

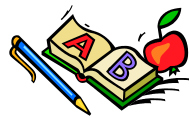


First Presbyterian Preschool & Kindergarten

Parent Handbook

First Presbyterian Preschool & Kindergarten
150 East Palisade Avenue, Englewood, NJ 07631
201-568-3042 www.fppkschool.com

Basic School Philosophy



First Presbyterian Preschool & Kindergarten believes that early childhood learning is both exciting and ongoing. The seeds that are planted early in a child's learning experience must be nurtured with care and compassion. Our goal is to balance constructive play and instructive learning in a loving environment, with a rewarding program that values independent exploration as much as group cooperation.

At FPPK we believe that children "learn what they live". We strive to create an engaging learning environment where children's curiosity is encouraged and their understanding of the world can be explored and expanded; where their self-esteem and confidence can grow and develop in harmony with others.

Through music, art, drama, dance, reading readiness, interactive math, science, social studies, free play, and culinary exploration, we make every attempt to fulfill each child's individual interests while laying a strong social and academic foundation for future learning.

School & Staff Contact Information



Address: 150 East Palisade Avenue, Englewood, NJ 07631

Phone Number: 201-568-3042

Web Site: www.fppkschool.com

Director	Sue Kozel	fppkschool@hotmail.com
Office Administrator	Cheryl Negrini	fppkschool2@gmail.com
Teacher (2s)	Toni Rossi	snuglbug2@gmail.com
Teacher (3s)	Juliane Rist	julianeriding@gmail.com
Teacher (4s)	June Miller	msjunemillerprek4@gmail.com
Teacher (K)	Julie Lev	houseoflev@gmail.com
Librarian	Jeannie Fitzpatrick	jeanniefitzpatrick@gmail.com
Dance Teacher	Sharon Snyder	sharon.h.snyder@gmail.com
Music Teacher	Sue Kozel	fppkschool@hotmail.com

School Attire



We recommend that you dress your child in comfortable clothing, particularly on Dance & Movement days when they will be actively moving around. Although children are encouraged to wear smocks in the classroom for messy art activities, paint and other materials may occasionally get on their clothing. Please have your child wear clothing appropriate for an active and involved school experience.

Unless it's raining or temperatures are below freezing, the classes will go outside for recess. We believe strongly in daily fresh air and exercise, even if it's just for a limited amount of time! Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather – layers are encouraged.

School Hours



2's class:	M - F am	9:15-11:30
	M - F Full day	9:15-2:45
3's class:	M - F am	9:00-11:45
	M - F Full day	9:00-2:45
4's class:	M - F am	9:00-11:50
	M - F Full day	9:00-2:55
Kindergarten:	M - F	9:00-3:00

Communication



We have an open-door policy at FPPK and parents are welcome to visit the classrooms at any time. There are two parent-teacher conferences scheduled each year, one in the Fall and one in the Spring, when you will meet with the teacher one-on-one and receive feedback on your child's progress. We conduct at least one parent survey during the school year in which we ask parents to rate various aspects of our school.

Our staff promotes open communication between the parents and the school, so you are encouraged to contact the staff or school board representatives if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns. If you have a concern regarding your child's recent experience in school, it is important that you get in touch with the teacher immediately. Because drop-off and dismissal are busy transition times, we ask that you email the teacher to schedule a convenient time for a discussion. If, after discussing the issue with the teacher, the parent still has concerns, a conference with the director, parent and teacher will be arranged.

Staffing Pattern

The state requires the following staff/child ratios:

2 years	1 adult for every 6 children
2 ½ - 3 years	1 adult for every 10 children
4 years	1 adult for every 12 children
5 years	1 adult for every 15 children

FPPK provides a better ratio of adults to students: 1 adult to 6 or 7 children (depends on ages)

Important Food Guidelines



FPPK is a peanut & **nut free facility**. All snacks and lunches must be nut free! Children must bring in their own snacks (one for the morning and one for the afternoon) and lunches. Please provide foods that they can handle by themselves. We encourage independence! We will not heat lunches, so please send warm items in a thermos. Sharing of food is prohibited and any uneaten food will be returned in your child's lunchbox, when possible. We discourage children from eating or finishing breakfast in school as they arrive in the morning in order to prevent any allergic reactions.

