



2019 - 2020 Parent Handbook

Plan of Operation



Dear Parents,

It is with great joy that I welcome you to St. Stephen Preschool. As your child's first educators, we thank you for providing us with the opportunity to join you during these most important years -- Where loving to learn begins.

St. Stephen Preschool is a non-profit organization whose mission began with the worthy notion, to seek to provide that first bridge between home and school, between loving and learning. That mission remains in the forefront today. In a nurturing, supportive, and open-ended, knowledge-seeking environment, your child will have many opportunities to grow socially, emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually. Our aim is to provide experiences that will help develop your child's awareness of all the world has to offer. As your children become aware of the care and guidance of our exceptional preschool staff, they feel valued, secure, and capable of interacting positively with their age mates and lesson-rich experiences. As they become aware of all of their individual capabilities, thoughts, ideas, and talents, they will feel the power of inquiry, exploration, and decision making, through all modalities of learning. As they become aware of others, they are enabled to start thinking and learning outside of themselves and become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and leaders for their future days. Yes. all that can happen in a sandbox, under shady trees and blue skies.

We hope that this handbook will answer many of the "nuts and bolts" questions you may have throughout the year. However, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your child or our program. My door is always open and we welcome your hands-on support, questions, ideas and comments. Your involvement and knowledge of your child's first school experience will help us get to know them and you as individuals. It will help them gain trust and understanding of the new learning and skills that is this new experience called School.

I personally welcome you to the St. Stephen family and hope the years to come will hold many cherished memories for you and your child.

Fondly,

Tracey

Tracey Renson
Director

Organization of the Preschool

We are a ministry of St. Stephen Church, with whom we share our beautiful sprawling grounds. We maintain close communication with the church through a Preschool Elder who attends our monthly meetings, along with our Pastor, Preschool Director, other church members and preschool teachers.

Accreditation

St. Stephen Preschool has been NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited since 1990. We have undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, and external professional review to verify compliance with the academy's criteria for high quality early childhood education – a program that provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children.

Philosophy

Our philosophy recognizes that children grow in stages – we treat each child as an individual by allowing him/her to work and play at his/her own level. We teach a love of learning by allowing children to fully experience their own stage of development without pressure. Both our indoor and outdoor environments are carefully planned to encourage independence and provide choices. A wide variety of activities are offered in the areas of creative art, math, science, cooking, tactile play, music and movement, large motor, practical life, dramatic play, language arts, fine motor and manipulatives. St. Stephen Preschool, in conjunction with the parent, is the educational setting through which knowledge, culture and values are developed.

Our goals are to guide each student to...

- Increase independence in meeting new challenges & solving problems
- Develop confidence - Promote cooperation
- Promote language development and expansion of themes and refinement of information built on previous themes
- Further intellectual development by fostering cognitive learning, concept formation, self-awareness and exploration, and curiosity
- Develop large motor skills through activities that develop core strength and body awareness -- climbing, running, jumping, balancing, pedalling, swinging pumping, crossing the midline, etc.
- Develop small motor skills that develop eye/hand, finger strength, and dexterity -- using scissors, working puzzles, stringing beads, manipulating play dough, controlling crayons, holding a paintbrush, etc.
- Appreciate and explore the diverse world in which we live
- Develop imagination, real-life skills, team building, and problem solving through dramatic play
- Develop creativity and scientific method through open-ended STEAM experiences
- Learn how to follow directions, complete tasks, develop impulse control, and appropriate attention span
- Develop the identification and expression of feelings, moods, wants and needs in prosocial ways
- Build a positive attitude and a joy for learning in all competencies. This, along with self mastery in their own time, develops a positive self-image.

Mission

St. Stephen Preschool serves children ages 2 ½ through kindergarten. We are committed to providing a well-rounded program to develop the social, emotional, physical, mental and spiritual growth of our students, and to prepare them to become full participants in their community, their faith, and the larger rapidly changing world.

Administration and Staff

The administrative officer of St. Stephen preschool is the Director. The Director oversees curriculum, daily programs and teacher staffing. Our teachers are carefully chosen for the highest quality experience and training in the field of Early Childhood Education and Child Development, as well as their warmth and sensitivity to the needs of young children and their parents. The teachers and Director participate in a continuous program of in-service education and studies for professional advancement in order to remain aware of current research, and the ever-changing needs of today's families. Additionally, a preschool accountant is part of our office staff, overseeing all billing and finance.

