



Prince  
*of* Peace  
PRESCHOOL

# Parent Handbook

Revised December, 2019

# Prince of Peace Lutheran Preschool

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## **Our Mission**

The mission of Prince of Peace Preschool is to provide a Christian school for preschool-age children of the congregation and the local community. Our faith in Christ is the basis for our understanding of child development, teaching strategies and curriculum content.

## **Philosophy**

Learning in the preschool years forms the foundation for the remainder of life. The purpose of Christian Education is to enable all children to develop their God-given potential.

## **Goals**

At Prince of Peace Preschool, we are here to:

- Assist parents in providing for the spiritual, emotional, educational, and physical needs of their children.
- Lead the children on the way to everlasting life through Jesus Christ, the only Savior.
- Teach the children to love and serve God, their neighbors and their country.
- Equip the children with the knowledge and life skills needed to be successful in their educational and future endeavors.

## **Relationship of Prince of Peace Preschool to Prince of Peace Church**

Prince of Peace Preschool is an extension of Prince of Peace congregation and a mission to the local community, specifically families with young children. This outreach is a non-profit and financially self-supporting activity of Prince of Peace Church.

## **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church and Preschool Contacts**

Pastor	Rev. Mark Nieting
Church Secretary	Kathryn Wacker
Preschool Director	Alicia Mangels
Board of Education Chairman	Michele Wilson
Church Office Phone Number	340-8420 (9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Monday - Friday)
Church Office Fax Number	340-8421
Preschool Office Phone Number	340-3033

Website: [www.princeofpeacevb.net](http://www.princeofpeacevb.net)  
Preschool E-Mail: [school@princeofpeacevb.org](mailto:school@princeofpeacevb.org)  
Church E-Mail: [office@princeofpeacevb.org](mailto:office@princeofpeacevb.org)

## **About our Church**

Our school is part of a network of Lutheran Schools in the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, whose stated goal is to: “Exemplify excellence in Christian education and in ministry with families.” Our staff, Pastor, Christian Education Committee and entire congregation are committed to this goal.

## **We are Partners with Your Family**

We want to serve you and your child the best way possible throughout their preschool adventure. Please feel free to come to any of us with any questions or concerns about our school. We want you and your child to be happy and look forward to coming to school each day. You are always welcome and if we can ever offer support to you and your family, we hope to do so.

## **Family Resources**

As stated before, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is dedicated to the ministry of education, having the largest number of parochial schools after the Roman Catholic Church. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod offers several Christian resources for parents, families, teachers and children. You can find a link to these resources on our website at [www.princeofpeacevb.org](http://www.princeofpeacevb.org).

## **Church Activities for Families**

We have many family activities throughout the year. These free or low cost events may include picnics, fairs, carnivals, dances, group outings, recreational classes and other fun activities. We will post flyers and distribute invitations for these events. Please RSVP for these activities so we can plan accordingly. For a listing of these events, please see our church calendar online at [www.princeofpeacevb.org](http://www.princeofpeacevb.org).

## **Hours of Operation**

Our hours of operation are 9:00 am to 12:00 pm for students and 8:30 am to 12:30 pm for staff. We offer early drop off for students beginning at 8:30. There is an additional fee for this service. Please refer to our fee schedule.

## **Enrollment Capacity**

The maximum number of children that the preschool will enroll is 60. The maximum number of children to be in care at any one time (as dictated by the local building inspector) is 74.

## **Our Program**

We offer classes for pre-school age children from 18 months to Pre-kindergarten. Students are placed according to age similar to the public schools using September 30<sup>th</sup> as a cut-off date. We offer 2, 3, and 5-day classes. Our daily activities include the following:

- Hand washing/free play (upon arrival)
- Circle time which includes a story and the introduction of new age appropriate concepts
- Art, with an emphasis on process art
- Bathroom break/hand washing
- Snack - provided by the parents. You will be notified if any children in your child's class have nut or other food allergies. We ask your cooperation with our allergy awareness procedures.
- Learning centers
- Large Motor Playtime (at least 30 minutes outdoors unless out of safe regulations as outlined in Childcare Weather watch:  
<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hcci/common/pdf/weatherwatch.pdf> )
- Chapel (once a week)
- Music (daily)

## **Curriculum**

Every classroom will follow an emergent curriculum based learning environment. Our learning components incorporate bible lessons, language arts, math, social studies, science social skills, problem solving, and motor development. Christian social skills are practiced and modeled by the teachers to reinforce positive, Christian behavior.

## **Our Staff**

Our staff offers a variety of teaching approaches and unlimited learning activities to help match your child's learning style. They have many years of early childhood teaching experience and are always taking classes to stay on the cutting edge of preschool education. They are caring, warm individuals with a genuine love for children. As noted above, all staff members are required to attend workshops, conferences, and in-service training programs to keep up to date with professional growth and earn required continuing education credits of 20 per year. Staff members also have first aid training, and are CPR certified.