Co-op Guidelines

If you have signed up to be a co-op parent, please heed the following information: It is FPPK's policy that parents, and only parents, of children enrolled in First Presbyterian Preschool & Kindergarten assist in the classroom. All co-op parents must be fingerprinted and undergo a background check. Expectations will be discussed with the teacher at Back-to-School Night or at another time prior to the start of school.

Supervision of Children

All children will be supervised by a staff member (includes a lunch aide or co-op parent) at all times, including during outdoor activities, walking through hallways, and visits to the bathroom. Every child must be accounted for at all times, and no child will ever be left unattended for any reason. If you pick up your child early or need to take him/her away from the class for any reason, you must inform the teacher before you do so.

Philosophy of Child Discipline

It is FPPK's policy that discipline is positive and constructive. It is the responsibility of the teacher to be a role model of positive behavior because young children learn by example. With gentle direction, children can learn to choose actions that are appropriate. This leads to positive self-esteem.

A child who needs time to "calm down" may find it comforting to read a book or sit in the quiet area of the classroom.

Communication between parents and staff members is extremely important. As a cooperative school, we are able to create a warm and friendly atmosphere where children can express their emotions.

We are in full agreement with the following quote from an article reprinted from the N.J. Division of Youth and Family Services: "Discipline shall not be in isolation without supervision, the withholding of food or attention. No child shall be subjected to corporal punishment, emotional neglect, abusive language, ridicule or any behavior that shall intimidate, frighten, or endanger a child, or his/her self-image."

Medical Policy



General

A health form, complete with immunization record, is necessary before your child attends school. In addition to standard immunizations, New Jersey requires that all children under 59 months of age receive an annual flu vaccine before December 31st.

Policy of Dispensing Medicine

Under no circumstances can the school dispense medication, with the exception of allergy-related emergency medications with an accompanying medical form. Although inconvenient, it is a State regulation that non-emergency medication can only be dispensed by a licensed nurse.

Parents also please note: If your child IS on medication of any sort, please let us know. Medicine can affect how a child functions at school, and we would like to know so we can respond accordingly.

General Sickness

According to pediatricians, there are some clear-cut symptoms of an oncoming illness that parents can watch for. Prior to bringing your child to school, we ask that you clear your child of the following: diarrhea, vomiting, an elevated oral temperature of 100 degrees, coughing (not related to a previous diagnosis, i.e. asthma, allergies), red eyes

with discharge, lethargy, difficulty breathing, green nasal discharge, congestion (not related to a previous diagnosis, i.e. allergies) and undiagnosed rashes. Any one of these symptoms probably means your child should not be at school. Parents should trust their intuition if a child isn't acting normally. Our teachers must also trust their intuition. If a teacher feels a child is listless, unhappy, shows signs of aches or fatigue out of the ordinary, and is unable to function during the normal requirements of a class day, you will be notified.

Intuition aside, if your child shows any of the symptoms of sickness mentioned above, we ask your cooperation in keeping your child home until he/she has been **clear of these symptoms for 24 hours** or you have a note from your child's physician that states the child is no longer contagious. Although **Covid-19 testing** is not mandatory, we strongly encourage you to test your child for a possible Covid-19 infection before returning to school if your child has at least 2 Covid-19 symptoms. If your child does have a positive result from a Covid-19 test, you must notify the office immediately for instructions on when and how he/she can return to school. You must also notify the office if your child has an in-home close contact of Covid-19 for further instructions. You will be notified by our school office via email if your child has been exposed to Covid-19 within the school.

If your child develops any of the symptoms mentioned above, we will remove that child from the group of well children to the office and call you to take him/her home.

Masking is optional, although some certain circumstances may require mask wearing for up to 10 days. The staff will support any child who chooses to wear a mask and encourage the other children to accept different choices.

Allergies

If your child has any type of allergy, it is extremely important that you notify the FPPK office and your child's teacher. If your child needs Benadryl or an epi-pen in the event of an allergic reaction, we must have the medication in the classroom, along with the pediatrician's instructions. We also ask that you fill out an allergy alert form to post in the classroom to advise other parents of your child's allergy. You may also send in a few special allergy-safe snacks, clearly labeled with your child's name, for those days when the class celebrates an occasion such as a birthday.