Admission Policies

Children must be between 2 ½ - 6 years of age and toilet trained. (No pull-ups or diapers allowed). We welcome all children regardless of ethnic background, nationality, or religion. Parent and child are required to visit the school prior to enrollment. This is to determine whether the preschool will be able to meet the particular needs of both parents and the child. This is a good opportunity for the parents to see the school and ask any questions they may have about the program.

If you wish to enroll your child, please download the packet of Enrollment Forms from our website. **All forms must be completed and returned to the preschool office along with Physicians form by the first day of school.** All information submitted on the Enrollment Agreement and attached forms must be updated on an annual basis or any time information changes. The information contained in a child's file is confidential and released only when a written request is submitted by a parent.

Parent Orientation

A **mandatory** parent orientation meeting for one or both parents will be given at the beginning of the school year. At this meeting we will share pertinent information about the school and our policies, and we will answer any questions you may have about our program. You will be notified of the time and date of this meeting.

Children with Special Needs

All children are welcome. Our program makes every effort to serve children with special needs. For timely identification of your child's unique needs, an information sheet should be submitted during the application process. Should a special need be identified after enrolment, a special needs information sheet should be submitted to ensure your child's needs are met. Any and all information provided about your child's condition(s) shall remain confidential.

In some cases, our program may not be equipped to meet your child's unique needs. It is the Preschool's discretion to dismiss any child whose actions are deemed detrimental to other children or the program. Preschool personnel will provide information about other available programs and services in the area.

Phone Numbers:

Preschool Office: (818) 360-7330
Accounting: (818) 363-8184

****Early and Extended Hours Phone # (818) 363-8141****

Classroom Rosters: Classroom Rosters are available in the Preschool Office.

School Hours

School Hours: 7:00 a.m. --6:00 p.m.
Preschool Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Early Birds: 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Regular Session: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
Extended Hours: 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Preschool Daily Schedule:

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. School Opens/ Welcomes Early Birds
9:00 a.m. Arrival/Greeting Circle Time
9:30 a.m. – 10: 45 a.m. Outdoor Time & Snack
10:45 p.m. Classroom/Center Time
11:45 p.m. Closing Circle Time
12:00 noon Goodbye/Dismissal

Extended Day Schedule

12:10 p.m. Hello/Toileting & Lunch Time
12:30 p.m. Full Day Children Nap Time
Part Day Children Outdoor Time
1:45 p.m. Early Afternoon Extended Classroom/Center Time
2:15 p.m. Early Afternoon Extended clean-up & closing circle time
Napping Children return to join the group as they wake
2:30 p.m. Early Afternoon Goodbye/Dismissal
2:45 p.m. Afternoon Snack Time
3:00 p.m. Mid-Afternoon Center & Outdoor Activities
4:00 p.m. Mid-Afternoon Goodbye/Dismissal
4:15 p.m. Storytime
4:30 p.m. Art Activities/Music & Movement/Teacher Directed Games
5:00 p.m. Final Snack Time
5:15 p.m. Free Choice Activities
5:50 p.m. Clean-up/Goodbye
6:00 p.m. School Closes

School Calendar 2019-2020

September 3 First Day of School Tu/Th & 5-day students
New Parent Orientation
September 4 First Day of School M, W, F students
June 11 and 12 Last Days of School

Holiday Schedule -- All dates are also posted on the school Website Calendar Page

Our school will be **closed** on the following days:

November 11, 2019 Veteran's Day
November 27 - 29, 2019 Thanksgiving
Dec 23, 2019 - Jan 10, 2020 Winter Break
January 20, 2020 Dr. M.L. King Jr. Day
February 17, 2020 President's Day
March 20, 2020 Parent/Teacher Conference DDay
April 4 - April 10, 2020 Spring Break
May 25, 2020 Memorial Day

****We reserve the right to close the school 2 days a year for Staff Development**

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Registration

A non-refundable annual registration fee of \$175 is required upon enrollment. Each additional child is \$100. There is a \$25 Earthquake Fee per child.

