

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL  
PARENT HANDBOOK  
2008-09 STAFF**

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**Since it was founded in 1969, the  
First Presbyterian Preschool  
has been operating under the  
following  
Mission Statement and Philosophy**

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE A CHRIST-  
CENTERED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM  
THAT PROMOTES CHILDREN'S  
INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL,  
PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT  
THROUGH A WIDE VARIETY  
OF AGE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES**

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

**Our Preschool is a Christ centered program built on the words of Scripture: "...the greatest of these is love", (1 Corinthians 13:13). An atmosphere of peace and love enables children to grow to their full potential. We will love your child in a way that affirms his or her value. We will also help your child learn to love others.**

**Our program is designed to help children develop the skills necessary to make an effective transition to kindergarten. We believe each child is an individual and should grow at his/her own rate. To encourage this growth we plan a balance of age appropriate activities (active/quiet; individual/group; indoor/outdoor; structured/unstructured).**

**We seek to help your child grow intellectually. Throughout the school year we explore a variety of units of study, each of which is designed to help your child grow in self-understanding and in awareness of the world.**

**We seek to help your child grow socially, that is in his/her ability to function effectively as a member of a group.**

**We seek to help your child grow emotionally by providing a safe, secure and structured environment where your child can cultivate curiosity, enthusiasm and excitement for learning.**

**We seek to help your child grow physically. We provide regular times for physical movement, including structured activities such as games as well as opportunities for free play. We encourage fine motor development with activities such as cutting and writing, as well as gross motor development with activities such as hopping and skipping.**

**We seek to help your child grow spiritually, to understand that God created all things and loves all that he has made, including your child. It is a Christ-like love that pervades our program and holds all the activities and emphases together.**

## **SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**The First Presbyterian Preschool schedule is similar to the Branson Public School schedule.**

**Please make note of these dates on your calendar!**

**Aug. 25-29-----Teacher Work Week**  
**Aug. 27-----Parent Orientation Meetings**  
**Sept. 2-----School Begins for Classes 3A,3B,3C and 3D**  
**Sept. 3-----School Begins for Classes 4A,4B,4C and 4D**  
**Oct. 17, 23,and 24-----NO AFTERNOON CLASSES**  
**Nov. 26 thru 28---Thanksgiving Vacation NO SCHOOL**  
**Dec. 22 thru Jan. 4 ---Christmas Vacation NO SCHOOL**  
**Jan. 5 -----School Resumes**  
**Jan. 19-----Martin Luther King Day NO SCHOOL**  
**Jan. 23-----District Teacher Workshop NO SCHOOL**  
**Feb. 16-----President's Day NO SCHOOL**  
**March 12 and 13-----Teacher's Meetings NO SCHOOL**  
**March 16 Thru 20-----SPRING BREAK NO SCHOOL**  
**April 10-----Good Friday NO SCHOOL**  
**May 19-----Last Day of School for 3-year olds**  
**May 20-----Graduation Day for 4-year olds**  
**May 21----Preschool Roundup for 2008-09 new students**  
**May 22, 26 thru 29-----Teacher Work Week**

*\*Inclement Weather Policy will follow the Branson School's Policy. Check local radio and news for cancellations. Sign up to get the Pirate Cast instant messages for cancellations, visit [www.branson.k12.mo.us](http://www.branson.k12.mo.us) to sign up for this free service. The Branson schools will notify you of immediate cancellations and early dismissals. Snow days will be made up according to the Branson Public Schools schedule.*

**START AND DISMISSAL TIMES FOR 2008-2009**

**3-Year-Old Classes meet on Tuesday and Thursday.**  
**Morning Session: Begins at 9:00 AM, Ends at 11:30 PM**  
**Afternoon Session: Begins at 1:00 PM, Ends at 3:30 PM**

**4-Year-Old Classes meet on Mon-Wed-Friday.**

**Morning Session: Begins at 9:00 AM, Ends at 11:30 PM**  
**Afternoon Session: Begins at 1:00 PM, Ends at 3:30 PM**

**\*Students may be dropped off no earlier than 15 minutes prior to class start times.**

## **DAILY CLASSROOM SCHEDULE**

Our daily class time will include a portion of time spent in each of these important areas: free play, circle time, quiet time, snack time, craft time, and outside play-time, weather permitting.

### **CURRICULUM**

The children will participate in many learning activities during the year. These experiences will include science, art, social studies, numbers and language.

**FREE PLAY** is planned to include outside activities as well as inside activities. Free play is an important part of the child's learning process; therefore it is important that the child arrives on time for class. During this time he or she learns how to play with children in unstructured group situations.

**CIRCLE TIME** is devoted to unit lessons, stories, songs, and group games.

**QUIET TIME/SNACK PREP TIME:** When the snack is being prepared, the children will have a quiet time on their "sit-upons". While waiting their turns to use the restroom to wash their hands, they will enjoy a book, an individual game, or a toy.