Field Trips



During the school year, some classes may leave FPPK on field trips. All parents will be notified in advance about the trip and will be required to sign a field trip permission form. FPPK will ensure that there will be more than the state required minimum number of staff members accompanying the children on these outings. Parents may be asked to attend these field trips. If a parent drives to/from the field trip destination, the parent is required to submit a copy of his or her driver's license and auto insurance to the school office. Staff members will have a list of all children attending the field trip, and every child will be accounted for upon arrival and before departure.

Please note: Our field trips are for the FPPK enrolled children only. Siblings may not attend.

Playground Safety Rules



Outdoor recess is an important part of our program. When co-oping or visiting, please enforce the following safety rules if supervising on our playground:

Monkey Bars – Children should proceed along the monkey bars in one direction to avoid collisions. Children are not permitted to go on top of the monkey bars.

Sandbox – Sand must remain in the sandbox! You may need to remind the children to keep the sand low when they are shoveling in order to avoid getting it in another child's face.

Slides – Children should go up the ladder and slide down feet first. They should not be permitted to walk or climb up the slides.

Tricycles – Children must wear a helmet, securely fastened, when riding on a tricycle.

Building Safety Rules



-Safety covers are on all outlets in the school and gym. If you remove a safety plug to use the electrical outlet, you must replace the cover when you are finished.

-Do not open any window that does not have a screen.

-Handrails should be used when descending the stairwells.

Please ensure that all exits remain unobstructed.

-When co-oping or visiting the school, handbags must be placed in designated areas, out of the children's reach.

Injuries



There are first aid kits in every classroom, as well as in the school office. An AED is easily accessible in the Church and all staff members are First Aid certified and trained in CPR. If a child gets hurt, we will assess the injury and apply any first aid required. Most injuries will likely only require a band aid, an ice pack and some TLC. If the injury is something you should be made aware of before picking up your child, we will call you immediately. Otherwise, you will be notified of the injury at your child's dismissal time. If we feel that an injury is serious, we will call 911 and follow the instructions of the emergency personnel. We will also contact you immediately. Emergency forms are kept in every classroom and the school office, and are brought on all field trips and evacuation drills.

Parking, Drop Off and Pick-Up Policy



The circular driveway by Dwight Place is to be used exclusively to drop off and pick up your children. **Do not leave your car unattended in the circular drive. You may be ticketed!**

In the morning, you may park in either parking lot and walk your child into the school through the door at the circular drive or the door in the playground. If you would rather just drop your child off you may pull into the circular drive and wait for Sue or Cheryl to escort your child to his/her classroom. We are at the door no earlier than 8:50 a.m. If we are not there the moment you pull up, please wait with your child. Do not send your child from your car into the building alone. If you do not see us at the door, please be patient and remember that we must make sure that all children get safely to their proper destinations.

At dismissal, the teachers will release your child to you (or other designated adult) at the Dwight Place door as you are identified. Once again, please be patient.

Important: FPPK will not release your child to anyone other than you, the parents, unless notified in writing, verbally at drop off, or with a telephone call to the school office. If there are any changes in normal pick up procedures (i.e., your child will be going home with another child after school, or a family relation or friend will be picking up instead) you must call the office or advise the administration beforehand. Teachers are made aware of changes to normal pick-ups by notations written on the blackboard by the circular drive door.

Policy on the Release of Children



Each child may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the custodial parent(s) to take the child from FPPK. Such authorized person(s) will assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the custodial parent(s) cannot be reached. A child shall not be visited by or released to a non-custodial parent unless the custodial parent specifically authorizes FPPK to allow such visits or release in writing. This written authorization, including name, address and phone number is maintained in our files.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time the child's class is over, the following procedure should be followed:

1. The child will be supervised at all times
2. Staff members will attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized to pick up the child if it is 15 minutes after dismissal time
3. An hour or more after closing time, and providing that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or authorized person(s) have failed and the staff member cannot continue to supervise the child at FPPK, the staff member shall call the State Central Registry Hotline (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick up the child.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual
2. Staff members will attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s).
3. If FPPK is unable to make alternative arrangements as stated above, a staff member shall call the State Central Registry Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child.