Security Deposit

Upon enrolment, a Security Deposit equal to one month tuition is required. This deferred payment will be applied to your child's June tuition. It is the first of TEN monthly payments.

Withdrawal

If your child withdraws from school, a FOUR WEEK written notice is required and the security deposit is applied to the student's last month's tuition. If your child is withdrawn without a four week written notice, and/or after April 30, 2020, the security deposit will be forfeited.

Tuition

When registering your child, think in terms of a 10-month school year. This annual tuition is divided into 10 (ten) equal monthly payments (Sept – June). If enrolment occurs after the first month of the school year, the tuition amount will be adjusted accordingly. Because tuition is based on annual rates, there are no reductions for months in which there are fewer class days, such as September, December, January, April, June, or for illness, family vacations or any circumstances beyond the school's control.

Monthly Billing

Monthly bills are sent out to parents via email on the 25th of the month, for payment of the following month's tuition. Bills are due on the 1st, and late by the 5th. You can pay online by credit card, directly from the email in which the bill was sent. Or, payments by check or cash can be dropped off at the preschool office. If payments are not received by the 5th, a late fee of \$35 will be billed the following month.

St Stephen Tuition Schedule 2019-2020

	<u>5-Day</u>	<u>4-Day</u>	<u>3-Day</u>	<u>2-Day</u>
Basic Preschool 9am-12:00	\$650	\$550	\$440	\$300
Preschool + Extended Care 9am-2:30	840	712	577	400
Preschool + Extended Care 9am-4:00	920	785	635	450
Preschool + Extended Care 7am-6pm	1,140	980	800	577
Early Birds 7am-9am	150	120	100	70
Early Birds 8am-9am	75	60	50	35

Walk-in Extended Care hours: \$4.75 / hour

Program / Schedule Changes

In the event you need to change your child's days for preschool or for Extended Care, the preschool office will need a 1-week written notice before the change can be made. Program / schedule changes will only be made if there is space available for the desired days.

Late Payments

In order to meet payroll and operating expenses, St Stephen Preschool depends on tuition revenues for supporting its programs. All tuition is prepaid before service is rendered. The yearly tuition is divided into 10 (ten) equal payments due on the 1st day of the current month. There is no reduction in payment for absences, days off, or vacations. **There is a \$35 late fee for all payments received after the 10th day of the month.**

If a payment is not made by the 30th of any month, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the balance has been paid, unless an agreement has been arranged with the Director. Tuition payment policies are strictly enforced.

Returned Checks

There is a \$35 charge for all returned checks. The school reserves the right to require cash or money order to replace a returned check.

Sign In / Sign Out Fee

If your child has not been signed in our out, and you have been given two reminder notices, there will be a \$5 charge each time your child is not signed in our out.

Late Pick-Up Fee

If possible, please notify the school if you expect to pick up your child late. Children in either Preschool or Extended Care who are not picked up within 10 minutes of the end of their day will join Extended Care and parents will be billed the daily Extended Care rate of \$4.75/hour.

If any child is not picked up by 6:00 pm, the late pick-up charge of \$1.00 per minute will apply.

Arrival / Dismissal Procedures

Upon arrival each morning, bring your child to their classroom and sign them in. Our school day begins promptly at 9:00 am. PLEASE BE ON TIME! Your child's transition from home-and-parent to school-and-teacher is facilitated by your child starting their day when the other children start theirs. Children get involved in play at the start of their day, and late arrival could mean missing an important part of their day.

Your child should be picked up and signed out promptly at the designated pick-up time. If you are unavoidably detained, please call and let us know, if possible. A few minutes seem very long to a child and they may become very anxious if they do not see you as soon as school is over.

Arrivals and departures are easier for children if they are made quickly. If you have lengthy questions for your child's teachers, we will be glad to schedule time for you to have a conference. For children with disabilities, arrival / departure procedures will be addressed on an individual basis.

Take-Home Items

Check to make sure you have all your child's belongings. All belongings they bring to school should be labelled. And remember the items they made for the day are very important to them and represent a very serious effort on their part.