**SNACK TIME** is not only for eating, but also for practicing good table manners and for having some "new taste" treats. Our basic snack is milk or juice and graham crackers. We also cook foods that are appropriate for use with certain units of study. You are welcome to bring a snack on your helping day. The Missouri Department of Health requires that food brought for snack time must be prepackaged items, unopened with a current expiration date. Fresh fruits and raw vegetables must be washed and prepared in the classroom. Milk and juice are always available at Preschool.

Sign up sheets will be posted if we have special needs for food items for the holidays. We prefer not to overload your child with sweets and we pay careful attention to children with food allergies.

**CRAFT TIME** allows children an opportunity to work with many kinds of art materials, as well as to have experience with cooking.

**OUTDOOR PLAY** gives the children a chance to play vigorously. Dress your child in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Attention to appropriate clothing for the type of weather is important too. If the weather is cool, be sure to bring a jacket for outdoor play.

**SHOW AND TELL** is valuable to our program. It gives children an opportunity to have something to say to the group. However, it can be very time-consuming, so please help us by limiting your child to ONE item. Show and Tell days are scheduled **ONLY ON YOUR HELPER DAY**. Toys brought from home for show and tell must be left in the child's locker. The Missouri Department of Health requires that the children, either inside or outside the classroom, cannot handle pets brought to Preschool for show and tell. Pets brought in must be confined to a cage. **Reptiles, i.e. snakes, lizards or turtles may not be brought to school.** Please discuss bringing a pet with your teacher prior to the day of show and tell.

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:** You are welcome to celebrate your child's birthday at Preschool. If you choose to do this let the teacher know and tell him/her your plans. The parties need to be "no present" parties. **If you are having a birthday party at home and inviting all children in the class, you may bring invitations to school to distribute. If you are only inviting a portion of the class, please mail the invitations.** This saves hurt feelings.

### **DROP-OFF AND PICK UP POLICIES**

1. Children need to arrive on time to Preschool each day. Please note the class schedule on Page 5. Do not bring your child earlier than 15 minutes prior to class start times. **Please be considerate of your teachers, they use the noon hour for lunch and afternoon preparations.**
2. Park in the church parking lot, not next to the street. Bring your child in the south doors. **Accompany your child into the classroom; do not let him come alone.**
3. **Do not leave your child in the classroom unless there is a responsible adult in the classroom.**
4. When picking up your child outside, enter the playground through the classroom. Opened gates may be forgotten and become a safety hazard.

5. As you pick up your child **make sure his/her teacher sees you.**
6. Keep your child with you until you are ready to leave. **Do not allow your child to run in the hallway or go into the parking lot alone. Please emphasize to them to walk.**
7. If you are in a carpool, please relay all messages to each parent in your carpool.
8. **Children will be released only to those persons designated on the enrollment form.** Parents must notify the teacher ahead of time to make other arrangements. A written note of permission will also be required for our files. In the event of an emergency, a parent may notify us of a change, prior to the child being picked up. A written authorization must be obtained from the parent, and if they call the request in, staff must take down the information, and then place a call to the contact phone numbers listed in our files in order to verify this request. **No child will be released to an unauthorized person. Staff will request photo identification (drivers license) of persons picking up children that they are not familiar with.**
9. Check your child's locker each day.
10. **Do not leave children unattended in car.**
11. **Cell Phones** are a wonderful invention! They can also be a great distraction. We are asking that your telephone calls be made outside the Preschool facilities so that your full attention is with your child. **Please turn off or mute your phone while you are in the building.**

### **RULES FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN**

1. Children and adults will be treated with respect and value.
2. Children will be expected to behave in a way that will ensure the safety of all people in our classrooms.
3. Children will treat the physical property of the Presbyterian Preschool with respect.
4. Children will be expected to learn and use good manners.

5. Children will learn to use supplies and equipment at school in appropriate ways.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY & PHILOSOPHY**

1. Teach the children what they can and cannot do.
2. Direct a child to a different activity.
3. When necessary, put the child in time out, no longer than 1 minute for each year of child's age.
4. When necessary, seek help from Preschool Director.
5. Hold a conference with the parent(s), the child, the child's Teacher, and the Preschool Director.

**Every effort will be made to encourage students to behave in a way that promotes positive behavior among the whole class.**

### **HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES**

The Missouri Department of Health requires the Preschool to have a health form on file for each child prior to the first day of classes. This form must include a list of immunizations and be signed by your doctor. The form is valid for two years.

The first 72 hours of an illness is the period when it is most contagious. If a child is ill with a cold or other communicable illness, he/she should be kept at home for 3 days or more, and should not return to school until 24 hours after his/her temperature or vomiting has subsided.

If your child is not well enough to play outside he/she should be kept at home.

Please notify the teacher if your child will be absent for an extended period of time.