All staff hired by our school are required to have the following background checks:

- A sworn statement or affirmation;
- A fingerprint based national criminal history search;
- A search of the child abuse and neglect registry in Virginia;
- A search of the child abuse and neglect registry in any other state she has lived in the past five years.

In addition, each staff member is certified annually by a practicing physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children under their supervision.

### **Notice of Racial Non-discrimination policy**

Prince of Peace Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, national & ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national & ethnic origins in administration of its educational policies, scholarship programs, & athletic & other school-administered programs.

### **Specialized Consultants**

The POPP Director will suggest to parents the need to seek the guidance of a trained professional to support the efforts of the staff in meeting the needs of their child. It may be a result of identified or implied needs due to behavior, physical disabilities, educational achievement or other special needs. A description of the type of skills needed by a consultant, with a suggestion of some well-known in the area, may be offered. More than one name will be provided and the parent will be encouraged to find someone who they and their child are comfortable with and meets their needs. The parents will need to contract directly with the specialist. The school staff will participate, as needed, to our abilities, in the relationship between consultant and child. All requests should be presented to the POPP Director before implementation. This policy applies to working with specialists in the private sector, as well as, those in a public agency.

### **Enrollment**

Our preschool is open to all children age 18 months through 5 years (Pre-K). Our student body includes children of the congregation, children of other denominations, and children whose parents have no church affiliation. Our enrollment capacity is 81 students per day; however, we keep our class sizes smaller than state guidelines require.

**The following paperwork must be submitted before the first day of school along with your September payment.** All forms can be downloaded from our website at [www.princeofpeacevb.net](http://www.princeofpeacevb.net). Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Enrollment form – All Students (New and Current)

VA School Entrance Health Form – New Students Only

Up-to-date shot record – New Students Only

Proof of Birth – New Students Only (one item listed below)

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Record
- Doctor's/Hospital Record

Fee Agreement – signed (All Students)

Illness Policy – signed (All Students)

Online Policy and Procedure Manual Awareness Form – signed (All Students)

## Social Roster agreement

### **Registration**

You may register your child by completing a registration form found online at [www.princeofpeacevb.net](http://www.princeofpeacevb.net). A non-refundable registration fee of \$150 is also due with the paperwork to secure desired placement for your child.

Registration is on a first come, first serve basis with currently enrolled students and church members given first priority.

### **Classroom Supplies**

We will periodically send out needed supplies lists. On the first day of school, please bring a complete change of clothes (including underwear and socks) for your child. Accidents happen and we always want to be prepared. Please place the spare change of clothes in a zip-lock storage bag labeled with your child's name. Also remember to provide a clean set of clothes on the next school day if your child has had an accident. When the seasons change, remember to update their spare outfit.

### **Clothing**

Please dress your child in play clothes (elastic waistbands on pants make for easier bathroom visits) and tennis shoes. Please do not send your child wearing flip flops or dress shoes as they can be dangerous on the playground. Daily activities include active and messy play and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. Your child's name should be placed on all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all possessions and clothes. Please label all personal items with your child's name.

### **Potty Training**

We are one of the few preschools in our area who allow 18 mos. to three-year-old students to attend school even if they are not yet potty-trained. Children in the three year old room must be potty trained.

If your child is not yet potty trained teachers will request the completion of a potty training survey. This lets us know where your child is in the process and directs us on how to better assist you and your child.

Frequent potty visits and close observation by the teachers are a few ways we work with your child to accomplish this goal.

### **Snacks/Lunches**

We ask children to bring a **healthy** snack and drink with them from home each day. If your child participates in any after school programs offered here at Prince of Peace Preschool, please remember to also send their lunch.

## **Medication**

We will not administer any medication unless it is an emergency medication such as an inhaler or Epipen (and Benadryl).

## **Allergy Awareness**

If there is a student with a food allergy, we will ask parents to be considerate and exclude any potentially threatening foods as snack items. Further details will be communicated as needed. We will provide special accommodations to ensure the safety of our students.

Parents of children with allergies must provide the following:

- Medical concerns and allergies must be documented by a physician.
- An Allergy Action Plan that includes:
  - A detailed description of items which your child is allergic
  - Symptoms of a reaction
  - A small, recent photograph of your child
  - Emergency actions
  - Emergency phone numbers
- Epinephrine (Epipen Jr.) and/or Benadryl or other required medications along with a completed doctor and parent authorization form (most insurances will cover two sets of medications, one for home and one for school)
- A special snack list of items that are safe for your child (for special events/parties/projects)
- Must meet with your child's teacher(s) and the Director prior to your child's first day of attendance
- At times a parent may be requested to supply specialty items
- Parents should also
  - Educate child about symptoms
    - ♣ How/ways to avoid exposure
    - ♣ When/who to tell if symptoms appear

## **Illness Policy**

Our staff takes constant precautions to prevent the spread of illnesses. Careful and repeated hand washing by staff **and** students can help eliminate the risk of spreading germs. Other precautions include taking extra care with diaper changing procedures, monitoring toilet procedures, and working to maintain sanitary conditions throughout the center such as sanitizing toys weekly and separating sick children from those who are well.