Rules Governing Release of Children

California State Law requires that every child be SIGNED IN AND OUT BY A RESPONSIBLE ADULT (18 or older). Under no circumstances will we release your child to a person who is not on your emergency list **without prior written notice**. It is important to keep your Emergency Information Form up to date. Staff members have the right to inspect identification from any person who is picking up children. Department of Social Services' regulations state that a responsible adult must escort all children to and from their classrooms.

Note: The daily sign In/Out sheets at the classroom door are Legal Documents. Your signature indicates the transferring of responsibilities for your child to /from the preschool. ***This must be done legibly in ink and with your first and last name.***

There will be a \$5 charge for each missing signature after a parent neglects to sign in/out two times.

If only one parent has custody of the child and the other is not authorized to pick up the child, the parent must instruct the school of this fact, and must provide the Preschool Director with a certified copy of the court order confirming that one parent does not have visitation rights.

If after the school's closing time of 6:00, a child is not picked up and the Director is unable to reach either parent or anyone on the emergency contact list, the police and Child Protective Services will be notified.

Health Policy

The Preschool is only licensed to care for children who are well. All children entering are required by law to have a pre-entrance physical examination and a completed Department of Social Services Physician's Report. Immunizations and TB tests are required for attendance in a licensed childcare center and requirements change from year to year. Please consult with the Director or office personnel if there are any questions.

For the protection of all, please keep your child home if they have any symptoms of illness. Your child should stay home if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Sore Throat or Swollen Neck Glands
- Upset Stomach and Vomiting
- Head Cold or Any Other Communicable Disease
- Bronchial Infection
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Contagious Rash or Skin Eruptions
- Acting Listless, Drowsy, Headache, Flushed Face, Lack of Appetite, or Any Behavior Out of the Ordinary

Please note: Your child must be free of fever and diarrhea for at least 24 hours without fever reducing drugs before attending class. Please inform the preschool office if your child develops a communicable disease. If your child

becomes ill at school, we will bring them to the Preschool office and notify the parent to take them home.

Allergies and Asthma

Parents must inform the Director and teacher of any allergies suffered by the child. Food allergies are posted in each classroom as a precaution for all staff members or substitutes who may be serving snacks. Allergies to insect bites or pollen should also be mentioned to the teacher. Medications for severe allergic reactions and inhalers for asthma attacks can be kept at school and should be discussed with the Director. Some children do have allergies that have symptoms similar to colds. If your child has such an allergy, a note from the doctor, so stating, should be in your child's preschool file so that they are not sent home unnecessarily.

Incidental Medical Services (IMS) Policy

In accordance with California Health and Human Services Regulations section 101266, St Stephen Preschool will provide certain Incidental Medical services to its children under certain conditions. The need for such services and SSPC's ability to provide them will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with the decision being made by the Director whether the preschool staff can accommodate the child's needs.

1. Prescription Medications

SSPC staff can administer prescription medications to your child, as long as the appropriate paperwork has been provided. Pick up a form in the preschool office called "Request for Medication to be Taken During School Hours", and have a Health Care Provider fill out the top portion, which specifies the medication being prescribed, its purpose, dosage, possible side effects, instructions to administer, and any other pertinent information.

The bottom half of the form is the "Request for Medication to be Taken During School Hours", to be completed by the parent. This authorizes the preschool to administer the medications according to the doctor's prescribed instructions. The back of the form lists additional SSPC procedures and requirements for medications taken during school hours.

2. Non-Prescription Medications

The Registration packet includes a page entitled "St Stephen Release of Information Page". It includes a section "Non-Prescription Medication Release" in which parents specify which, if any, over the counter medications can be given on an as-needed basis:

- Tylenol
- Aspirin
- Benadryl Cream
- Neosporin
- None of the above

3. Epi-Pen Jr. and Epi-Pen

The Epi-Pen Jr and the Epi-Pen are disposable, pre-filled automatic injection devices designed to deliver a single dose of epinephrine for allergic emergencies. Such

emergencies may result from insect bites or stings, or from foods, drugs or other allergens, or any anaphylactic reaction.

SSPC Staff will handle and administer these devices when such an emergency with a child arises. They are kept available and properly maintained at all times, according to the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101266.

