

Preschool Program PARENT HANDBOOK



PINNACLE
PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool. Our goal is to provide a warm, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child.

This handbook is designed to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with the program. In the handbook we have tried to anticipate many of your questions about the program. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the program's policies and procedures. We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transitions between home and school. Daily communication and a sense of trust between parents and teachers are vital.

Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children and to ensure that parents are valued and respected. To accomplish this we depend on parents to be responsible and active child care consumers. We expect parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about the program. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child's experience and the program. We understand that nothing is more important than your child's early education experience.

Given the nature of an ever-changing quality early education program, this handbook is a "living" document. You will be notified of formal policy changes during the year via a written policy notices. In addition, the handbook will be updated as needed.

Come and talk with us should you have any suggestions, questions or concerns.

PART I

HISTORY

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool was established in 1994 as a mission of the Pinnacle Presbyterian Church. The preschool began with 2 teachers and 8 children and served as an outreach to our community. Fast forward many years and we now have a staff of 18 teachers and 150 children who are currently enrolled. The program is licensed through Arizona Department of Childcare Licensing. We are DES Certified and we are also accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (NAEYC) only 5 percent of programs in the nation achieve such an accreditation. Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool is one of only a few programs in Scottsdale to receive such an achievement.

MISSION STATEMENT

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool is based on the principles of the Reggio Approach to Early Childhood Education. This **approach** creates learning conditions that enhance thinking through expressive, communicative and cognitive languages. Project work is an important aspect of this curriculum approach. We believe that children, their families and society all benefit from a high-quality, early childhood program and that there is a critical link between a child's early experiences and later successes in life. The **mission** of the preschool is to enrich the lives of preschool children by building positive values.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophical position is based on the assumption that children learn from the dynamic interaction between their own activity, their own individual maturation, and the physical and social environment. The works of Piaget, Erikson, Gardner, Vygotsky and current researchers in the field of Human Development provide the theoretical basis for the program. The inspiration we have acquired from the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Education provides a framework for planning, implementing and evaluating our program. This means that our curriculum emerges from ideas that may be initiated by teachers, by a problem posed by a child, or by a chance event. The projects and activities are developed in such a way that multiple learning goals are possible. The children's experiences are documented by drawings, photographs, three-dimensional representations and written words. Music and movement activities are also integrated into the children's activities to provide a well-rounded experience.

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool believes that children are capable and competent individuals. We feel their ideas and feelings are valid and that they are able to make thoughtful intelligent decisions when given the opportunity. We further believe that by guiding young children in their spiritual, cognitive, emotional, social and physical development through a caring, responsive environment, we will not only facilitate learning, but also develop meaningful relationships between children and teachers, and home and school.

At Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool our goals are to:

- Encourage children's independence, to foster growth of healthy self-concept and to develop a sense of responsibility;
- Nurture children's feelings of empathy and encourage cooperation, honesty, respect and altruism;
- Promote children's receptive and expressive language skills and encourage emergent literacy skills;
- Stimulate children's curiosity and help them acquire knowledge about the world;
- Strengthen children's developing motor skills and increase awareness of health and safety;
- Support children's growing abilities to communicate ideas through visual arts, drama, construction, music, and dance;
- Enhance and encourage children's imagination, spontaneity, and originality;
- Inspire each child to a lifetime of learning;
- Help the child develop expressive and receptive oral language;
- Help the child to become an independent thinker who is able to make choices and decisions;
- Help the child move from the need for outer authority to the control of his/her own behavior (self-discipline);
- Help the child develop confidence in his/her ability to achieve goals through independent effort as well as teamwork;
- Help the child develop an understanding of feelings and how feelings motivate behavior; we strive to maintain a safe, healthy and nurturing environment where the developmental needs of the children are addressed.

The preschool program has set goals for the program that are tied to specific outcomes for children as well as families and are assessed on how well these goals are met through the assessment of child progress and through family evaluations and other input.

The program is based on the belief that children need time to be children and time to experience their childhood.

Teaching is the art of providing young children with an environment which encourages active exploration and discovery. Projects are planned, yet responsive to individual needs and environmental happenings. Opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility, make decisions and learn through play. Children's positive feelings of self-worth must be the foundation of all curriculum development in early childhood. Each child's learning is filtered through his or her unique screen of self-concept. Each child brings his or her own world to us each day.

The teaching staff is sensitively aware of how young children learn. Children process knowledge by using their whole self to gather information. Children absorb what their bodies are experiencing, the more involved the experience, the greater the potential for learning.

THE REGGIO APPROACH

The Image of the Child

Rich

Strong

Capable

Powerful

Has Potential

Desire to Grow

Ability to be Amazed

Desire to Relate to Others and to Communicate

ACCREDITATION

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool is one of the select few preschools in the country that has earned national accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC is the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators and schools. Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children since 1999. The standards and criteria held by the Association are separated into ten categories, or the ten Standards of Excellence, as described below:

1. Relationships
2. Curriculum
3. Teaching
4. Assessment of Child Progress
5. Health
6. Teachers
7. Families
8. Community Relationships
9. Physical Environment
10. Leadership and Management

* For more information regarding NAEYC, please go to naeyc.org or call 800---424---2460.

LICENSING

Licensing for operation is secured through the Arizona Department of Health Services. A yearly inspection ensures compliance with State regulations. Inspection reports are available for review.

Office of Childcare Licensure
150 N. 18th Ave. Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85007

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The preschool program does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, national origin or sexual preference.

ANTI-BIAS STATEMENT

The Early Childhood Education professionals at Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool understand that at an early age children can absorb our society's biases of gender, age, color, language, and physical characteristics. We believe that the anti---bias curriculum that we embrace supports children as they explore, celebrate and understand differences.

Our approach acknowledges that children and adults can be empowered to stand up for their rights and the rights of others and to recognize and question social injustice. We challenge the children and ourselves to:

- explore issues of fairness as seen from a child's perspective
- see conflict as a challenge in problem-solving
- be open to differing perspectives, ideas, attitudes and behaviors
- monitor our words and actions for unconscious bias or prejudice
- recognize and demonstrate respect for diversity among people

LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

Building and maintaining relationships with the community and advocating for children and their families guides our mission and philosophy. These are standards and practices we share with our NAEYC accreditation agency.

All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community or region and beyond. Teaching staff participate in informal or formal ways in local, state or regional public awareness activities related to early care by joining groups, attending meetings or sharing information with others, both at and outside the program. The preschool also communicates with local and state officials through the distribution of our program newsletter and events.

Program staff advocate for the program and its families by creating awareness of the program's needs among community councils, service agencies, and local governmental entities.

Program staff includes information gathered from stake holders in planning for continuously improving, building stakeholder involvement in the program and broadening community support for the program. Program staff use their knowledge of the community and the families they serve as in an integral part of the curriculum and children's learning experiences. Program staff inform families about Pinnacle Presbyterian Church events and events in the community and local organizations, such as museum exhibits, concerts, story-telling and theater intended for children.

Program staff invites members of the performing and visual arts community, such as musical performers, coordinators of traveling museum exhibits and local interests to interact with the children both on and off campus. These events may be co-sponsored with other organizations. Program staff are encouraged to participate in local, state or national early childhood education organizations by joining and attending meetings and conferences. Program staff are also encouraged to participate regularly in local, state or regional public awareness activities related to early education.

PART II

ENROLLMENT POLICY

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of a child's race, national or ethnic origin, religion or economic status in the administration of admissions policies, educational policies, or any of the programs and activities of the school. In order to be eligible for enrollment in the preschool program, the child must be three years old by August 31st of the current school year; have an up-to-date immunization record; and be reliably toilet trained. Mini 3's children must turn 3 years old after September 1st but before January 1st. They must wear regular underwear to school, no pull-ups or diapers.

Requirements Prior to Attendance

Your child will not be allowed to start school until the following forms are on file:

- Child Information, Contact and Emergency Record
- Policy & Procedures Form
- Tuition Contract Agreement
- Immunization records
- Parent Handbook Agreement
- Photographic Release Form

In addition, parents are asked to complete other forms and surveys that provide information on their child and his/her relationship with the family. These forms are typically provided in the enrollment packet. This information will assist Preschool staff in providing the best care and education possible for your child. It is requested that these forms be completed prior to the first day of school. The preschool operates from the end of August through end of May for a total of thirty-six weeks during of classroom time. The preschool classrooms operate 9am-12pm for 3 year olds and Mini 3 year olds and 9am-12:30 for Prekindergarten students.

Extended day classes are available until 2pm each day and are signed up for every quarter. (4 times a year). Enrollment is on a yearlong basis. A nine ---week Summer Adventure Camp is also available. This program operates 9 am to 1 pm (Monday---Thursday).

Open Registration is held the second week of January for the following school year. Priority Registration for current students, siblings of current or former students, and children of church members occurs prior to Open Registration at a time chosen at the discretion of the administration. Priority families will be notified accordingly. In order for church members to receive priority status, they must have been registered members of the church for six months prior to our priority registration period or at the discretion of the Associate Pastor.

- All attempts are made to give Priority Registrants their first choice for class placement. In the event that there are too many registrations for available class spots, a point system will be implemented. For every child and every year they have attended PPP they will receive a point.
 - For Example:
 - A child continuing at PPP after their 3 year old year (with no previous siblings attending) will receive 1 priority point.
 - A child continuing at PPP after a mini 3 year old year and then 3 year old year will receive 2 priority points.
 - A child new to the program, but had 2 siblings each attend for 2 years would have 4 priority points entering the program.
 - Twins are calculated at 2 points per year (each receiving a point for their sibling also)

A registration fee is due upon placement of your child in the program. This fee is non---refundable. Registration fees are not required to place your child on a wait list. Wait lists are only used for the current enrollment year and do not carry into the following year's registration session. Children who do not meet the age requirement will not be placed on a wait list for future enrollment. Interest lists will be used for families inquiring about future program opportunities.

Tuition is calculated on an annual basis. For your convenience, tuition can be paid annually, semi-annually, or divided into ten equal payments beginning July 1st through April 1st. We request all tuition be paid through Auto Debit Pay, EFT. Tuition is considered delinquent if not paid by the 10th of the month. If delinquent, a \$25.00 late fee should be added to your payment. If the prior month's tuition is still delinquent at the beginning of the following month, the child can be dropped from the program and be replaced by a child from the waiting list. If you are in need of an extension, arrangements can be made through the Director. If this becomes necessary, please do not hesitate to discuss it rather than become delinquent in paying your tuition.