**We ask for your cooperation in the following ways:**

- If your child has been exposed to any contagious illness or disease, we ask you to notify us of the exposure, even if symptoms are not present.



- If your child shows any of the symptoms listed below, please keep the child out of school. If any of our staff members feel your child is exhibiting any of the below symptoms, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child as soon as possible. Your child may return to school when he or she is symptom free with a normal temperature (without fever reducing medication for 24 hours) or with a written Doctor's note.

### **Symptoms include:**

- Both fever and behavior change.
- Symptoms of severe illness such as lethargy (more than expected tiredness), uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs (until medical evaluation determines the child can remain in care).
- Diarrhea, defined as more watery, less formed, more frequent stools not associated with a diet change or medication – a stool not contained by the child's ability to use the toilet.
- Blood in the stools not explained by diet change, medication or hard stools.
- Pinkeye - redness of eyelid lining and/or white part of the eye, crusty eyelids.
- Itchy scalp due to lice or nits. All nits must be absent before returning to school.

### **Daily Health Screening**

A simple health screening will be done each morning upon arrival. If at any time, a child displays any of the above symptoms, he/she will be removed from the classroom and a phone call will be made to that child's parents. The child will not be allowed to participate in preschool activities until he/she has fully recovered and/or has been treated and released by a physician. A note from your doctor may be required before your child returns to school.

### **Hand Washing Procedures**

Our students and staff are required to wash their hands with soap and warm water upon arrival, before eating, after toileting or diapering, when coming in from playground, after coming in contact with bodily fluids, and any other time we feel is necessary.

## **Transitions**

To prepare our students for transitioning from one age level to the next, we allow time for students to visit other classrooms each spring. They will have the opportunity to spend time in the “older” classroom and meet the teachers for a special story time. Our Pre-K students (and parents) will be notified of Kindergarten registration for public schools. We provide a Kindergarten Readiness checklist for our Pre-K parents (from VBCPS) and share stories with our students about starting Kindergarten. Special summer programs for Kindergarten Readiness will be communicated with parents as well. We work very hard to prepare our students (and parents) for a smooth transition to their new setting. A group meeting will be held to discuss what to expect with your child’s transition or any parent concerns as needed. If parents would like to meet one on one to discuss the transition process, we are happy to arrange a time to meet.

## **Parent/Teacher Communication**

Our teachers are eager to keep parents informed concerning their child’s development and growth. Examples of communication may include weekly newsletters, calendars, individual notes, updates, and remarks for each child, as well as conferences. You may have a conference at any time. During the month of May, you are welcome to request a final conference before your child transitions to a new setting.

## **Transfer Request of School Records**

A transfer of your child’s school records to include written information concerning the student’s abilities, learning styles or medical/safety concerns can be requested by the parent either verbally or in writing. Schools should submit a written request signed by the parent or with the parent’s verbal consent.

## **Behavior Management**

Our preschool teachers provide students with guidance for self-control and teach acceptable behaviors. This is accomplished in several ways to include the following:

- Modeling appropriate behavior
- Using descriptive praise when appropriate behavior is occurring (“I like the way you are walking down the hall so quietly.”)
- Redirection - substituting a positive activity for a negative one
- Active listening - to possibly determine an underlying cause of the behavior such as changes in family routines.
- Individual time: This is only used when the above methods have been tried and the behavior of the child is still unacceptable. In the event that this “cool off” period is used, the child remains in the classroom and is asked to choose an individual activity such as reading or puzzles.

- Removal from the classroom: If the child still needs time to gather himself, the teacher may decide to walk outside the classroom with the child and discuss the behavior. This time is meant to be instructional, never punitive.

**Inappropriate behaviors include, but are not limited to the following:**

- Hurting themselves or others (other students, staff members, animals)
- Being aggressive such as biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, etc.
- Swearing, using profane language or inappropriate language
- Intentionally damaging or misusing property
- Being unable to control oneself to the point that the teacher/staff person must focus most or much of their time with the child, to the detriment of other children at the school
- Being unable to control oneself to the point that he/she is becoming a distraction to the other children
- Any other behaviors that the director and/or board of education feel is a detriment to the learning environment of the school

If these or other inappropriate behaviors become a reoccurring disciplinary issue, the parents of that child will need to attend a mandatory conference with the teacher and director. This conference will be used to determine a behavioral plan of action.