In the case where the Epi-Pen is needed and administered as an emergency treatment, the Preschool staff will call 911 to obtain emergency medical treatment for the child, and call the parent immediately as well.

4. Inhaled Medications

California Health and Safety Code section 1596.798 specifies requirements for daycare providers who choose to administer inhaled medications. Accordingly, SSPC personnel, upon written request by the parent, will assist a child with use of inhalers when there is a respiratory need. In such cases, the parent must provide to the teacher the inhaler device, with instructions for proper storage and instructions for use. Such instructions should include:

- How to assist the child in the use of the inhaler
- When to use it
- Dosage that should be administered
- How the child should respond to the medication
- When to notify the parent
- Telephone number / address of child's physician

SSPC staff will accommodate the use of inhalers per the above requirements, but we are not currently equipped for the use of nebulizers, therefore, we cannot offer the services for administering medication through nebulizers at this time.

First Aid and Injury Reports

The preschool staff applies their best efforts to supervise children, prevent accidents and avoid aggressive conduct among children. Nevertheless, accidents may occur --falls or minor injuries from play equipment, as well as other incidents such as scratching or biting may occur during the school year. If the severity of the injury warrants parental notification, an injury report will be filled out and a copy will be given to the parent at pick-up time. A copy will also be kept on file in the preschool office.

In accordance with state regulations, the staff will wash injuries with soap and water, as well as apply a bandage and triple antibiotic ointment, if needed and if authorized by the parent in the registration forms. Ice packets may be applied to prevent swelling. In case of serious injury such as head trauma or a broken bone, ***we will contact you or your emergency contacts. It is important that you keep the school up to date with any changes of these numbers.*** Paramedics may also be called if necessary. Teachers are re-trained in CPR and children's first aid procedures regularly.

Child Abuse

Whenever circumstances suggest a reasonable suspicion of child abuse, these circumstances will be reported immediately to the proper agency, as determined by

licensing regulations within the applicable jurisdiction. The legal requirement does not include prior notification of parents by the school.

Emergency Procedures

Fire and Earthquake drills are practiced regularly so that everyone knows exactly how to do what, when, where and why. If a fire were to occur, the children would be escorted to the grassy area by the school parking lot.

In the event of a minor earthquake, you are the best judge of the effect it will have on your child. If you think he/she would be upset by it, come to the school and pick up your child.

In the event of a more serious earthquake, we know you will come to the preschool promptly to pick your child up. However, if it is necessary for the school to keep your child for up to 24 hours, we have an Emergency Preparedness Plan. Earthquake kits are kept here at the preschool, enough for all our staff and our students.

In the event of a catastrophe that requires the evacuation of the preschool (such as a fire), listen to the radio for the Red Cross Evacuation Centers. We will be all together. **No child will be released to anyone not listed on the pick-up list.**

Safety Policies

- **PLEASE BE SURE GATES ARE CLOSED UPON ENTERING AND LEAVING THE SCHOOL YARD.**
- Keep children close to you in the parking lot.
- Handicap parking spaces are for cars with blue placards only.
- Children may not be left unattended in the car for ANY amount of time.
- No cell phones on school grounds.

Classroom Observations / Visits

You are most welcome to observe your child's class. Arrangements should be made in advance with the teachers or the director. You may also be interested in visiting a classroom that your child may be advancing to in the future. This is a wonderful way to see what is developmentally appropriate at different ages and stages.

Parent Conferences / Assessments

Parent conferences are scheduled two times a year and are **mandatory**. This gives parents the opportunity to discuss their child's development with the teachers. You do not have to wait for the teachers to call for a conference if you feel that one would be helpful. Just make an appointment with the teacher whenever you need one.

However, the time to discuss your child is NOT at the classroom door at drop-off or pick-up time. Your child should not be present during the conference, and it should be at a time when the teachers can give you their full attention.

Assessments are for the parent to gain insight into their child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth and development. The teachers collect checklists, work samples, photographs and anecdotal records, as well as prepare development assessments for each child's portfolio. These are used to make informed curriculum and planning decisions to provide appropriate activities that will enhance each child's

development. The portfolios are confidential and will be shared only with the parent(s) of each child.