No child will be permitted to begin the year in August if the previous year's tuition payments remain unpaid on the account. Continuous attendance in class is dependent upon timely receipt of all scheduled tuition payments.

STAFFING/RATIOS

Each staff person has been carefully selected for educational qualifications and/or experience in the field of early childhood education. Equally as important is a loving and genuine interest in young children and the ability to relate this concern and caring to the children. Continual staff growth is encouraged through evaluations, classes, workshops and in---service training. Two- Three teachers guide each classroom of 12---20 children. They work as a team and plan and administer daily activities under the supervision of the Director, with oversight by the Associate Pastor. The teachers are required to participate in annual continuing education events and training in Child CPR and First Aid. All teachers have Fingerprint Clearance Cards on file in the office.

Staff consists of a director, office administrator, 14 classroom teachers, 1 studio teacher, a Director of Professional Development and Educational Practices, and a project coordinator. The preschool is a licensed facility through Arizona Department of Childcare Licensing, and is in full compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our low teacher/child ratios are 1:6. In addition to the professional staff, the preschool also provides field work, student teaching and student observation opportunities for students from ASU, NAU, PVCC and Grand Canyon University. Guidelines for field work and observation are provided to each student. Staff orientation is provided to each staff member at the beginning of each semester. Staff training is also provided during the academic school year. The preschool closes during staff training days which are approximately two days per academic year.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH RECORDS AND IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT POLICY

All children's immunizations need to be current at the time of enrollment. Immunizations are to be kept up to date thereafter following the Arizona immunization guidelines schedule. Health records are required which document the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the Arizona Department of Public Health.

Immunization is an important public health policy effecting children. As a matter of state law, children in the program must:

- be fully immunized, or
- be in the process of becoming fully immunized according to the approved schedule, or
- Have a physician's statement that immunization is contraindicated for medical reasons or an immunization statement from the parent stating that the child is not immunized due to religious beliefs.

The staff has a plan to identify and exclude any child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which the child is susceptible occurs in the program. We will follow all guidelines provided by Maricopa County Health Department. A list of any non-immunized or partially immunized child is kept in the preschool office.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Our program is inclusive of all children. A child may be accepted into the program, regardless of disability, as long as a space is available and accommodations can be made without creating an undue burden on the class, the teachers, or require extensive physical modifications.

SUMMER ADVENTURE PROGRAM

A nine-week summer program, "Summer Adventure Camp" is offered at Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool. Enrollment is weekly and each week is centered on a different topic. Activities include both indoor and outdoor experiences, which integrate areas such as art, music, science, math, social studies and literacy activities including stories and poetry. In addition, nature discoveries will become the subject for various studio art experiences including drawing, painting, collages and sculptures. Hours for the summer program are 9 am-1 pm, Monday-Thursday. Registration information for the summer program is provided in mid-March each year.

TUITION POLICY

Fees are based on an annual tuition fee and can be paid annually, bi-annually, or 10 equal payments (beginning July 1st). Extended Day Class Fees are due at the time of registration (4 times a year). Summer Program tuition is due at the time of registration. No refunds can be made due to illness, holidays, inclement weather, staff in-service training days or other legitimate conditions beyond the control of the Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool.

- We request all tuition be paid through Auto Debit Pay, EFT.
- A \$250 non-refundable annual registration fee is required at registration.

Tuition rates can be found on the preschool program website <http://www.pinnaclepres.org/registration-tuition-info>. All fees are subject to change. A \$25 late fee is charged if tuition payment is over 10 calendar days late. After 30 days, failure to pay may result in termination unless a payment plan is negotiated.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

It is understood that children are enrolled for the entire school year. **You are required to give a 30--day notice to the preschool office in writing if it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the program.** Tuition will be due during that 30 day notice period. **Families who withdraw after March 1st of the current year will be obligated for their tuition for the full year of enrollment.**

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

- Children must be escorted from their cars to the preschool front gate by the parent or other adult caregiver.
- Adults should only use delineated parking spaces and closely supervise the children while traveling to and from the classrooms. It is often difficult for drivers to see children while in the parking lot, so we recommend you remain observant of your surroundings. Also, rattlesnakes and scorpions inhabit our desert and it is not safe for children to wander from the sidewalks.
- **Children must be signed out with the full signature (not initials)** of the person responsible for them, including the time of day, as required by State licensing regulations. Children will be signed in each day by their classroom teacher. Children will be released only to those persons named on the emergency card as having permission to do so. No other person will be allowed to remove a child from the preschool without prior notice given to the Director, Office Administrator and/or teaching staff. In such cases a photo identification and signature will be required of the person prior to the release of the child.
- The school day begins at 9:00 AM. We ask that you do not bring the children before 8:50am this time as the teachers need the time before class to prepare for the day and to discuss the needs of individual children. The Preschool front gates will close each morning at 9:10am.
- Please be prompt in your arrival and departure. Not only can it be awkward for children to be the last one to arrive, it can be disruptive to the rest of the class. It is also very upsetting for a child to be left behind when everyone else has already been picked up. **A late fee of \$10.00 per every 5 minutes will be assessed to parents who arrive late.**
- Siblings must be supervised and remain with parents at all times while on campus. Please refrain from bringing any children on to Preschool Playground due to State Licensing Regulations. Families are welcome to use the Playground located up by Fellowship Hall.

PART III

EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE POLICY

A. Emergency Telephone Numbers

- EMERGENCY911
- Fire (Scottsdale- non-emergency)480-312-8000
- Police (Scottsdale-non-emergency)480-312-5000
- Poison Control800.682.9211
- Scottsdale Honor Health (Thompson Peak).....480-324-7000
- Phoenix Children's Hospital602-933-1000

B. Emergency Procedure

When a child becomes sick or an accident occurs, determine the severity of the situation and contact the parent/authorized person or arrange for transportation to the hospital. Call for an ambulance. One staff member (teacher or director) should accompany child to the hospital and take the child's folder. Remain with the child until the parent or alternative pick-up arrives. If parent cannot be reached, contact the designated person on the child's permission form.

C. First Aid Equipment

Supplies checked on a regular weekly basis. The first aid boxes are located in the preschool office and preschool classrooms marked with the Red Cross. There is also an outdoor first aid kit in playground storage room. Supply of kit is regularly checked at the beginning of each semester by the classroom teachers and restocked accordingly. First aid administered by any staff trained in first aid/ CPR.

Contents of First Aid Kit:

Gauze bandages • Scissors • Band-Aids • Triangular bandage • antiseptic wipes • bandage tape • water • Thermometer • Rubber gloves • Instant Ice Packs (freezer) • safety pins • eye dressing • first aid guide • splints

D. Plan for Evacuation

- Daily attendance recorded each day by classroom teachers.
- Evacuation plans are posted at every exit.
- Classroom teachers lead children out of the building.
- All meet at sidewalk in front of preschool parking lot for head count by classroom teacher.
- Director arranges fire drills every month (at different times of the day).
- Office Administrator keeps a log of each drill posted in office.

In the event of an outdoor hazard or concern, children and teachers will remain in the classrooms; doors locked if necessary. If there is a situation that would require the children to avoid exposure to windows (severe weather), the children will be moved into the teacher work area closets within the classrooms. The bathrooms may also be used to give protection in such situations, if needed.

E. Injury Prevention Plan

- Daily monitoring of the environment by the director, playground supervisor and classroom teachers. All staff required to bring to their attention any problems, repairs, or hazards.
- Conduct regular safety checks of the preschool. Director and teachers daily check all rooms and outdoor playground.
- Equipment and toy purchases carefully examined and all donated materials checked for safety and health concerns.
- Office Administrator maintains injury log. (Located in preschool office)
- The program maintains a record of any unusual or serious incidents including but not limited to behavioral incidents, accidents, property destruction or emergencies. These reports are reviewed by the director once a month.
- Parents are given a written accident form informing them of any injuries. Parents and staff sign form and then file
- It in children's folder. The written form is given to parents upon pick up, same day of injury. Preschool to notify licensing if parent seeks follow-up at doctor or emergency following and injury or illness reported from school.

F. Plan for Managing Infectious Diseases

- Children are greeted by the teacher upon entering, observing any possible health problems.
- If a child exhibits any of the symptoms listed in the exclusion list (distributed to both parents and staff and is posted at preschool), the classroom teachers or director will ask the parent to take the child back home.
- If a child becomes ill at the center, parent or authorized person is contacted to pick up the child. A quiet area within the school is set up for the child until parent arrives and a staff member accompanies the child.
- Director or Office Administrator will notify all parents and staff in writing (posting) and email when any communicable disease/illness has been introduced to the preschool.

Director and classroom teachers responsible for managing the environment:

- Checking all safety hazards, lighting, heating, ventilation, and all maintenance problems.
- All problems are reported to the preschool office.
- All soiled clothing sent home in a sealed plastic bag (see toileting procedure).
- Schedule for daily cleaning of toys and play areas are arranged.
- Purchasing safe toys, equipment, arts materials.
- Use of latex gloves when dealing with bodily fluids.
- Report communicable diseases to Arizona Health Department.

G. Plan For Infection Control

Hand-washing procedure for staff and children posted at the preschool.

Staff will use commercial disinfectant or prepare 1/4 cup bleach to one gallon of water solution or 1 tbsp. of bleach to 1 quart of water, labeled, and placed out of children's reach.

Director provides janitorial staff with directions for daily and monthly cleaning: daily disinfecting of toilets, toilet seats, sinks, faucets, floors, all table top surfaces, kitchen counter; all mops disinfected with approved solution and the mop is stored out of preschool. All cleaning supplies stored out of reach of children in a locked cabinet.

Daily disinfecting of table tops before and after any snacks or lunches are served.

All staff are trained in infectious control procedures and monitored daily using a check-list.

Water play equipment is disinfected and properly stored after daily use. Water is changed before new group arrives in afternoon.