In Case of a Building Emergency:

Fire

Teachers and co-op parents will escort the children quickly and quietly out of the building to a predetermined meeting place, either on the playground or near the circular driveway. If a class is on the playground already, the students must gather in their designated area and remain quietly seated. Teachers must take attendance and then ensure that the class waits quietly, seated in the designated area until authorities advise us that it is safe to return. The children then proceed quietly back to their interrupted activities. Administration will ensure that the children's emergency forms and cell phones are in their possession.

Indoor Lockdown

Teachers must gather: attendance books w/ emergency forms, cell phones, medication for children with allergies. Classes will proceed quickly and quietly to the gym. Staff will ensure that all doors are locked. If necessary, we will move to the rooms below the stage where there are bathrooms and running water. Classes will remain there until authorities notify us that it is safe.

Drills

We will perform fire drills and lockdown drills on a periodic basis according to the requirements of the Englewood Fire Department and the State of NJ. The drills will follow the procedures described above. Completion of each drill is signaled with a statement to each of the classes by the director. The children then proceed quietly back to their interrupted activities.

Emergency Evacuation

Teachers must gather: attendance books w/ emergency forms, cell phones, medication for children with allergies. Classes will quickly and quietly exit the building using the Dwight Place door (circular driveway). After all have exited, we will walk to the Englewood Public Library at 31 Engle Street. Parents will be notified of the evacuation. The Englewood Police department is aware of our emergency plans and will be notified of our arrival at the library. Classes will remain at the library until authorities advise us otherwise.

Tuition Payments, Withdrawals and Refunds



One-fifth of the program tuition is due upon signing a student contract. This contract deposit, or enrollment fee, guarantees your child a spot in the class. Tuition amounts, due dates, and details about our refund policy are specified on the student contract.

Expulsion Policy

FPPK does everything possible to ensure that each child adapts and is comfortable in our program. Unfortunately, there are reasons we have to expel a child from our program, either on a short term or permanent basis. This is extremely rare and we will work closely with the family in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

Proactive actions that may be taken in order to prevent expulsion include:

- Staff will try to redirect child from negative behavior
- Staff will reassess classroom environment, activities & supervision
- Staff will always use positive methods & language while disciplining children
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules
- Child will be given verbal warnings
- Child will be given time to regain control
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented & maintained in confidentiality
- Parent will be notified verbally and/or in writing
- Director, teacher & parent will meet to discuss how to promote positive behavior
- Parent will be given resources regarding methods of improving behavior
- Recommendation of evaluation by professional consultation on premises
- Recommendation of evaluation by local school district child study team

The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from school:

Immediate causes for expulsion:

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled students

Parental actions for child's expulsion:

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments
- Failure to submit required forms, including the child's immunization record
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child
- Verbal abuse to staff

Child's actions for expulsion:

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- Excessive biting

Schedule of expulsion

If remedial actions have not been successful, the child's parent will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's unacceptable behavior. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time when the parent may work on the

child's behavior or come to an agreement with FPPK. The parent will be informed regarding the length of the suspension period. The parent will then be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to school. The parent will be given a specific date upon which the expulsion will begin. Failure of the child or parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from FPPK.



Confidentiality Agreement

As a cooperative school, parents are actively involved with the teachers and students in classroom activities. Parents should understand that ALL student and staff information obtained while volunteering at the school must be kept confidential. FPPK requires parents to sign a confidentiality agreement, consenting not to disclose or use any student or staff information without specific authorization from the director. This confidentiality should be maintained even when the parent is no longer a volunteer at the school. Any breach of the confidentiality requirements may result in expulsion and/or legal action.



School Closings

In the case of an emergency or the forecast of heavy snow or ice storms, the director and board chairperson will confer about closing school. Since we are dealing with young children who have at least another 12 years of school ahead of them, and there are many steep roads around FPPK, chances are likely that school will be cancelled. You will be contacted via an email, a phone call or a text message from your class parent. Please note: These cancelled days cannot be made up.



Fundraising

FPPK holds several fundraising events throughout the school year. They have included a holiday bake sale, a clothing swap, a walkathon and a parent party. Parents are encouraged, but are under no obligation, to participate.



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