### **ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

**There are two Preschool age groups:**

*\*To be eligible for the three (3) year old class, children must be at least three (3) years of age before August 1 of the year they enroll. They must be potty-trained. The maximum number of students in each class is eleven (11). These classes meet on Tuesday and Thursday morning and afternoon.*

*\*To be eligible for the four (4) year old class, children must be (4) years of age before August 1 of the year they enroll. The maximum number of children in each class is sixteen (16). These classes meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning and afternoon.*

**TUITION AND FEES**

*3-year old class tuition——\$70 per month for 9 months*

*4-year old class tuition——\$80 per month for 9 months*

*Each student is required to pay a one-time supply fee of \$50, which is due with the September tuition. This fee will cover the cost of art & craft supplies, and paper products.*

*September tuition and the supply fee are due by July 15. The remaining 8 tuition payments are due by the first of each month, starting October 1. A preprinted tuition envelope will be placed in your child's cubby prior to the first of the month as a reminder and there is a collection box in each classroom for you to drop your payment in. Please feel free to pay monthly, quarterly, or for the whole year if you so desire.*

**Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Preschool**

**IN THE EVENT THAT YOU BECOME 3 MONTHS BEHIND IN YOUR TUITION PAYMENTS, YOUR CHILD WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY DROPPED FROM THE PROGRAM, UNLESS YOU MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE TREASURER OR DIRECTOR FOR LATE PAYMENTS.**

Scholarship assistance is available on a limited basis, and will be awarded on approval of scholarship application. Application forms may be obtained from the Preschool office and applicants must meet the requirements before being approved.

**PRESCHOOL PARENT HELPERS**

Our Preschool program is designed as a Parent Cooperative Plan. This means that each Preschool family is required to take turns helping. You will have a turn about once a month. Fathers, mothers, grandparents and family friends are welcome to help.

A schedule will be given to you each quarter. If you are not able to come on your assigned day, it is your responsibility to trade with someone else. **WE MUST NOT BE LEFT WITHOUT A HELPER!**

If you are unable to be in attendance on your helping day and can not, or do not wish to trade days, you may hire a substitute helper. Please contact your child's teacher. Twenty-four (24) hours notice is appreciated. You will be charged \$20 per session. This fee will be added to your next tuition payment, and if you are the substitute helper you will be credited \$20 per session on your next tuition payment. If you are interested in being a parent substitute, please let your teacher know so that your name may be placed on her list. **If you fail to show up for your scheduled session, you will be charged \$20 on next month's tuition.**

On your helping day you should plan to arrive at least ten (10) minutes early and be prepared to stay and help clean up. Wear clothing that is comfortable for work and play, remember our children play on the floor.

**Helpers please DO NOT bring siblings on your helper day. You need to be able to give your full attention to the Preschool children.**

### **PRESCHOOL PARENT-HELPER DUTIES**

1. Help put away toys
2. Help supervise activities
3. Help with toileting and hand washing
4. Help with snack preparation
5. Help see that each child has the necessary craft materials
6. At the close of the session, clean tables, arrange chairs, wash dishes according to the directions posted in the classroom, close windows, clean the bathroom, remove any paint from walls or woodwork, and vacuum the carpet.
7. Parents will familiarize themselves with fire and tornado drill policies, which are posted in each classroom.

### **USEFUL TECHNIQUES WITH CHILDREN**

1. Give the child time to respond to the environment, other children, and adults.
2. Be calm, quiet, and relaxed, speak in a low tone of voice. Avoid quick or hurried movements.
3. Be cheerful. Cultivate a sense of humor. Have a warm, sympathetic attitude.
4. Be aware of what is going on around you. Be alert to potential physical hazards.
5. Anticipate and prevent problems between children. Try to foresee what a child is going to do. When necessary, give constructive and preventative directions.

6. Make positive rather than negative directions; "We play over here." "Sand hurts our eyes."
7. Promote empathy and sympathy. Ask children to tell each other how they feel. Encourage, but do not force, them to say they are sorry.

### **DEALING WITH BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

- 1. Help the child understand what his behavior problem is.**
- 2. Remove the child from the scene of the problem.**
- 3. Help the child find something positive to do.**
- 4. Help the child understand why you "can or cannot" do something.**

### **ADDITIONAL WAYS TO HELP**

The Preschool Board of Directors tries to keep your Preschool costs at a minimum. However, as you might know, supplies are expensive. Following are some ways that you can help us keep the cost low:

1. Bring the following "trash" items to use **as we request them, please:**

Magazines, egg cartons, yarn, ribbon scraps, thread spools, paper towel rolls, shoe boxes, and other items we deem necessary for craft projects. We will post a list when the need arises.

2. Participate in Preschool fundraising activities:

**\*Country Mart Community Cash Receipts** – save these when you shop and drop them in the collection box in your child's classroom.

**\*Used Book Sale/Rummage Sale**- bring in all your old books and rummage items the week of the sale and help us with set up and

*sale days. Sign up sheets will be posted, and we will greatly appreciate your participation in these activities.*

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**We hope this will be a memorable time for you and your child at Preschool, and we appreciate the opportunity to share in this important time of growth and discovery. First Presbyterian Church of Branson welcomes you to attend our Sunday school classes for adults and children and our Sunday services. We have a wonderful after-school chorister program and youth**

**program. Information about  
children's programs can be  
found in the hallway of the  
Preschool  
or on our website at  
[www.fpcbranson.org](http://www.fpcbranson.org)**