H. Universal Health Care Precautions

1. Wash your hands:

- On arrival for the day
- After toileting (self or child)
- After handling any bodily fluids blowing nose, coughing, blood vomit, etc.
- Before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving food, or handling any raw foods that requires cooking (meats, eggs, poultry)
- After water play
- After handling any pets or any materials such as sand, dirt or surfaces contaminated by contact of animals; after handling any animals or their equipment
- Before and after administering medication
- After assisting a child with toileting
- After handling garbage or cleaning

2. Latex gloves must be worn when:

- Toileting a child
- Contact with blood, vomit, nose discharge, etc.
- Cleaning surfaces that have been contaminated
- Wash your hands after you remove gloves

3. Use disinfectant to:

- Sanitize all table surfaces before snack/lunch time
- Sanitize toys/objects used by children

4. Air Quality:

- Keep room temperature 65---75 degrees (F)
- No use of air sprays

I. Plan for Meeting the Needs of Mildly Ill Children While at the Preschool

If a child becomes ill while at the preschool, parent or authorized person is contacted immediately to pick the child up. A quiet area is set up for the child with a blanket, if the child does not have a blanket the preschool will use designated "ill child blanket" which will be laundered promptly after use. A staff person is assigned to child until parent arrives. Time of departure is noted in attendance book.

J. Plan for Identifying Special Health Care Needs/Allergies etc.

- Parents provide information regarding any allergies or other health care concerns at registration. Information is listed in child's folder and updated every year.
- A list of all allergies is posted inside and outside each classroom. All staff are made aware of the list and the children identified. List is updated as needed.
- The preschool will provide reasonable accommodations to meet allergy or special environment conditions to staff and children.

CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Responsibility

SCHOOL – The school will retain responsibility of all children on premises until they are released to a parent, guardian, or other designated person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center, in which case selected staff will remain with the children until they have reunited with their families.

EMPLOYEES – All employees will remain on the premises as service workers, as designated by law. Such employees will be subjected to whatever tasks are assigned by the person or persons in charge, and may not leave the premises until the same person or persons in charge give them official permission to do so.

PARENTS – Parents should not telephone the school; they should listen to the radio for progress reports on whatever disaster is taking place. Follow official instructions relayed by officials via the radio. If parents are able to reach the school without danger to themselves or without interference with disaster workers, they should come to pick up their children. Children will be released only to parents, guardians, or other designated persons known to them or to their parent guardians.

A. In Case of Fire, Natural Disaster, or Bomb Threat

1. Save lives --- evacuate any persons in immediate danger.
2. Evacuate the children and adults out the front door. Meet as a group at end of sidewalk in front of preschool parking lot. Person in charge to check for stragglers takes attendance book, schedule, and makes a head count. Secondary exit plan: out of back gate near garden or playhouse and meet in Fellowship Hall.
3. Sound alarm- pull on any fire alarms. Supplement with voice shouts, whistle, or bullhorn.
4. Report fire-- dial 9---911. Say: "There is a fire at Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool, 25150 N Pima Road (Tell specifics of what is burning) assign one person to meet fire officials.
5. Use portable fire extinguisher or wall extinguisher if it is safe to stay inside area while doing so.
6. Contain the spread of the fire and smoke by closing all doors and windows (if possible).

After evacuation:

1. When safe within the pre-designated area, all children and adults must be accounted for.
2. Person in charge reassures children of their safety.
3. First Aid is administered if needed.
4. Building is not re-entered until permission is given by the officials.

Evaluations:

Follow the emergency with an evaluation by all staff in order to spot areas of weakness or oversight to be remedied for any future emergency.

B. In Case Of Power Outage:

1. Remain calm.
2. If weather is nice, evacuate building if rooms are too dark to use.
3. If weather is hot and electricity blackout has caused the air conditioner to cease operating, plan for being outdoors in a cool, shady spot, if possible.
4. Utilize available emergency supplies to keep children comfortable.
5. When the announcement is made to close the preschool, person in charge will attempt to notify parents, guardians, or designated to pick up child.
6. Parents should arrange to pick up their child as soon as possible.

C. In Case of Loss of Water or Heat:

- The person in charge will notify the Pinnacle Presbyterian Church maintenance staff to report the problem.
- The preschool must meet minimum requirements regarding temperatures, hot water, flushing of toilets, running water, etc. in order to operate. After the problem is evaluated, the person in charge will make a decision whether or not the preschool should close.
- Teachers will take the children to the bathrooms at the Fellowship Hall for short-term use until all children are picked up and the preschool is closed.
- Parents or guardians will be notified to pick up their child and announcements will be made on designated radio and television channels if deemed necessary.

HEALTH CARE POLICY FOR CHILDREN

When is a child too sick or contagious and therefore should not be brought to the preschool? This is a question that may present itself during your child's attendance at the preschool. In order to protect your child and other children, we have set up some guidelines regarding illnesses. **If at any time a classroom teacher feels that your child is too sick or contagious, your child will not be able to attend.** Should your child become ill while at the preschool, you will be immediately notified. By helping us to observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and others at the preschool as well. Thank you for your cooperation.

Certain signs and symptoms in children (listed below) may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children exhibiting these symptoms should not be in a group setting. The child may return to school when he or she is no longer sick or contagious to others, and feels able to join in class activities.

Please keep your child at home if he/she has:

- Severe cold and fever, sneezing, nose drainage, and coughing.
- Temperature **of over 100 degrees in the morning.** The child may return to school when he or she has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of a fever reducer such as Motrin or Tylenol.
- **Eye/Nose:** Mucous or pus draining from red eyes; cloudy and/or colored drainage from the nose. Any child suspected of having pink eye should be examined by a doctor. An infected child may return to school once they have been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours and show no more sign of discharge.
- **Conjunctivitis:** an eye infection commonly referred to as “pink-eye.” The eye is generally red with some burning and yellowish discharge.
- **Bronchitis:** this can begin with hoarseness, cough and a slight elevation in temperature. The cough may be dry and painful, but it gradually becomes productive.
- **Rashes** that you cannot identify or that have not been diagnosed by a physician. Undiagnosed rashes with or without fever or other signs of illness. Infected Sores – Sores with crusting, or yellow or green drainage, which cannot be covered by clothing or bandages.
- **Sore Throat:** Sore throat when fever or swollen glands are present.
- **Impetigo:** begins as red pimples on the skin, which eventually become small vesicle surrounded by a reddened area. When the blister breaks, the surface is raw and weeping. The lesions occur in moist areas of the body, such as: creases of the neck, groin, and under the arm.
- **Diarrhea:** watery or greenish bowel movements that look different and are much more frequent than normal. Two or more abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours.
- **Vomiting:** more than the usual “spitting up.” Two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours.
- If child becomes really sick without obvious symptoms. In this case, the child may look or act different. There may be an unusual paleness, tiredness, irritability, or lack of interest.
- **Itching and Head Lice:** Persistent itching or scratching of body or scalp. (May be a sign of infestation or severe irritation). The Preschool has a “no nit policy”. A child with lice will need to be checked by school personnel prior to returning to school.
- If a doctor diagnoses an ear or throat infection, as an example, and the child is prescribed an antibiotic, the child may not be brought to the preschool until he/she has been on the medication for at least 24 hours.

At this age level runny noses, colds, and children’s ailments are very common. Our responsibility is to prevent the spread of illnesses by teaching sanitary procedures such as hand washing and by recognizing when a child needs to stay home.

Please contact the preschool office by 9:00am, if your child will be absent due to illness or any other reason. It is necessary that you inform us of any illness your child may have, even if they are not at school. Please make sure to write down the name of any illness or condition when diagnosed by your doctor and provide that information to the preschool office as soon as possible. There are certain communicable conditions that must be documented and the preschool families notified of, as required by State licensing. These illnesses include, but are not limited to: Strep Throat, Chicken Pox, Pink Eye and head lice. Your privacy will be respected at all times and we appreciate your cooperation. **THE ABOVE COMPLIES WITH EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE REGULATIONS.**

MEDICATION POLICY

We **do not** administer medications. If your child becomes sick at school, you will be called to pick him or her up. He or she will be brought to the preschool office for supervision and care until your arrival. Please have a plan for picking your child up in the event of an illness or injury. If you are unavailable, we will contact someone on the emergency form to come for him or her.

In the event of sudden illness or injury which would warrant professional attention, “911” will be called. In the event of a child ingesting a foreign substance, the Poison Control Center will be called. A staff person with CPR and First Aid training is always available. In the case of accidental injury that is non-life threatening, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent, then an emergency contact. If we can’t reach any of the above we will call the child’s physician. Until the arrival of a parent, or emergency contact, the Director will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of the child.

If your child has severe allergies to any foods or insects, or has a medical condition that could be serious at times (asthma or diabetes), you should provide the school with emergency treatment procedures and/or products (Epi-Pen or insulin booster). These will only be used in severe emergency situations when waiting for paramedics is not the safest alternative.

CLINICS

Several clinics, such as vision and speech screenings, will be held throughout the year to assure the well---being of the children. Parents will be notified in advance of the particulars of such screenings.

CHILD ABUSE POLICIES

Mandating Reporting

“As professionals in contact with young children and their families, we at the preschool are required by law to help the Child Protective Services (CPS) become aware of children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors; as well as day care/child care workers, are mandated reporters.” Thus, it is the policy of Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool program to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to CPS, , and the Department of Child Care Licensing immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone. Our school will offer full cooperation of its staff during the investigation of the reported incident. A staff member should follow these steps if abuse/neglect is suspected:

Definitions

Child Abuse is the non---accidental commission of any act by a caretaker that causes or creates a substantial risk of harm to a child’s physical and emotional well---being, including sexual abuse.

Child Neglect is the failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, safety, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential care.

Reasonable Cause means that after examining all the facts in a particular situation, most people with similar training and experience would also suspect abuse and/or neglect.

Parental Child Abuse

The following procedure has been established regarding the reporting and/or recording of suspected child abuse and neglect:

1. Any staff person that suspects a child has come to school abused or neglected, must reports that information to the director.
2. It is the responsibility of the director to contact CPS.

Institutional Child Abuse

It is the policy of the preschool program that there shall be no corporal punishment of children. No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliations, or verbal abuse, including, but not limited to, the denial of food. It is the policy of the preschool program that no one have unmonitored contact with the children at any time. Staff must be in sight/sound of each other at all times.

The following procedure has been established regarding the steps taken if a staff member is suspected of abusing and/or neglecting a child at the preschool program:

1. Whoever has reasonable cause to believe that a staff member or family day care provider may have been abusive or neglectful to a child (ren) shall immediately notify their supervisor and/or director.
2. The director will prepare, within 24 hours, but no later than 36 hours, a written report of the situation, the report shall include dates, times, names of all parties involved (adults and children), places, and description of incident.