Parent Communication / Participation

We welcome parent's participation in our school, not only for your child's benefit but also for the benefit of our program. Such participation may include helping with class parties, volunteering in the office, reading stories, singing songs, playing instruments, sharing your vocation, and family customs. Parents are encouraged to communicate any information that will enable the school to better serve their child. We hope to incorporate your child's life in their education. We also enjoy teaching our students about different traditions in which families participate. While the teachers often have time to chat day to day, they can all be reached at their emails that are linked through our website: www.StStephenKids.com or by calling the office anytime.

****PLEASE NOTE!****

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THESE ON A REGULAR BASIS

Information about parent education meetings and special days such as Parent 'n' Me Day, Petting Zoo Visit, Holidays, etc. **ARE POSTED ON THE ST. STEPHEN WEBSITE: www.StStephenKids.com** and will be announced in our monthly **PRESCHOOL NEWS which is emailed to all families**, as well as **posted on the office and classroom bulletin boards** and the **entrance gates**. St. Stephen Preschool is making every effort to be as Green as possible. As such we do not regularly send home hard copies of every event or meeting.

PLEASE MAKE SURE WE HAVE UP-TO-DATE CONTACT INFORMATION ON OUR COMPUTERS IN THE PRESCHOOL OFFICE AT ALL TIMES

PROGRAMS:

Early Birds:

If you wish to bring your child to school before 9am, you may take them to the Early Bird classroom and sign them in, anytime after 7am. This is usually their regular classroom, though it is best to check the entrance gate for a sign designating any change to the Early Bird classroom. Please be sure to record the correct time your child arrives. We keep track of the days and add these to the following month's billing if you are not being billed for Early Birds monthly.

Extended Care (Kid's Club):

You may choose to leave your child in Extended Care on any day, even if they are not signed up for Extended Care for the month. In such cases, add your child's name to the Extended-Care Sign Up Sheet, which hangs on the outside of the Preschool Office door. Please sign up your child before 10:00 am, so we can plan sufficient staff for the afternoon.

When your child stays in Extended Care, please be sure to pack them a nutritious lunch. Lunch is scheduled for 12:15 each day. The school provides a beverage (usually milk or filtered water). Children enjoy lunch in a familiar atmosphere with their peers and teachers.

Extended Care Available on Days Your Child Does Not Go to School

Your child may come at 12:00 to join us for Extended Care, on days when they do not attend school, however, we must know ahead of time. *You can sign up the day before in the*

preschool office, or call the office on the morning of your plans. The cost is \$4.75/hr and your child may be brought any time, and be picked up any time before 6:00pm.

Nap/Quiet Time:

Children in our full day program get settled down for nap/quiet time as they finish lunch around 12:30 p.m. The nap teachers play soft music, rub backs, read stories, to help the children relax and quiet down. Each child rejoins regular extended care upon awakening, or is awakened by the teacher, if needed by around 2:30 p.m. The school provides cots and clean sheets. The child may bring their own pillow, blanket, and comfort item. All of these items will be sent home with the family on a weekly basis for laundering to be returned to school for use the following week.

Clothing

Dress your child in clothes that allow them to participate in all school activities (such as painting, playing on the rug, climbing, digging in the sandbox, and water play) without fear of getting messy. **Clothes such as elastic waist pants encourage self-help when toileting. We encourage your child to wear tennis shoes, or shoes safe for climbing and running. Cowboy boots, sandals or jelly type shoes are not safe for active play. All sweaters and jackets should be CLEARLY LABELED with the child's name.**

We keep extra changes of clothes at school for emergency use. If your child should wear them home, please WASH AND RETURN TO SCHOOL PROMPTLY so we may have them ready for the next emergency.