Our staff will make every effort to work with all children to create a positive classroom and school climate. Parents will be notified of behaviors and incidents that the teacher thinks the family should be made aware of. We feel that in every area, but especially in discipline, the child will do best when the teachers and parents work together.

The Christian Education Committee of Prince of Peace Preschool, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to remove a student from Prince of Peace Preschool.

**Arrival and Dismissal / Late Pick Up Fees**

School begins at 9:00 a.m. We will open the school doors at 8:55 a.m. For your convenience, we also offer an Early Drop Off beginning at 8:30 am. Advanced notification is preferred, but not required. The cost is \$5.00.

The doors will remain locked for the remainder of the day for the safety of our students. We have an open door policy. If for any reason you would like to observe or drop by, you are always welcome. You will need to ring our doorbell and wait for assistance before entering the building. All visitors are required to check in with the Director upon arrival.

We dismiss our students at 12:00 using a car line process. If you prefer to walk in and pick up your child, please arrive by 11:50 or before the car line begins. If you are running late, please call the office and let us know. **Reoccurring lateness will result in a late fee of \$10.00 for each fifteen-minute segment beginning at 12:15.**

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent. Written or verbal permission is required. Pick-up permission information should be completed on your child's enrollment paperwork. If you are sending a person other than those listed on your pick form, please let us know. Photo IDs will be checked for those individuals.

### **Special Events**

Occasionally, we plan a special event for the children. When we plan an event offsite, we ask the parents to drive their child to the designated location. We will meet together as a group to enjoy the special activity. Periodically, we also have special guests visit our school to further our learning of certain topics.

### **Our Facility**

Our school is located in Prince of Peace Lutheran Church at 424 Kings Grant Road in Virginia Beach. The square footage of the entire facility is 12,500 square feet. The Preschool utilizes five classrooms, a Sanctuary, and a fellowship hall for special events and indoor play when necessary due to bad weather. A playground is located on the premises. PoPP does not intend to provide food service.

### **Volunteers**

We value our volunteers!! There are many opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, or help with school-wide projects, such as fundraising or event planning. Let us know if you have an idea for our school or want to share in some way. Parents and Grandparents are always welcome here at Prince of Peace Preschool.

### **Visitors**

We invite parents, friends and family to visit our school any time. For safety reasons, we ask all visitors to check in with the Director upon arrival.

### **Withdrawal Process**

We require a written, 30-day paid notice should you choose to withdrawal your child. Registration fees are non-refundable. Regardless of your child's attendance, tuition for the month is still required.

### **Tuition Payments**

All tuition payments are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month beginning in August (for September). You will make a total of 9 payments (September - May). If you wish to set up an automatic check to be sent from your financial institution to the Preschool, please feel free to do so. A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged if payment is received after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Please note we provide a discount to families with siblings in the amount of \$25.00 per month.

### **Absences**

If your child is absent, you may call the office at 340-3033 to let us know. However, you are not required to do so. If your child is absent for more than 2 days, we would like to be notified especially in cases of prolonged illnesses or travel plans.

### **Teacher/Student Ratio**

Our facility follows the required staff to student ratio determined by the Department of Social Services for Religiously Exempt schools.

- One staff member to five children from ages 18 months to 24 months.
- One staff member to eight children from ages 24 months to 36 months.
- One staff member to ten children from ages 36 months to five years.

Students are supervised at all times in the classroom, before school and at dismissal. All teachers are evaluated twice a year for following our safety and supervision policies.

### **Safety Requirements**

We follow strict safety policies provided by state agencies. We survey our campus daily for hazards. We also keep close supervision of the children at all times so that we can prevent accidents before they happen. We are required to meet all health, safety and fire inspection regulations. We have fire drills monthly.

### **Public Liability Insurance**

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church provides public liability insurance for our school through Church Mutual of Milwaukee, WI.

### **Exemption from Licensure**

Since our preschool is a non-profit ministry of the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, and is housed within the church building, we have a Religious Exemption from licensure. This means we have complied with state requirements for religious entities and have passed all fire, building and health inspections.

### **School Closings and Delays**

When the Virginia Beach Public Schools are closed or delayed due to inclement weather, we will also be closed. We are CLOSED on one and two-hour delays. Please call the office at 340-3033 and listen to our voicemail to confirm school closings or delays. Closures will also be posted on our website [www.princeofpeacevb.net](http://www.princeofpeacevb.net) and our Facebook page. If the preschool must close during normal operating hours we will contact parents by telephone. **Make up-days are not provided.**

### **\*The Christian Education Committee**

The Christian Education Committee consists of church members who represent various professions including the education field. The preschool director answers to this committee and implements their rules and regulations in conjunction with the church council. Meetings are usually held the first Monday of every month in the evenings. Parents are welcome to attend these meetings.