3. The director must immediately notify the executive director or designee, the executive director or designee will assess the situation and, if warranted, report the suspected abuse or neglect to CPS.
4. The suspected or alleged employee or family day care provider shall immediately be removed from working directly with children until a written investigation has been completed by CPS, and authorized to return as appropriate, the employee will be paid only after an unsubstantiated report is made, and employee will then receive back wages.
5. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Phone Numbers of Services Involved in Abuse/Neglect Cases

- **Child Protective Services** 1-888-SOS-CHILD
- **Department of Child Care Licensing** 602-364-4768

POLICY ON RELEASING CHILDREN

Only the authorized parent(s) or others identified by the parents can pick up a child. A signed form is on file in the child's folder listing other authorized persons. Under no circumstances can a child be released to anyone not on the signed form. Photo Identification will be asked for if the person is not known to the staff.

CHILD BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY

At Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool we have some basic rules for the health and safety of the children. We try to arrange the environment to avoid problem situations. We tailor our expectations to fit the development levels of the children to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behavior. Teachers receive ongoing staff training in the area of positive approaches to discipline and strategies to use with challenging behaviors, including the use of "Conscious Discipline". Children participate in establishing school rules and policies as appropriate for their classroom.

We do intervene; we do not use corporal punishment, or spanking. A child is **never** subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse. A child is **never** denied food or force feeding as a form of punishment. A child is **never** punished for wetting, soiling, or not using the toilet. (These are in accordance to licensing regulations.)

We encourage children to develop their own control, autonomy, management of feelings, problem solving, and find their own rewards in cooperative social behavior. The underlying goal of all discipline at the preschool is to help children develop inner self---controls to replace adult---maintained external controls. Whenever a conflict arises we support children in finding their own solutions, while also promoting the development of self---control and empathy within each individual child. Teachers set clear, consistent limits and strive to develop close, nurturing relationships with all children enrolled. We avoid the use of the words "no" and "don't" unless a child is in danger, and even then follow it with a reason, such as "that isn't safe" or "I can't let you hit Susan with the block because it hurts her." School rules mostly relate to health and safety. Teachers avoid ultimatums that force power struggles.

Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool's approach to behavior guidance (discipline) is based on the acceptance of a wide range of children's feelings and the encouragement of self--- control. Respect for each other and the environment are emphasized through the development of social skills such as turn---taking, helping and cooperation. Children are encouraged, individually and as a group, to generate possible solutions to conflicts, to predict various outcomes, and to choose alternative behaviors. We seek to balance the needs of the child for autonomy and individual attention, with the needs of the group for the consistent expectations which embrace a sense of fairness.

Our goal is to help children learn to control their own behavior. Therefore, we emphasize the use of active listening to help children understand and accept feelings; and the use of inductive reasoning to teach the child the consequences of behavior. Children are encouraged to use their own words to settle differences with peers.

Behaviors which might prove harmful to the child and/or their peers will not be accepted. If serious discipline problems occur regularly, the teacher will confer with parents and the Director. There are times when it may be necessary for a parent to pick up a child who is having a very difficult day. If on a regular basis your child needs the complete attention of one faculty member, we will contact you and set up a conference. At the conference we will set goals, make recommendations for implementing them, and a time frame will be set. While we welcome every child here at Pinnacle, we want the faculty/child ratio to meet every child's needs. At the discretion of the Director, recommendation of the teacher, and in consultation with the parents, the Director has the option to transfer a child to another class or to request the child be removed from the program.

We work as a team with other teachers and with parents. Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions regarding classroom and behavior management with the classroom teachers and/or director. We analyze possible reasons for the behavior problems and make whatever adjustments in the environment that we can. We offer choices, try to redirect activity, point out natural or logical consequences of different behaviors, help the child individually or in a group to problem solve. We give hugs and words of encouragement.

The following general behavior management strategies are frequently used at the preschool:

- Positive statements are made which tell the child the correct thing to do. For example: "Turn the pages carefully," rather than "Don't tear the book!"
- Positive redirection is used to clarify when and where a certain behavior is acceptable. i.e., "Save your running until we go outside" instead of "No running inside!"
- Feelings are validated, and children are guided to socially acceptable means of expressing anger and frustration, such as using words, tearing newspaper, pounding play dough or a pillow.
- The "deed" is separated from the "doer," relaying the message that "I like and accept you unconditionally but I do not like what you did."
- Behavior we want to see continued is reinforced. Examples of positive reinforcers include a smile, a "thank you," and other words of encouragement, such as "Let's try it together."

Sometimes a child may display individual need that are beyond the scope of our program and/or the expertise of the teachers. If the child's teacher and the director feel that s/he would benefit from additional services, they will notify the parents and make recommendations. Behavioral problems that result in injury to other children or adults or require excessive one-on-one staffing to prevent frequent disruptions of the group routines are responded to as outlined in the referral/termination policy of the preschool.

POLICY TO AVOID SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT POLICY

Termination is always a last resort action which is carried out only when the director and teachers feel that such action is in the best interest of the child or the other children enrolled. If the preschool is unable to meet the needs of the child and/or family, every effort will be made to refer the parent to a more appropriate program for their child. The circumstances under which a child may be terminated are explained below.

1. The child exhibits extremely aggressive behavior which endangers other children and/or staff.
2. The child's health and safety at the preschool cannot be assured due to circumstances such as impulsive, risk-taking behavior.
3. Unwillingness of the parent(s) to work with teachers in the management of their child's behavior, and/or refusal to follow the preschool's recommendations for outside support services.

4. The child's developmental needs are not being met at the preschool due to general immaturity. Behavior indicative of a child's immaturity may include severe ongoing separation issues, excessive need for teacher attention, and inability to function independently or with the group.
5. The child has individual special needs which require accommodations causing an undue burden on the preschool.
6. If suspension or termination is due to the child's behavior, Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool will give specific examples, and let parents know whether we will accept the child back if he receives counseling, or sees his doctor, or some other change occurs. Parents will receive a written explanation of the reasons why, and the circumstances under which the child may return. Recommendations
7. For return will be made by the referral services in consultation with Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool.
8. Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool will prepare the child being terminated with sensitivity and consideration of their developmental ability. Children in the preschool program would be informed in an age appropriate manner that the child will be attending another school.
9. Parent's display of inappropriate behavior towards staff or children. May include: disrespectful language, disregarding program policies, verbal and/or physical harassment or any unlawful behavior.
10. Falsifying information on child enrollment forms.

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO PARENTS/REFERRAL SERVICES

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool program shall use the following procedures for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services for their child should the staff feel that an assessment for such services would benefit the child. Whenever any staff member is concerned about a child's development or behavior and feels there is a need for further evaluation, they will confer with their teaching partners and then will review the information with the director and our Developmental Specialist. If there is agreement, the classroom teacher is requested to complete an observation report and review the child's record prior to making a referral.

Referral Meeting with Parent(s)

Parents will be notified of the situation and of all ongoing developments by either the teacher or the Developmental Specialist. A parent conference(s) will be scheduled as soon as possible to discuss the concerns. Parents will be given, in writing: the reason(s) for recommending additional services, a brief summary of the preschool's observations related to the referral, and any efforts the preschool made to accommodate the child's needs. The Developmental Specialist or classroom teacher will also provide the parents with specific referrals. We will offer referrals to parents for evaluations, diagnostic and therapeutic services. It is the parent's responsibility to share pertinent information with their child's teacher, to follow through on the referral recommendation, and to request additional conferences with the teachers as they feel this is needed. We will work collaboratively with support services to implement a plan to meet the child's developmental needs both at school and at home including consultation and education training if needed.

Follow-up to the Referral

The Developmental Specialist or classroom teacher will, with parental permission, contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the preschool. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from this agency or is ineligible to receive services, the preschool shall review the child's progress at the preschool every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

Record of Referrals

The Developmental Specialist will maintain a written record of any referrals, including the parent conference and results. A referral checklist will be kept in the child's record.

SUPERVISION POLICY

Before children arrive at school, the classroom teachers and playground supervisor will complete the following daily safety check list indoor and outdoor.

1. All safety plugs and electric outlets covered, heat/AC, water temp, and toilets, refrigerator, phone, etc. in working order
2. All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and stored properly
3. Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground
4. Supplies checked – first aid box, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
5. Daily monitoring of environment – spills, sand, etc. – other serious problems reported to maintenance

Daily sign-in policy is maintained. Children are signed in and out on a daily basis. Records are kept. Daily attendance is completed by the classroom teacher.

Upon daily arrival at the preschool, each child is observed by a teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities. The family will supplement these observations as needed.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending the preschool. At least two staff will always be available at any one time. The classroom teachers will regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition time and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

All emergency problems will be reported to the office and the director will be notified immediately.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Information contained in child's record and staff files shall be privileged and confidential. Unauthorized removal of records or unauthorized divulgence of parents, staff or program's confidential information is a strict policy of the preschool program.

Violation of these rules is considered serious and will result in discharge without prior warning. All staff and student observers must comply with these professional ethics at all times and never discuss children, families or staff elsewhere. Observations made in the classroom and all information discussed at staff meetings and at staff trainings are to be kept in strict confidence. Student observers should use a "pseudonym" for children in their observation forms, journal entries, etc. and the word "teacher" to describe any staff.

Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool does not release information in a child's record to anyone without parental written consent. The child's parent or guardian shall, upon request, have access to his or her child's record.

ASSESSMENT

At Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool the Focused Portfolio system for authentic classroom assessment is used. With Focused Portfolios, teachers are asked to authentically assess children by observing them in everyday interactions in the classroom. A portfolio is put together for each child using this planned collection of “documentation” of a child. Documentation is evidence of a child’s experience and includes photos of the child in action, and/or work samples that the child produced. To go along with each photo and work sample, the teacher writes an “anecdote” – a note describing what was happening with the child at the time the photo was taken or the work sample was made. Teachers collect documentation in four categories: favorites, friends, family and developmental milestones.

