at drop off and fill out a yellow pick slip, or contact the CCP Office (317-252-5517 or karchbold@secondchurch.org) and we will notify the classroom teachers. We will check ID for anyone we have not met before.

Late Pick-Up Policy- It is important that you arrive on time for pick-up. Children become nervous when they are the last to be picked up. Should you know you will be late, please notify the CCP Office (317-252-5517 or karchbold@secondchurch.org) and let us know, so we can reassure your child. Should late pick-ups become a habit, you will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$5 beginning at 2:35 and an additional \$5 for every 15 minutes after that.

Communication Between School and Home- Teachers will provide families with a newsletter and/or calendar outlining the upcoming month's activities. A school wide newsletter will be distributed each month with upcoming events, reminders, and parenting information. Teachers will post information outside their classrooms about the day's events.

Teachers will set up communication methods through classroom apps or email. Each teaching team will inform parents of their processes as part of our Orientation.

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled in early February for all Preschool 3 and Pre-K classes. Parents in any classroom may always request a conference at any time. Teachers may request additional conferencing to discuss issues or develop action plans for a child.

It is a parent's responsibility to make the CCP Office aware of any changes in address or phone numbers and to keep medical information up to date.

Guidance and Discipline- Our classes are planned with developmentally appropriate activities in mind so there are few discipline issues. When necessary, we use redirection and appropriate behaviors are explained in simple terms. Time outs are rarely used and only to allow a child to regain his or her composure. Corporal punishment is never used.

Toilet Training- Although we understand young children may occasionally have accidents, CCP policy states that children enrolled in Preschool 3, PS 3 Friday Friends, and Pre-K classes must be toilet trained. This means accidents are few and far between and a child can manage toileting skills on his or her own. Preschool 3, PS 3 Friday Friends, and Pre-K classrooms are not equipped with diaper changing facilities,

and, to maintain our student/teacher ratios, teachers may not leave their classes to change children. If a child is consistently having accidents, the parents will be contacted for a conference.

Registration, Financial Agreements, and Tuition:

Registration- Registration for the following year is open to current families in January. New families may register in February. A registration fee and supply are collected at the time of registration. A pre-paid tuition payment for May of the following year is then collected to guarantee placement in a class. ***All prepaid fees (registration fee, supply fee, and May tuition) are non-refundable.***

Class enrollment is based on birthdates. CCP does not make exceptions for birthdates. CCP will only take requests for day/days of the week. Children are assigned to classes based on age, boy/girl ratio, and to balance class size. We cannot honor teacher or friend requests. CCP recommends that children who meet kindergarten age requirements enroll in Kindergarten or an alternate program. Exceptions will be made based on conversations with CCP Director.

Tuition- ACH payments are recommended. Families will receive paperwork to initiate ACH payments at the beginning of the school year. ACH payments are taken on the 3rd of each month.

Tuition may be paid by the year, semester, or monthly. Monthly tuition for September through May is based on nine equal installments. Tuition payments are due on the first of each month and are considered late after the 10th. A late fee of \$5 may be assessed after the 10th. The full monthly tuition is due regardless of attendance. We are unable to make tuition adjustments for illness, vacation, or weather related cancellations.

At the time a family is two months in arrears (45 days) the Director will schedule a meeting to discuss a payment plan. Enrollment in the program may be discontinued if the payment plan is not followed. If your family is experiencing a financial hardship, see the Director for information about tuition assistance. ***All accounts must be paid in full by April 30.***

Withdrawals- Should it be necessary to withdraw a child after registration or during the school year, notify the Director in writing two weeks in advance.

If you find yourself in financial hardship, please see the Director for information about tuition assistance. All prepaid fees are non-refundable (including May prepaid tuition).

These are current guidelines (as of 8-1-22) and may be changed at any point. CCP will continue to update based on Marion County Public Health Department (MCPHD) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations. We appreciate all the changes our families and staff are making to make this a positive school year.

STUDENT/STAFF HEALTH: Families will be asked to closely monitor their child's health. If your child is exhibiting symptoms of illness, please keep your child home. Staff will be expected to adhere to the same standards.

The Director has the final say on whether a child may remain at school should they be exhibiting symptoms of illness.

FACE COVERINGS: Face coverings are *optional* based on each family and staff members' choice. We support each member of the community in their decision. If a family chooses to continue to mask, we will ask the following:

- Students should come to school with 3-5 masks per day with his or her name on the masks.
- Students should have two Ziploc type bags in the front pocket of their school bag- one marked with child's name and "CLEAN", one marked with child's name and "USED".
- If a child's mask becomes wet or dirty during the day, we will help them trade it out for a new mask. The used mask will go in the "Used" bag.
- Be sure to replenish your child's mask supply each day. Much like spare clothes, everyone prefers to use his or her own.

CLEANING/DISTINFECTING PRACTICES: CCP has established strict cleaning and sanitizing practices for classrooms and equipment following CDC and Marion County Public Health Department guidelines. CCP will sanitize high touch or shared items in the school (playground toys, etc.)

COVID SYMPTOMS AND TESTING- Children exposed to COVID-19, but without symptoms, do not need to quarantine. CCP will still notify families if a child or staff tests positive in their child's class. This notification will allow families to be diligent in looking for symptoms such as fever, cough, nasal congestion, etc., indicating that the child should stay home.

POSITIVE COVID CASES-

- Children testing positive for COVID-19 should isolate at home for 5 days
- Children who are fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and show improvement in symptoms may return on day 6 if they can correctly and consistently mask for days 6-10.
- Children who cannot correctly and consistently mask should isolate at home for 7 days and may return on day 8 if they are fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and show improvement in symptoms.

SHARED INFORMATION- CCP values the privacy of all our families and staff and will work hard to protect it. We will share information about positive cases with our families including classes affected. ***We will not share students' or staff members' names with other CCP participants.***