



Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Mission

Our mission is to provide an enriching and respectful preschool experience where all children feel secure and supported in developing new skills that will prepare them to succeed in life and learning.

We believe that:

- Children are part of diverse family units who have the right to participate in their child's education.
- Children are unique individuals who have the right to a warm, caring, and respectful learning environment.
- Children are social and communicative individuals who have the right to interact and communicate with peers and with encouraging adults within a respectful and responsive environment.
- Children at the preschool level learn best when both the material and the human environment is driven not solely by an internal force but also is nurtured, facilitated, and intensified by the timely and dynamic intervention of significant adults in the environment.
- Children at the preschool level succeed when the foundation of learning is centered on a continuum of play-based activities which is paramount in the development of kindergarten readiness.
- Children are curious individuals who have the right to participate in a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that are differentiated to their specific needs.
- Children are literate learners who have the right to a print rich environment that demonstrates the purpose of letters, words, and numbers and that offers opportunities to use this emerging knowledge in meaningful ways.

Enrollment

Active church members and siblings of current students receive enrollment priority for our program.

Enrollment is then offered to new families on a ‘first come’ basis.

To enroll a child:

1. Submit all enrollment forms including the tuition agreement form
2. Pay the \$150 enrollment fee & one month’s tuition

All fees are non-refundable.

Enrollment Qualifications & Program Information

2s Program

Children who turn two by June 30th are eligible for the 2s program. The program focuses on stimulation of sensory, fine and gross motor development, age appropriate social growth, through exploration and discovery with a multidisciplinary and multisensory approach to learning. Based on an interactional philosophy, students engage in structured and unstructured play, experiential learning, pre-literacy opportunities, music, and art.

2-day 2s	T & TH	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
3-day 2s	M, W & F	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

3s Program

Children who turn three by December 31st of the school year and are actively working on potty training are eligible for the 3s program. Our program engages children in daily whole group learning time, small group activities, and self-guided play as they learn about routines of school. Hands-on experiences are a focus of the curriculum and children are introduced to foundational concepts including colors, letters, and number recognition in age-appropriate ways.

3-day 3s	T, Th, & F	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
----------	------------	------------------------

Pre-K 4s Program

Children who turn four by December 31st of the school year are eligible for the Pre-K 4s program.

This program eases students into a longer day and focuses on readiness skills such as identifying and naming letters and numbers, following simple directions, and the art of compromise. Pre-reading and math skills are introduced at morning meetings and practiced through play experiences.

3-day Pre-K 4s	M, W, & F	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Sept. – Dec.) 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. (Jan. – May)
4-day Pre-K4s	M, T, Th, & F (Thurs. is a mixed class with Pre-K5)	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Sept. – Dec.) 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. (Jan. – May)

Pre-K 5s Program

Children who turn five by December 31st of the school year are eligible for the Pre-K 5 program. This class is specifically designed for those children who need more time to practice social skills, conflict resolution, compromise, and self-regulation. Children will also learn new concepts in STEAM and have time to explore & investigate. Several components of a student's day mirror a developmentally appropriate kindergarten program. Older 4s may be invited to join this program with teacher recommendation.

4-day Pre-K 5	M, T, W, & F	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
5-day Pre-K 5	M-F (Thurs. is a mixed class with 4-day Pre-K 4)	9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Tuition Schedule

There is a 10% tuition discount for active First Presbyterian Church members and a 10% discount on the second tuition and each successive tuition for families with more than one child in the program during the same school year.

Tuition payments are payable in the following payment schedules:

9 Installments

- o Installment #1: at enrollment with \$150 enrollment fee
- o Installment #2: due June 1st
- o Installments #3 - #9 due September - March on 1st of the month

Semiannual payments

- o Installment #1: at enrollment with \$150 enrollment fee
- o Installment #2: due June 1st
- o Installment #3: due September 1st
- o Installment #4: due December 1st

Annual payment

- o Installment #1: at enrollment with \$150 enrollment fee
- o Installment #2: due June 1st
- o Installments #3: due September 1st

All first tuition payments, due at enrollment, are nonrefundable. Parents are responsible for the balance of the year's tuition even in the event of withdrawal. Check is our preferred method of payment. We also accept cash, credit, and debit cards.

*All tuition payments received after the 15th of the month are subject to a \$20 late fee and returned checks will be subject to a \$25 returned check fee.

Required Forms

Presby Kids requires the following forms for your child to attend school:

1. Enrollment forms, consisting of:
 - a. Emergency Form
 - b. Permission Form
 - c. Parent Agreement
 - d. Health Form and [Immunizations](#) (due prior to the start of school, a Sign-up will go out in July for August appointments to submit Health Forms)
 - e. Child Information Form (sent via email in July)

*Should your child have allergies or health concerns, we will also require:

1. [Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form](#) (for each medication)
2. Action plan (from the allergist or asthma specialist)
3. [Individual Care Plan](#) (for children with allergies or conditions that do not require medication)

Please let us know if your child has a known allergy or condition upon enrollment to allow for adequate time to complete the necessary forms.