These developmental milestones have been adapted from the NAEYC Developmental Milestones and the Arizona State Preschool Standards. The Portfolio will be presented to parents during conference time and parents are invited to reflect and goal set with the teachers. There is a Portfolio Presentation Party at the end of the school year with parents, children and teachers. The Portfolios stay at the preschool as long as your child is a student and becomes a continuous record of your child’s growth and development. When a child leaves the program, the portfolio will go home with the family.

Throughout the year, we will be busy overseeing your child and documenting his/her progress. As teachers, our knowledge of each child helps us to plan appropriately a challenging curriculum to tailor and meet each child’s strengths, needs and interests. Assessment is defined as the process of observing, recording and documenting what children do, know and understand.

All information collected is held in a confidential manner.

We use these steps in our assessment process:

- Collect facts—all information secured in file folder;
- Analyze and evaluate the collected data on a weekly basis. Collected data includes but is not limited to, information put in child’s portfolio;
- Use what we learned to plan for individual child or group;
- Results are used to support curriculum goals and individual learning;
- Results may be used to identify children in need of referral services;
- Results may be used to communicate with families which are sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and languages.

Assessment information includes:

- Child Portfolios – tools may include checklists, social inventory, anecdotal records, progress reports,
- samples of work, drawing, paintings, writing, stories, block building, sample work of writing, drawings, paintings, block play constructions, stories, poems, etc. – parents are welcome to view their child’s portfolio at any time;
- Photos included to support their work;
- Assessment tools are used to inform parents meeting their family culture, experience and language needs;
- Daily classroom discussions;
- Project work – documentation panels;
- Portfolio Presentations – completed on each child in January and May of each year. Parents also have an opportunity to sign up for a parent/teacher conversations held in January to discuss the child’s report and collaborate on goals for the child;
- All educators, parents, specialists, and consultants are given the opportunity to contribute to the portfolio.

TOILET TRAINING

The preschool does not provide diapering area facilities for children who are not fully toilet trained. The preschool will be in full compliance with Child Care Licensing Policy and be consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities.

Children must be reliably toilet trained to attend Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool. After the first week of school, four "accidents" within a month will be considered not reliably toilet trained and the child may be disenrolled at the discretion of the director.

Because of licensing regulations, we assume that children will be able to pull down and pull up their own pants and will be able to wipe themselves. It is our policy that teachers not assist with this process. Occasional accidents will be handled in a positive and non-threatening manner.

If any child after admission to the preschool appears to be not fully toilet trained, the following may apply:

- The director and/or classroom teachers will make contact with the parents
- There may be granted a period of adjustment for 1 week.
- At the end of the adjustment period, removal of the child from the program may be required if the child is not fully trained
- Upon consultation with the director and classroom teachers, the child's place will be held up to one month and the child may re-enter when completely trained
- There will be no tuition refund during the period of absence and tuition will continue to be due.

All children are required to have an extra set of clothes at the preschool. A box of extra underwear and socks are also available if needed.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions work better when we know what to expect. By planning transitions, we can help children adjust to new settings and approach new experiences in a positive way.

Transitions happen when:

- Children enter a program for the very first time
- Children go from preschool to kindergarten
- Children move to a different community
- Children attend more than one program

The teachers welcome new children and parents into the program in the following ways:

- Registration and tour of preschool – parent and child
- Family Welcome Days – held the first week of school – children and parent visit classrooms and spend half the day
- "All About Me Books" – bringing the home/school experience – each child has own special book
- Information obtained on each child included on the enrollment forms – special interests, activities, temperament, check list, etc.

On-going communication includes:

- Daily greeting and good-bye of all children and parents
- Weekly or, if needed, daily discussion with parents on child's progress/concerns. Classroom teachers are always available for weekly via email, telephone and face to face communication. Please contact classroom teacher to set up face to face meeting.
- Daily email home to parents of activities that happened in the classroom
- Parent resource materials available on a variety of topics as well as resources in the community

HELP WITH SEPARATION ISSUES

We understand young children often have difficulty with separation. We want to reassure you that we are always ready to talk to you and comfort your child.

Always say good---bye with a kiss, hug and a wave! Be firm, but friendly about leaving. If your child whines or clings, prolonging the good---bye will only make it harder for yourself and your child.

Saying good-bye

- Be consistent
- Follow the same routine each day.
- Always say good-bye

We are there to help during these transition times and help to comfort your child once you leave. We offer comforting words such as, “I know it’s hard to say good---bye.” Once you have gone through your good---bye routines a few times, your child will get to know what to expect and the good---byes will be less difficult. After a short period of time, your child’s anxiety about you leaving ends quickly after you leave. Should this not be the case, we want you to know that we would call you to let you know how he/she is doing.

Your child will pick up on your confidence about having chosen a good place to him/her to be while you are away. Good feelings are contagious. So the first step in adjusting to saying good---bye is to be sure you are comfortable with your decision to enroll your child in our program.

Please let us know if we can be of further help. We want you to know that separation adjustment is normal and we have the experience to help you and your child ease through this transition time.

End of the Program

- Prepare for children “moving on” using books, music and games
- All other children leaving the program – a special good---bye activity is planned to help the children make a smooth transition
- Children/parents invited back to visit
- Information shared on children with local schools with parental consent

More information about transitioning to kindergarten will be provided to parents of PreK Students during Parent/Teacher Conversations in January.

PET POLICY

The classroom teacher and/or the director will be responsible for checking the appropriate care instructions for pets both indoor and out. All animals requiring immunizations will require proof of immunizations and be in good health and free of any diseases which can be transmitted to humans. All pets will be secured in clean living quarters. Children and staff will follow proper hand washing after feeding or handling pets and equipment. Program staff must make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal.

NUTRITION POLICY

We provide opportunities for children to learn about healthy food choices. Parents provide snacks. Children younger than four years are not to bring and are not provided the following: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Water is provided for snack. Clean sanitary drinking water is available to children throughout the day

The preschool takes care in the selection, preparation and presentation of any special foods prepared at the program. We ask parents to join our efforts to promote good eating habits and good food choices with any food coming into the school such as snacks, lunch or food for special celebrations. The preschool maintains a list of nutritional information, menu ideas and literature on child nutrition. This is part of our NAEYC accreditation standards. Staff also receives training on USDA nutrition guidelines to promote healthy growth and development.

SNACK POLICY

As an accredited school, our curriculum requires to educate about good eating habits. Having healthy snacks in the classroom will help to achieve this. Snacks are provided by each parent for their own child. You will be asked to provide healthy snack items such as crackers, fruits or vegetables for your child each day. With the collaboration of Pinnacle families and staff, the school also recognizes and addresses the increasing number of serious allergies in our student population. We will attempt to eliminate or minimize allergens wherever possible. Pinnacle will remain a Peanut and Tree Nut Free Zone.

Parents are asked to send a snack each day with their child in a Ziploc bag or reusable container with their child's name clearly written on the outside of the bag.

LUNCHTIME

For those children staying for lunch, please send a lunch from home (including a water or 100% fruit juice). We recommend a variety of sandwiches, cut up vegetables, fruit, and yogurt. We do not have the ability to refrigerate all lunches, so please place an ice pack in your child's lunch. Lunches can be stored in your child's cubby. The simpler the lunch, the better. Any child who is in a PreK class or scheduled to stay for Extended Day should bring a lunch. Since good nutrition is an important focus of our program, we ask that water or 100% fruit juice be sent in lunches.

LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

Thirst Quenchers

Milk	Pineapple/Orange Juice – low sugar	Apple Juice – low sugar
Orange Juice – low sugar	Tomato Juice	Cranberry Juice – low sugar
Water		

Fruit Goodies

Banana Slice or Halves	Sliced Peaches/wedges	Dried Peaches
Melon Cubes	Applesauce	Dried Pears
Strawberries	Grapefruit sections	Fresh Pineapple sticks
Orange Wedges	Raisins	Pitted Plums
Fruit Cocktail	Apple slices/wedges	Tangerine sections
Pears		Cantaloupe

Munchies

Graham Crackers
 Saltine Crackers
 Pumpkin Bread
 Raisin Bread

Muffins

Banana Bread
 Date Bread

Cinnamon Toast Squares

Raisin Cookies
 Fruit Cookies

Lunches

Thermos of Soup
 Vegetable Slices
 Yogurt

Turkey Sandwich Pita

Macaroni and Cheese
 Grilled Cheese
 Tuna Salad

Lettuce and Tomato Sandwich

Egg Salad or Chicken Salad
 Pita bread and hummus
 Tortilla and cream cheese

FOOD BROUGHT FROM HOME

The program will supplement a child's home---provided meal if the nutritional content appears to be inadequate or if a child forgets his/her lunch. The parent or legal guardian will be informed by the teacher if food brought from home is inadequate on a regular basis, and a list of suggested food items will be discussed. The recommended food list is in the parent handbook and posted at the preschool. Staff will check for food allergies before providing any supplemental food. In this facility, food may be brought from home under the following conditions: for special occasions and for lunch.

1. Perishable food brought from home to be shared with other children must be store brought and in its original package.
2. Lunch and snack foods brought from home will meet with the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food program for the types of foods and portion sizes. They will be prepared and transported in a sanitary fashion, including maintenance of safe food temperatures for perishable items. Classroom teacher will check the arrival temperature and storage requirements of food brought from home. Food that is not at a safe temperature when it arrives will be discarded. Perishable foods that require refrigeration will be kept below 40 degrees F and perishable hot foods will be kept above 140 degrees until served. Food brought from home will be labeled with the child's name, the date, the type of food and the need for temperature control. Thermometers maintained in all refrigerators.
3. Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.
4. Leftover food will be discarded. The only food that may be returned to the family is food that does not require refrigeration or holding at a hot temperature, that came to the facility in a commercially--wrapped package, or food that was never opened.
5. No peanuts allowed. Food must be cut in small bite sizes, for example, grapes cut in half, apples sliced, meat and cheeses cut.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, PUBLIC SAFETY AND PEST CONTROL POLICY

The preschool facility and outdoor play areas are entirely smoke---free. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children. The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests and poisonous plants along with environmental hazards such as air pollution, lead and asbestos. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Pesticide Application will only occur after a 48 hour posted notice on the preschool campus.

The preschool program prohibits smoking, firearms and other significant hazards that pose risks to children and adult. Outdoor activity is limited as a precaution during any smog or air pollution alerts.