Food & Drink

We ask that you send a nutritious meal / snack(s) for your child each day, with foods from multiple food groups, and limiting sugar content. (No sugar in the first two ingredients of any item. (Read below, birthdays are an exception, though we have other suggestions too!) **Please make sure the preschool office has any food allergies on file.** The children have access to filtered water at all times. It is preferred that each child bring their own labeled, refillable water bottle each day and that their snacks and lunch items are packaged as low-waste as possible. St. Stephen teaches the children to recycle and all classrooms and offices have blue recycle bins. We serve organic items as often as we can and use as few paper cups, plates or plastic utensils as possible. We encourage you to join us in helping us teach this important part of our curriculum to the children.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special time for your child. If you wish to have your child bring in something to share on their birthday, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Limit your choice to ONE snack item. Some suggestions are frozen yogurt, fruit popsicles, single serving ice cream cups, Mini-muffins or cupcakes, rice crispy snacks, pizza, or fresh fruit.
- Let the teachers know **one week in advance**
- **Keep the sugar, frosting and serving size to a minimum.**

- No candy, party favors, or balloons. Thank You!!

For the children, the excitement is in the recognition of their special day – **not food, party favors, or balloons**. Getting a birthday crown or badge, singing, being recognized at the rug time, is what makes our children feel special. Please help us maintain reasonable standards for our preschoolers' important events. Birthday party invitations may be passed out in school ONLY if all the children in the class are invited to the party. Class rosters are available in the office if you would like to mail invitations to an individual child.

Share Days

The classrooms have special days for your children to bring a favorite "something" to school (book, toy, etc) to share with their teachers and classmates. Share time helps promote language development and encourages social interactions among the children.

NOTE: Please do not send items of value, fragile toys, **toy weapons of any kind**, or toys with small parts. School policy dictates that guns, swords, play knives, and television superhero action figures and accessories are not appropriate to bring to school.

Photographs

Parent agrees that photographs and videos may be taken of the children during the course of the school day, both by the school and by parents at the school, for non-commercial use only. The school photographer will also take a class group picture with your child to be made available to parents to purchase. Please sign the photo non-release form if you do not want your child to be photographed.

No Solicitation

There will be no soliciting allowed on the premises during preschool hours.

Suggestions

Your suggestions and constructive criticism are most welcome at any time. We care about our children and the job we are doing with and for them. You can help us to help them by letting us know what you like, as well as what you feel we could do better.

Preschool Grievance Policy & Procedure

Any parent or group of parents with child or children presently enrolled in the school may submit a grievance form, in writing, signed by all complainants. It must be specific and with documentation of the complaint or grievance and with a list of steps already taken to solve the problem.

The following procedure will be followed:

- The initial grievance must be presented to the Director of the school, in writing. The Director and complainants must agree upon a reasonable time for solution of grievance. A third and neutral party may be called upon to negotiate this timeline.
- If no resolution is forthcoming, the grievance may be taken to the Church Preschool Elder and Preschool Committee.

- The Preschool Committee must respond in writing to the complainant within one working week with an outline of their planned course of action. This may include follow-up study, conference with the Preschool Director, or specific action.

Discipline

We encourage children to use age-appropriate problem-solving skills. We model acceptable behavior, redirect the child to a constructive activity, or ask them to engage in correcting an injustice as a way to give meaning to a difficult problem. We validate the child’s feelings and emotions, and offer them an alternative way to express themselves. By giving positive verbal rewards, alternative solutions, and encouraging acceptable behaviors, the children come to understand that mistakes are learning experiences for all.

Termination Conditions

The school may terminate a child from school effective immediately upon written notice to the parent of such termination, if any of the following conditions arise:

- Any payment owed by the parent to the preschool is not paid within 30 days of payment being due
- In the opinion of the preschool’s administration, a child’s behavior threatens the physical, mental health or well-being of one or more of the children at the preschool. If reasonable accommodations will eliminate the threat, the child may be suspended until such time as the accommodation can be implemented
- In the opinion of the preschool’s administration, a parent’s behaviour threatens the physical, mental health or well-being of one or more of the preschool staff and/or is disruptive, destructive or detrimental to the integrity of the preschool
- The child is picked up after 6:00 pm more than three (3) times in a 30-day period
- On more than two occasions within any thirty day period, in the judgement of the preschool’s administration, a child has obvious symptoms of illness when brought to the preschool, or a parent fails to pick up the child from the preschool promptly when notified the child is ill.

At the time of termination, a refund of unused tuition will be issued.

Summer Camp

A Summer Camp program is offered every year. A separate enrollment takes place in the spring with fees and tuition set each annually. Look for enrollment packets starting in early spring on the school website.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Child's Name