Busy Buddies

For a given section of Busy Buddies to become active, three or more student participants must be registered and adequate staffing must be secured. Please note that not all programs are available to all classes. Extended day options should be considered enrichment opportunities and not guaranteed childcare hours, as both student and staff absences, inclement weather, etc. may affect the ability for our programs to run on a given day.

There is an additional fee for those who participate in any of the following extended day options:

- Morning Buddies: 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. (open to all children)

- Lunch Buddies: 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (open to 3s, Pre-K 4s) Children will require a lunch accompanied by an ice pack. Our school is nut-aware. Please, no nuts or nut products.
- Afternoon Buddies: 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (open to 3s, Pre-K4s, Pre-K5s) Children will require an additional snack and a blanket to use at rest time.

Arrival and Dismissal

2s Program

The 2s class will arrive and depart from the main entrance. Parents are required to help children into the classroom at arrival. Children will be dismissed to their parents at the main entrance.

3s Program

Typically, the 3s class will arrive to the playground and dismiss from door #7. In cases of inclement weather, the 3s will arrive to door #4, the Parlor Door and start their day in Brooks Hall.

Pre-K 4s

The Pre-K 4s class will arrive via the main entrance and typically dismiss from the playground. In cases of inclement weather, the Pre-K 4s will end their day in Brooks Hall and dismiss via door # 4, the ‘Community Room’ door. The children are encouraged to enter the school independently, however, parents are allowed to assist their children should the need arise.

Pre-K 5s

The Pre-K5s class will arrive and dismiss via door #7. The children are encouraged to enter the school independently.

Change in Pick-up Person or Delays

Each child is dismissed to a parent or authorized person. Parents involved in carpools should advise teachers via email. Should the carpool be a regular occurrence, please add that person(s) to the Emergency Form as an authorized pickup person. If the teacher is unfamiliar with the authorized person picking up, photo identification must be presented.

If you are going to be delayed picking up your child, please notify the school. This will allow the teacher to ease your child through this period of delay. If the school is not notified, a late fee of \$5 per quarter hour, or any part thereof, will be charged until the child is picked up.

Communication

Parents are always welcome. We try to provide ample opportunities for parents to volunteer at Presby in the classroom, as well as attending field trips and special events.

We will distribute notices and most sign ups via email. It is very important to keep email information and emergency contact information current to remain well informed.

Conferences

Two formal conferences will be scheduled during the school year. We use this time for an exchange of information about your child's development and adjustment to the program. In-person, phone, or video conference options are available. Parents or staff may request an additional meeting at any time.

Unexpected Closings

In the event of inclement weather or any major weather emergency, the Director will notify families via text message, email, and our social media platforms.

- If Fairfield Public Schools announces a delayed opening, we will open at 10:00AM and there will be no Morning Buddies.
- If Fairfield Public Schools announces a school closing, we will also be closed.
- If Fairfield Public Schools announces an early dismissal, we will cancel Lunch Buddies and Afternoon Busy Buddies and Pre-K will dismiss at 12 p.m.

Please note that Presby Kids does not schedule make-up days for any days closed due to inclement weather.

Attendance & Health

If your child will not be attending school due to an illness or vacation etc., please email the teacher **and** Main Office to let us know promptly. If your child is ill, please keep them home until they are no longer contagious and adhere to the following guidelines:

If your child has been running a fever or vomiting, please keep your child home a full 24 hours after the fever has ended (without medication) or vomiting has ceased.

Your child may be sent home if they appear to have symptoms of illness during the day. In such cases a parent will be contacted. If a parent is unavailable, we will contact an authorized person listed on the child's Emergency Information Form.

In the event of an accidental injury or serious illness, we will assess the situation and make an immediate attempt to contact the parent and/or EMS and/or the child's physician. Please be aware that if the nature of the injury/illness is serious, it may be necessary to call EMS first and then call the parent. The school will maintain a signed consent form agreeing to this provision. Please be sure to list any medical concerns or allergies, including food allergies, on your child's Emergency Information Form, Child Information Form and Medical Form.

Flu Vaccinations

It is CT state law that your child must be properly vaccinated against influenza annually, between August 1st and December 31st to attend our school. Parents must provide a signed [Medical Exemption Form](#) to be exempt from vaccinations required by the school. Religious Exemptions are no longer permitted.

Children who do not have proof of vaccination or a notarized exemption on file at Presby Kids will not be allowed to return to school after winter break until appropriate paperwork is submitted. State law provides: "Children with medical exemptions shall be permitted to a licensed childcare program or school

except in the case of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable disease.” In that case, a non-vaccinated child shall be excluded from our school until the outbreak has passed.

Snacks & Lunch

All children bring their own healthy snack and/or lunch and water each day. Usually, one snack item plus water is sufficient. Per state regulations, all snacks and lunches must be accompanied by a “cold pack.”

Please label your child’s lunch box with their name.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Our school is nut allergy aware. Please NO NUTS and/or NUT PRODUCTS.