PROTECTION FROM HEAT POLICY

Extreme heat can be as hazardous to children as extreme cold. When playing outdoors in warm weather children should wear lightweight cotton clothing. Drinking cool beverages, especially those with low sugar content (like water) also helps the body to maintain a comfortable temperature. The heat index is an indication of how the temperature “feels” and is a combination of actual heat and relative humidity. A heat index of 80 Fahrenheit or below is considered comfortable, and safe for children to play outdoors. A heat index between 80---90 degrees F means that children should be closely observed while outdoors, and outdoor play time should be limited. When the heat index is above 90 degrees F young children should not play outdoors, and older children should only play outdoors for short periods of time. Again, local weather reports are a valuable resource for obtaining heat index information.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

The preschool does not provide transportation. Parents are responsible for transporting children to the preschool via personal vehicles. Preschool staff may arrange for education of families and staff by local public safety personnel on appropriate care seat safety of children and adults.

Motor vehicle---related injuries are the greatest threat to a child’s life. To reduce the chances of injury, the following policies and procedures:

- Please watch your children at all times in the parking lot. Please do not allow your children to play in parking lot area
- Please drive slow in parking lot and watch behind you at all times when backing up.
- Parents or designated adult must accompany the children into the preschool at arrival time and notify teachers of child’s arrival. Same procedures apply at pick---up times. Parents must sign out d a i l y .

Parents are advised to follow State Law requirements on appropriate car seat and seat belt laws for children and adults. No child will be left alone in a vehicle unsupervised by an adult.

USE OF MEDIA IMAGES

Media images (i.e. photographs, videotaping) are used by the program for documentation of the classroom program, research, advertising and news reports. In the enrollment forms, parents are asked for permission to use media images of their child. It is understood that photographs and/or videotapes of classroom activities made by parents are only for their own home use.

INSURANCE

An adequate insurance policy is carried on all students and staff. It includes liability coverage for classroom and playground. A Copy of the insurance policy is available in the preschool office for viewing.

CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES

Kiva or Circle Time

The Kiva is where we spend time listening to each other speak, singing songs, reading stories and sharing. The children try their very hardest to sit still, they learn to raise their hand when they have something to say and speak with confidence.

- Share** – we learn to sit quietly and listen to our friends. We learn to find our voice and share things that are important to us. The classrooms all have a Share Bag that is sent home with the children. Children are encouraged to pick something special and meaningful to them that they may share with the class.
- Songs** – we learn many songs, finger plays and dances
- Stories** – the children can sit in the Kiva area anytime and select a book. Stories may be read during free play and often the classrooms close the day with a storybook.
- Vocabulary** – Language development is enhanced through verbally communicating and listening to others; role playing and dramatic play.

Exploration Time/Work Centers

A majority of the day is spent in exploration time where the children are allowed to pick their own activities and float freely from one activity to another. Items are carefully selected by the teachers to prompt investigative and learning experiences.

- Dramatic Play** – our dress up areas, play kitchen, cars, plastic animals, stuffed animals, puppets and dolls lend themselves to their imagination
- Science Projects** – Concepts are introduced using experiments, textures, measuring and natural life. Science concepts are developed by observing seasonal changes; plant life; animal behavior; and taking nature walks to observe plant and animal life.
- Art Activities** – Art experiences emphasize the process rather than the product. Time, space and the freedom to work independently help children increase their attention span, improve fine motor skills and form a sense of independence. Art activities may include: drawing with crayons, pencils, chalk, and markers; painting with brushes, feathers and sponges; printing with rubber stamps, potato shapes and utensils; cutting and gluing, creating collages from any combination of fabrics, pictures, 3---Dimensional items, etc.
- Analytical Development** – Math skills are being formed while children play. These activities involve: puzzles; pattern manipulatives; light tables; Lego blocks; sorting and categorizing; counting and comparing; number symbols and quantity; and graphing

Music

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool provides a variety of music experiences including, singing, moving, playing instruments and listening to music which enhance brain development, physical development and music appreciation. We also welcome visiting musicians and artists that share their talents with our students.

Art Studio (Atelier)

Once a week, children will visit our art studio, the Atelier. Our studio teachers provide extensive art materials that are both traditional and also unique. This special place is very important to the children at Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool. The word atelier, which derives from the French language, means work room or artist's studio. Historically, ateliers have served not only as a place where seamstress, carpenters, painters, sculptors and other artists could create their products, but also as a place that could offer inspiration and answers to their questions. We believe research and self--expression were linked to the original concept of atelier. This concept led us to create a place where children use art as a tool to represent their ideas and feelings. Here you will find a place where children want to be, a place where every child will find just the right "something" that will help them to grow, to understand, to communicate and to express their creative sides.

Snack Time

Snack time is used for socializing as well as nourishment. Children learn to clean up after themselves. Snack time is also used as a time for reflection and where a prayer is shared.

Outdoor Classroom/Playground

Learning doesn't stop when the kids go outside. Just like the classroom, the playground is divided into specific areas that encourage learning through play. Your child can choose from a variety of activities, including riding tricycles, nature study, water tables, and imaginative play alongside some great sliding, climbing, jumping and much more. Throughout the school, there is an effort to create experiences for all of the children in which they interact, explore and use their imaginations.

Field Trips

Due to our brief daily schedules, the preschool does not usually participate in school--sponsored field trips off campus. However, there may be times classes will leave the immediate campus on foot to enjoy our beautiful church facility and grounds.

RELIGIOUS VALUES

Religious values are not studied at Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool; they are lived. Children are met on their level, and teachers show through their own example Christ's way of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Classrooms visit the Church Sanctuary every month to participate in Little Lambs led by the Director of Children's Ministry. They share bible stories and visit with the children. Each of us is dedicated to modeling the values set forth by the Church.

CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

The Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool curriculum is based on the knowledge that young children learn through active exploration of their environment. This occurs optimally when their physical needs are met and they feel emotionally secure. Instilling in children a sense of security and trust will be of utmost importance. Staff will create classroom learning environments appropriate to the developmental needs of the various age groups and will provide for the needs of individual children. Statements of Intent (classroom goals) are available for each classroom.

History of Reggio Emilia: Immediately after World War II a town in Northern Italy called Reggio Emilia decided to bring hope to their families. Out of the ruins, they constructed quality preschools for their children. In present times, Reggio Emilia has been broadly recognized for having some of the best preschools in the world.

The Reggio Emilia approach to education is committed to the creation of a learning environment that will enhance and facilitate children's construction of his or her own powers of thinking through the combination of all the expressive, communicative and cognitive languages.

The Reggio Emilia approach is based upon the following principles:

Emergent Curriculum: An emergent curriculum is one that builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from the talk of children, through community or family events, as well as the known interests of children (puddles, shadows, dinosaurs, etc.). Collaborative planning is an essential component of the emergent curriculum. Teachers work together to formulate hypotheses about the possible directions of a project, the materials needed, and possible family and/or community support and involvement.

Project Work: "A project is an in---depth investigation of a topic worth learning more about. The investigation is usually undertaken by a small group of children, sometimes by a whole class, and occasionally by an individual child. The key feature of a project is that it is a research effort deliberately focused on finding answers to questions about a topic posed by the children, teachers or parents." (Lilian Katz)
The length of the project may vary from a couple of weeks to several months. Project work is only one aspect of the curriculum. There are many learning areas and activities where children are actively engaged. They include singing time, block building, dramatic play, group story time, snack time, outdoor play to name a few. "The extended time and in---depth nature of projects enables rich documentation of children's growth and development of skills." (Katz) Documentation panels are developed which tell the story of the evolving project. With teacher narratives, photographs, conversations and sample drawings the history of the project comes alive. Children, teachers, parents and visitors can see first-hand what the children are learning and how the investigation is proceeding.

Throughout a project, teachers help children make decisions about the direction of study, the ways in which the group will research the topic, the representational medium that will demonstrate and showcase the topic and the selection of materials needed to represent the work. Long-term projects or progettazione, enhance lifelong learning.

Representational Development: Consistent with Howard Gardner's notion of schooling for multiple intelligences, the Reggio Emilia approach calls for the integration of the graphic arts as tools for cognitive, linguistic, and social development. Presentation of concepts and hypotheses in multiple forms of representation ----- print, art, clay, construction, drama, music, puppetry, and shadow play ----- are viewed as essential to children's understanding of experiences.

Collaboration: Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to dialogue, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work. Within the Reggio Emilia approach, multiple perspectives promote both a sense of group membership and the uniqueness of self. There is high emphasis on the collaboration among home, school and community to support the learning of the child.

Teachers as Researchers: The teacher's role within the Reggio Emilia approach is complex. Working as co-teachers, the role of the teacher is first and foremost to be that of a learner alongside the children. The teacher is a researcher, a resource and guide as she/he lends expertise to children. Within such a teacher-researcher role, educators carefully listen, observe, and document children's work and the growth of community in their classroom and provoke, co-construct, and stimulate thinking, and children's collaboration with peers. Teachers are committed to reflection about their own teaching and learning.

Documentation: Similar to the portfolio approach, documentation of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. Pictures of children engaged in experiences, their words as they discuss what they are doing, feeling and thinking, and the children's interpretation of experiences through the visual media are displayed as a graphic presentation of the dynamics of learning. Documentation is used as assessment and advocacy.

The Role of Three Teachers: Reggio Emilia schools believe that there are three primary teachers for our children. The first teacher is that of the parent, the second teacher is the classroom teacher and the third teacher is the environment.

The Role of the Parent: The active participation of parents in the life of the school is an essential component of the educational experience. Families are actively involved in meetings, conferences, celebrations and events. Parents become a part of the school by not only receiving feedback from teachers about their child's work but also when decisions about the school and about educational approaches are taken. Partnering with families is essential for consistent, positive experiences both at home and at school. Parents are aware of what is happening in the classroom through posting of daily journals, newsletters and e-mail communication. Teachers provide portfolio assessments on each child's development. This all supports an open environment of communication between the families and the teachers.

The Role of the Teacher: Teachers play a critical role in preparing your child for a lifetime of learning. All of our teachers are highly experienced educators in the development of young children. Our expectations are high and we demand nothing less than the following from our teaching teams:

- To help children see the connections in learning and experiences.
- To co-explore the learning experience with the children.
- To provoke ideas, problem solve, and conflict resolution.
- To take ideas from the children and return them for further exploration.
- To organize the classroom and materials to be aesthetically pleasing.
- To organize materials to help children make thoughtful decisions about the media.
- To help children express their knowledge through representational work.
- To document children's progress: journals, photographs, and portfolios.
- To have a dialogue about the projects with parents and other teachers.
- To foster a collaborative connection between home, school and community.

The Role of the Environment: The environment is designed to provide a variety of sensory experiences in an aesthetically pleasing manner, using both indoors and outdoors as learning spaces. Classrooms are light and bright, with large windows and doorways to the playground. Items found in nature are incorporated into the classroom materials and considered an important part of developing an appreciation for the world around us. Teachers carefully arrange the room and display all materials so that children can make thoughtful decisions when working and exploring. Documentation of children's works, plans, and collections that children have made are displayed at both the children's and adult eye level. Common space is available to all children in the classroom that includes a house area complete with dramatic play clothes, a mini atelier/art center with lots of clay and other mediums, a communication area containing reading and writing materials, and construction for block building along with manipulatives and puzzles. The classrooms provide an enriched environment that nourishes each child's development.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Children may work on drawings and paintings over many days and sometimes weeks. We focus on the process. Studio arts are a vital and vibrant part of our program. As children draw, paint, sculpt and work with clay and wire, they begin to represent ideas and their understanding of the world. Each child has a portfolio. Children are encouraged to revisit their work, make additions and corrections to their drawings/paintings. To that end, children's work remains at school and may not be sent home every day. We ask for your support and understanding of this concept so children do not feel pressured to produce a piece of artwork. Our approach is not "a make and take home" practice. We work at slowing children down, helping them see details and how things change over time. In the process, children think creatively, make decisions and problem solve.

Please join us in our adventure with your children this year and hope you are able to release your creative spirit here, too!

GUIDELINES FOR PRESCHOOL BASED ON THE ARIZONA STATE PRESCHOOL STANDARDS*

At Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool, experiences are presented in a developmental sequence and place learning in the context of play and meaningful activities. The mark of a superior teacher is the ability to select materials and interact with children in ways that motivate children to learn through their own play. The art of teaching is founded in a thorough understanding of child development, coupled with careful observation and documentation of a child's responses to materials and interactions. Experiences are that:

- Young children learn by doing and need to be provided with varied opportunities to explore and experiment with concepts through play and hands-on activities in the natural environment.
- Although children develop through a generally predictable sequence of steps and milestones, they may not proceed through these steps in the same way or at the same time. The younger the child, the greater their need for first-hand, sensory experiences.
- Through play experiences, preschool children constantly refine their skill development and understanding. As teachers observe children's play and development, they can identify the signals for providing new stimulation and challenges.
- Activities, environment, and materials may need to be adapted to meet children's individual needs, including modifications for children with disabilities.

Strategies for fostering learning in all curriculum areas include many, varied opportunities for children to:

PLAN: Children consider what they are going to do with the materials and how they are going to do it, to build a foundation for setting goals for themselves.

PLAY: Children use materials and make choices in ways that best suits their own personal curiosity and understanding, and allows them to experience joy in creating meaning for themselves.

REFLECT: Children recall/reflect on things that happened during their experiences, thereby reinforcing or questioning their understandings.

REVISIT: Children practice skills and replay their experiences over and over in many different ways and either confirm their understanding or adapt it based on new discoveries. As they explore, their understanding spirals; each new experience building on previous learning.

CONNECT: Children, with the guidance of highly trained teachers, create linkages among disciplines and areas of skill development.

* Taken from the Arizona preschool curriculum frameworks

CHILDREN'S NEEDS

CLOTHING – DRESS TO PLAY

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool values hands---on experiences. Frequently, these experiences are messy! Your child's school day will be much happier if he or she is wearing comfortable play clothes that can get dirty. (You will also be much happier if the clothing is easily laundered.) Each parent is asked to provide a seasonal change of clothing (shirt, pants, dress, socks, underwear, etc.) to be left in the classroom or cubby in the event of an "accident" or extra messy incident. Please label all clothing, including any sweaters or jackets

- Sneakers or shoes with rubber soles are required – no open toed shoes.
- Dress shoes, crocs, flip flops and cowboy boots are not permitted because they present a safety hazard, especially when climbing
- Special or dressy clothes should be reserved for use elsewhere. This type of clothing often inhibits a child from taking full advantage of the program
- A complete change of clothing is essential – please label all clothing with your child's name. Extra set of clothing to be stored at school
- Children should be sent to school in layered clothing to protect from excessive cold and/or heat
- During the winter months, children should be sent to school with warm jackets
- Parents should apply sunscreen before dropping off their child during warmer months

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are important times for preschoolers and the teachers will recognize each child's birthday in some way. We honor each child in the classroom on the school day closest to the child's birthday. FOOD, GOODY BAGS AND BALLOONS ARE NOT PERMITTED. Why? Our State Childcare License to operate prohibits serving children any food items prepared at home to the entire class. If we celebrated each birthday and holiday with sweets, children would be eating them every day (especially in classes with children in the same age range). An additional consideration is children's food allergies and medical conditions. We take seriously the responsibility of respecting and protecting all children. Some parents choose to donate a book or other item to the classroom (with your child's name and date of the donation), which is a remembrance that can be enjoyed for many years. If this is something you would like to do, you are welcome to confer with the teachers on your selection.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

At Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool we strive to honor the traditions of the children and families in the program. Holiday curriculum and celebrations are handled in response to child and family input. Teachers invite families to share seasonal and holiday traditions that have personal meaning to them. Children may bring items from home and talk about their family's special celebrations. We invite parents to share with us non---commercialized holiday traditions, customs, and activities.

Our goal is to ensure that children learn about various cultural traditions in developmentally appropriate and educational ways. We seek to avoid superficial stereotypes and to minimize differences in economic status by de---emphasizing materialism and commercialization. Instead, we concentrate on the aspects of love, family and the values that give meaning to each holiday.

We encourage parents to share a special story, song, musical instrument or food preparation activity with the children. Parents participating in the classroom help to transform our classroom groups into small communities of parents and teachers sharing in the care of children.

ALL ABOUT ME BOOKS

We ask parents to help their child create an "All about Me" book at home to share with the class. These special books to keep at school. Each child will have these books available to read at school and to share with friends. Parents will be emailed the template for the "All about Me" book in early August each year.

TOYS FROM HOME

Bringing toys from home is discouraged. Please leave personal toys at home or in the car rather than bringing them into the Preschool. When personal items are brought to school, they frequently get lost or broken. They can also cause disagreements and hurt feelings, and distract children from the wealth of materials and experiences available to them at school. Here are some examples of what not to bring: jewelry, games, action figures, collectible cards, videos, video games, violent books, etc.

Occasionally, children may want to bring a special book, a photo, a great find from nature, or some other “treasure.” We honor that delight and enthusiasm in children, and it's fine if your child brings a book or a natural object or some other “big excitement.” Please consider that the classroom is a busy space, with lots of children, so you may want to think twice about delicate items or family heirlooms.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Each child has a cubby with their name card in the cubby.

- **Extra Clothing** --- each child should keep a **complete** set of extra clothing at the Preschool. (Pants, Shirt, Underwear, Socks.)

Replace as needed

- **Backpacks** – backpacks and lunch boxes need to be able to fit in the cubbies.
- **Lost and Found** --- there is a lost and found trunk located in the preschool office. If your child is missing something check there first. The lost and found trunk will be emptied and its contents donated twice a year.

PART VI

PARENT COMMUNICATION, INVOLVEMENT AND RESOURCES

KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING OUR PRESCHOOL FAMILIES

As part of orientation and ongoing staff development new and existing staff will develop skills and knowledge to work effectively with our families. Program staff will use a variety of formal and informal strategies (including conversation) to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure, their preferred child---rearing practices and information families wish to share about their socio---economic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Program staff will actively use information about families to adapt the environment, curriculum and teaching methods to the families we serve...

To better understand the cultural backgrounds of children, families and the community, program staff will participate in community events, concerts, storytelling activities, or other events and performances designed for children and their families.

ROLE OF THE FAMILY

The Staff of Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool recognizes the vital role that families play in the school life of their children. For this reason, families are considered integral to all phases of the program. We use the term family rather than parents, to identify the range of family structures in which children live. Whether family includes two parents, one parent, grandparent, foster parent, relatives, or any other combination, the child's family is valued.

Family Responsibilities

Families are responsible for communicating with their child's teachers, and in helping to set goals and expectations for their child. Teachers have joint responsibility for these as well. It is the family's responsibility to keep your child's records current to reflect any significant changes as they occur; this includes telephone numbers, work location, emergency contacts, child's physician, child's health status, immunization record, family status, and other information relevant to your child's care. Families must cooperate with Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool in carrying out all governmental laws, rules and regulations affecting the operation of the Preschool. Any questions regarding the Preschool's policies and procedures should be directed to the Director.

Family Participation

Whether a parent, grandparent, guardian, or any other significant adult in a child's life, you are welcome, needed, and valued as an essential part of your child's education. Adult family members can volunteer and observe at any time. PPP welcomes participation and involvement by the child's family. Some examples of ways to become involved include: serving as a resource person within the classroom, sharing diverse ethnic practices, reading to children, dictating stories that children tell, assisting staff with projects within the preschool, and volunteering your help with a special skill you may have.

Family Conversations

Parent/Teacher Conversations are typically scheduled during January of each year to discuss children's developmental progress. Each classroom will have its own sign-up. Conversations may be arranged at any time during the year by staff or by the family, as the need arises. In addition, parents are encouraged to talk with their child's teacher briefly at drop-off or pick-up times.

These encounters should be brief because the child's teacher has the primary responsibility to care for and educate the children. If a greater length of time is needed than is allowed at drop-off or pick-up, please feel free to call the preschool and leave a message for the teacher to schedule a meeting, or simply email your child's teachers.

CENTER WIDE AND CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

Staff members seek the opportunity to communicate frequently with families concerning childrearing practices and to share specific ideas for promoting children's healthy development and learning. Within each classroom there will be a verbal and/or written system established for sharing day-to-day happenings. We use technology on a regular basis to communicate with our families. This may be through emails (sometimes with digital photos), documentation boards in the classrooms and entryways, and other things we may come across. Parents will be further informed about issues concerning children and families through periodic memos and postings. Your child's cubby will contain the work that your child has accomplished. Your child's work is often revisited day after day until he/she is completely satisfied with the end result.