Backpacks

Please note that we have a NO BACKPACK policy. All children will receive a Presby Kids tote bag. This is the bag we ask all families to use.

Birthdays

Parents may come in to read a book and share a special snack with the class for their child’s birthday.

Please schedule the celebration with the classroom teachers. Students with any food allergy will **only** eat their own safe alternative treat.

Birthday Parties: We do not permit any birthday party invitations to be distributed at school.

Outside Play

Outside play is an important part of our program and children should wear appropriate clothing (NO crocs, clogs, loose sandals, flip-flops, jelly shoes or shoes with slippery leather soles). Please dress your child in accordance with the weather. Teachers will notify you should specific outerwear, like a snowsuit, be required. Please label all your child’s outerwear. All children go outside for some part of the day unless it is excessively cold or wet. If the Director determines it is dangerously cold or the playground is unsafe due to ice or snow, the children will stay inside and engage in gross motor activities in Brooks Hall.

Clothing

Remember that children are here to have fun and develop their independence in a safe environment. Please do not dress your child in their best clothes. Children must be able to use the restroom and play comfortably. Play is a child's work, and they will get paint, glue, etc. on clothing.

Bathroom Procedures

3s, Pre-K 4s, and Pre-K 5s

Our bathrooms are conveniently located in the classrooms--one in the Blue Room and two in the Yellow Room. Children may use the bathroom as needed. Your children are encouraged to pull down their pants and underpants independently. After using the toilet, your child may be reminded to clean themselves, flush the toilet, pull up their pants and wash hands. A staff member may stand at the bathroom door and 'talk' your child through the process. Should your child require more assistance, the teachers will follow our [Handwashing/Diapering/Toileting Policy](#).

2s Class

The children will be changed as needed. Those children showing potty readiness will be encouraged to use the potty. Conferences will be held to determine readiness of both child and family prior to potty training. All staff will adhere to our [Handwashing/Diapering/Toileting Policy](#) and will use our [Presby Potty Training 101](#) to help you through this sometimes challenging time.

Toys

We ask that you refrain from letting your child bring in toys from home unless it is a book that can be shared with the entire class. Exceptions will be made for show & tell.

Sunshine Fun Program

Our Sunshine Fun Program consists of 3 one-week sessions in June and is open to our current 3s, Pre-K 4 and Pre-K 5 students; therefore ages are mixed. Information is sent out via email in February.

The Director will determine if the 2s may participate based on student participation and adequate staffing.

Behavior Modification

Discipline and behavior modification provides an opportunity to assist the child in developing socially acceptable ways to express needs and emotions. This is done through compassion, caring, sensitivity and helping the child understand that mistakes are a natural part of growing up. Staff will serve as positive role models. Teachers guide children by using a “positive discipline” and “positive language” approach, encouraging children to use tools to emotionally regulate in order to “use their words” with calm intention. Any activity that may be harmful will be redirected. Teachers will also assist the child in developing socially acceptable ways to express needs and emotions. Request a copy of our comprehensive Discipline Policy for more information.

Lock-Down & Lock- In Policy

Presby Kids is linked into the Fairfield Public School and Fairfield Police Department Emergency Communications System. We will receive a voice call and/or text message and/or email involving any emergency that requires the children to be secured under Lock-DOWN/Lock-IN.

During a Lock-IN, all exterior doors remain locked, windows and classrooms will be locked, shades drawn and lights out. The children will be able to move freely throughout the classroom.

During Lock-DOWN, staff and children crouch in their designated area in the classroom.

For the safety of all children during Lock-DOWN or Lock-IN, no persons will be able to enter or exit the building until Presby Kids has clearance by local authorities.

Parents and caregivers will only be able to pick up their child/children from school AFTER Presby Kids has been notified by local authorities that it is safe to do so. Presby Kids will notify parents as events unfold to the best of their ability.

Removal of a Child From School

Requested Withdrawal of a Child from School by Parents/Guardians

If a child is withdrawn during the year at the parents/guardians' request, the parents/guardians are liable for the year's tuition. Extraordinary circumstances may be considered (i.e., verified medical conditions which preclude participation in the program).

Requested Withdrawal of a Child by Presbyterian Nursery School

The Presbyterian Nursery School aims to be inclusive of all children enrolled in our program. We work to ensure that each child enjoys a smooth transition and positive experience. It is our goal to meet the needs of all children in our program. If, in the opinion of our professional staff and our educational consultant, we are unable to adequately address an individual child's needs, parents/guardians of that child may be required by Presby Kids to withdraw their child from our program. The decision to discharge a child rests with the Presbyterian Nursery School Board together with the Director of the school and shall be final. All rights of privacy will be respected. The classroom staff, as well as the administration of our school, will work closely with the family in providing conferencing, professional referral(s), guidance, and support. When a withdrawal is requested by Presbyterian Nursery School, parents/guardians will be responsible only for the tuition incurred through the month the child is in attendance.