Classroom E-mail Addresses

Each classroom will have access to email. Feel free to contact the teachers in your child's class directly via email for class info, updates on your child or to simply thank them for a job well done. Due to scheduling, these emails may not be answered right away, therefore if immediate assistance is needed, please call the front office at 480-585-9448 ext. 2.

Mini 3's

Quails: quails@pinnaclepres.org

3 Year Old's

Javelinas: javelinas@pinnaclepres.org

Geckos: geckos@pinnaclepres.org

Tortoise: tortoises@pinnaclepres.org

Desert Buddies: desertbuddies@pinnaclepres.org

Pre-K's

Owls: owls@pinnaclepres.org

Jackrabbits: jackrabbits@pinnaclepres.org

Roadrunners: roadrunners@pinnaclepres.org

FOSTERING TOLERANCE AND RESPECT

Children are born without biases about other people of any race, culture, gender or disability. We sometimes wonder if we can raise children free of prejudice by just leaving well enough alone and making sure not to pass on negative attitudes. Unfortunately, it doesn't work this way; society's messages are too pervasive. As parents and teachers, we need to take positive action if children are to grow up being comfortable with who they are and respectful of others.

We want to work with you to create a program that helps to counter society's message of bias and reflects the cultural background of all the children and families. To begin with, we choose books, dolls and even pictures on the wall with an eye to finding balance and showing children what they see too little of elsewhere. Are we doing this to be "politically correct?" Not really. We're committed to helping children grow up confident of their own identity, respectful of other people and aware of the rich diversity of their community and the world. We can only do this by working closely with our families, hearing your perspectives and finding out more about the cultural background that each child brings to the program.

CHILDREN'S FRIENDSHIPS

Children today are beginning earlier in social situations and they are spending more time with peers than they used to. Recent studies have found that some friendships formed in the early years of childhood are second only to family relationships in importance. From such findings comes a heightened awareness of the social and emotional importance of friendships in the early years.

Enrollment in an early childhood program offers children social experiences that might not be available to them in relationships with adults or siblings. With many friends her own age, a child encounters lots of opportunities to negotiate and compromise. Children are encouraged to express opinions and ideas, as well as to respect others.

Interaction with and acceptance by peers have long-term effects on a child's life. Preschoolers develop social competence in three main areas: initiating interactions, maintaining ongoing relationships and solving conflicts with other children. While some children easily join a group at play, others have difficulty. As adults, we can help young children learn social strategies for entering playgroups or for talking to other children about what they want. Watching for a few minutes and then saying "I'll be the big sister, okay?" works better than "Hey, let me do that!"

We need not be too concerned when children frequently change best friends. A friendship may last only for an afternoon of play. However, if the child does not seem to have any special friendships at school, he may benefit from one-on-one time with one of the other children outside of the early childhood setting. Playing together a few times outside of school often gives two children a level of comfort with each other that carries over to their time at school.

* Taken from *Family Friendly Communications for ECE*. NAEYC Publication by Deborah Diffily & Kathy Morrison.

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is published once per month and is emailed to parents via Constant Contact and also posted on the preschool website. We welcome and encourage parent submissions. We also have a monthly preschool blog on our website.

RESOURCES

Parent resources are available in the Preschool Office. These include books and professional referrals. The Pastors on staff of Pinnacle Presbyterian Church are also available to meet family or individual needs.

PARENT TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

Parent/Teacher Conversations are held in January. Parents will have an opportunity to meet with the classroom teachers. A portfolio will be given to parents prior to the meeting for viewing. This will be used as a guide for discussion. Parents may request to meet with the classroom teachers at other times during the year as well.

YOUR CHILD'S RECORDS

Information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. The preschool's staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

Access to the record – You should be able to have access to your child's records. The preschool must provide access within two business days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record, even if it is located in more than one location. The Preschool must have procedures regarding access, duplication and dissemination of children's records. They must maintain a written log which identifies anyone who has had access or has received any information out of the record. This log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the Preschool's records.

Charge for copies – The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in your child's record.

Transfer of the record – Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in care, the licensee can give you your child's record or transfer them to any other person the you identify. The center should ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the record.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAM

Providing information to the Department of Child Care Licensing – The licensee must make available to the Department any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. This includes information in your child's records. Authorized employees of the Department are not to remove identifying case materials from the center premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

Reporting abuse or neglect – All preschool staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to either Child Protective Services (CPS) or to the licensee's program administrator. The licensee must have written policies and procedures for reporting and must provide the written policy to you upon enrollment.

Notification of injury – The licensee must notify you immediately of any injury which requires emergency care. They must also notify you, in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

ANNUAL PARENT AND STAFF SURVEY

Parents and staff are asked to complete a survey at the end of each year. This information helps to assess how the program is meeting the needs of parents and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program to help set program goals for the next year. A copy of the report is made available to all parents and staff with suggested recommendations and improvements.

HOW TO HANDLE A PROBLEM OR COMPLAINT

In the event a parent has a concern regarding their child; or has an issue that involves a staff member; the following resolution procedures are recommended. Please remember that the Preschool staff always wants to work together with the families to do what is in the best interest of the child.

1. Arrange to have a conference with your child's teachers. This should be scheduled so that there is enough time to make progress on the issue. The child should not be present; and these meetings should always include a third party.
2. If a parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the first attempt at resolution, the Director of the program should be contacted. The Director will initially meet with each of the parties separately, and will then work towards a consensus and solution.
3. When the Director is not able to satisfy the parent, she will contact the Associate Pastor of the Church for assistance. The parent is always encouraged to contact the Pastor personally if they feel this will help their situation.
4. The final option for assistance in the resolution process is the Preschool Board of Directors. The Associate Pastor or Director can provide any needed contact information.

SENSITIVE ISSUES --- DIVORCED OR SEPARATED PARENTS

Pinnacle Presbyterian Preschool tries to be aware of and sensitive to the families we serve. If divorced or separated parents are sharing custody and there is some way the program can help make this easier (or avoid making the situation more difficult) please let us know. Please note, that without a legal document (i.e. copy of custody settlement or restraining order) we cannot presume one parent has more or less rights than the child's other parent.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES/PARENT COMMITTEES

The child's parent is the first and most important teacher! It is our hope that whenever possible, parents will be able to continue this vital involvement in their children's education by participating as classroom helpers or providing other volunteer support. This experience allows parents the opportunity to really know what children do at preschool. It is also a time when parents may bring their own talents and interests to share. Most important of all, many children enjoy having a parent in the classroom.

Each classroom will have varied opportunities for participation. Please ask your child's teacher what you can do to help, or look for notices regarding ways to help in other areas of the program. Occasionally, teachers may ask parents to do a project at home with children. We hope that you will take joy in this kind of participation, as well. Any parent that plans to spend time on campus volunteering must have a signed "Volunteer Agreement Form" on file prior to working with children. In addition to volunteering in our school, parents have access to observe in all areas of the school at any time during hours of operations. We recommend that you notify the administrator prior to your arrival so you are aware of certain class schedules and can get the most from your visit. Outside visitors, however, shall be supervised and accompanied by preschool personnel while touring the campus.

Preschool Board of Directors

The Preschool Board of Directors is composed of members of Pinnacle Presbyterian Church, members of the community, and preschool parents. The Board meets monthly in order to determine school policies and fees and to assist in fundraising and other activities needed by the Preschool. Its decisions are subject to the approval of the Session of Pinnacle Presbyterian Church.

Parent/Teacher Committees

Each year representatives from each classroom, as a group, assist the school in a variety of ways. Fundraising, organizing school photo sessions, and assisting with special events are just a few of the areas in which this group provides support. Look for the Parent/Teacher committee sign ups during Family Welcome Week and the first few weeks of school in the school entryway. Some of the committee groups in the past have included: Community Outreach, Garden, School Picture Day,

Friends of the Atelier, Pancake Breakfast, Book Fair and Hospitality just to name a few. There are many ways for parents to become involved in the Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool. We always welcome your ideas and suggestions. As we begin a new school year, we realize how greatly our program benefits from the support of our parents. Parents are strongly encouraged to become a member of a committee.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Come into the classroom to share your special skills, interests and experiences with the children. Possibilities:

- Read your favorite children's book
- Tell a story
- Assist with a studio arts lesson in drawing, painting, sculpture (no arts/craft project)
- Do some science or math experiments
- Show photos from a past trip
- Tell about your job, hobbies, etc.
- Cooking activities, holiday foods, ethnic recipes, healthy snacks
- Play an instrument, teach new songs
- Teach a dance or exercise program, yoga
- Share information about your culture/country, teach a language
- Talk about your favorite artists, musician, bring examples of their work
- Gardening and planting

Classroom volunteer times are coordinated with classroom teachers. Classroom volunteers don't often begin in the classroom until October, or whenever the classroom teachers feel the children have overcome any separation issues.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All Parents are expected to participate in the following:

1. Attendance at Family Welcome Days held in August each year.
2. Participation in all fundraising projects which provide needed financial assistance to the operation of the preschool as fees alone do not cover the full cost of operation.
3. Participation in such projects such as playground and fall/spring planting and clean-up, small painting projects, and other selected projects suggested by parents and staff.
4. Participation on a committee.
5. Each parent is required to sign a program/financial contract agreeing to all policies regarding tuition, late fees, change in schedule and the parent's responsibility to keep current all forms on file, including: health forms, fact sheet, emergency authorization, developmental history, all consent forms, etc.

PARENT BEHAVIOR IN THE PRESCHOOL

All adults in the preschool, including parents, are expected to behave in a pleasant, friendly and respectful manner towards children, teaching and administrative staff, parents and visitors. It is expected that there will be no physical discipline of children and no verbal threats toward or humiliation of children, staff members or parents in the program. Incidences of such behaviors will be addressed by the director and may be grounds for termination of enrollment.

CLOSING STATEMENT

A strong home and school environment is essential when building a good environment for young children. All of our staff will try to do our very best to keep you informed and involved in our preschool program. Clearly, ongoing communication and support from both families and staff make the connection between home and school a two-way street. Please share with us information about your child and report any changes especially during a major crisis. Anything you share with us will be held in confidence. We hope to nurture mutual trust and respect at every opportunity. There will be many ways for parents to become involved in Pinnacle Presbyterian preschool program. We look forward to getting to know you and your family!