

Parent Handbook



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

PRESCHOOL

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE SINCE 1986

161 N. Mesa Drive
Mesa, AZ 85201
480-835-7877
preschool@fpcmesa.org

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Welcome to First Presbyterian Preschool!

Welcome to First Presbyterian Preschool! We are honored that you have entrusted us to serve as partners in your child's education. As a Mesa preschool, we consider it a privilege to provide a joy-filled, positive education to the children of the East Valley! We take great pride in providing a safe and loving atmosphere allowing for quality interactions and sincere passion to flourish.

First Presbyterian Preschool provides educational excellence in an atmosphere of Christian love. We invite and welcome children of ALL faiths to attend and benefit from the many blessings offered by our school!

Our staff members here at First Presbyterian Preschool are selected for their Christian beliefs, character, love of children, education, training and experience. Our teachers guide the children, while at the same time, giving them room for imagination and exploration. We are more interested in how a child creates a project rather than worrying about the end result. Our staff is dedicated to the whole child, whom is entrusted in our care. We, here at First Presbyterian, are dedicated to meeting the child's social, emotional, physical, cognitive and spiritual growth.

We also believe that it is important to care for your spiritual needs. We encourage you to call us if you have specific needs for family support such as counseling, Christian education or baptism. We invite you to utilize our resources.

This Parent Handbook has been compiled to keep you informed of our school policies, procedures and curriculum. We have updated our policies and procedures to reflect the current COVID19 health and safety standards. We look forward to working with your child this year, and if there are ever any questions or concerns, please feel free to stop by the Preschool office or give us a call.

(480) 835-7877 or email us at preschool@fpcmesa.org

Sincerest Blessings,

Shiloh Murillo
Director
First Presbyterian Preschool

Letter from Our Pastor:

PRESCHOOL HOURS OF OPERATION:

9:00 am to 1:00 pm Monday – Friday

Annual REGISTRATION FEE:

\$85 per student and is NON-Refundable.

Morning PRESCHOOL Classes: (2 1/2 year old – 4 year old)

9:00am to 11:30 am

- **Child must be potty-trained to begin school. Drop in daily rate=\$30**

2 Day Program	T/Th	\$200 per month
3 Day Program	M/W/F or T/W/Th	\$240 per month
4 Day Program	M thru Th	\$270 per month
5 Day Program	M thru Fri	\$300 per month

PRE-K Classes: (4-5 years old)

9:00am – 11:30am

- **Child must be potty-trained to begin school. Drop in daily rate=\$30**

3 Day Program	M/W/F or T/W/Th	\$240 per month
4 Day Program	M thru Th	\$270 per month
5 Day Program	M thru Fri	\$300 per month

EXTENDED DAY Preschool & Pre-k Classes:

9:00am – 1:00pm

- **Child must be potty-trained to begin school. Drop in daily rate=\$40**

2 Day Program	T/Th	\$240 per month
3 Day Program	M/W/F or T/W/Th	\$300 per month
4 Day Program	M thru Th	\$350 per month
5 Day Program	M thru Fri	\$400 per month

LUNCH BUNCH: optional add-on to Morning Class

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Lunch Bunch fee: \$5.00 per day and student needs to bring their own lunch and drink.

Scholarships may be available. If your child is a scholarship recipient and attends 4 days per week, your monthly copay = \$50. If your child is a scholarship recipient and attends 5 days per week, your monthly copay = \$100. These fees are due on the first of each month.

LICENSURE: First Presbyterian Preschool is licensed by the State of Arizona. A copy of the state's facility inspection report is available in the preschool office upon request. It is also available online at <http://azdhs.gov/licensing/childcare-facilities/index.php>

PURPOSE. PROGRAM GOALS AND ORGANIZATION:

PURPOSE: Our primary purpose is to provide a loving environment to draw out and develop the child's potential for being a responsible human being. The environment reflects our Christian faith by recognizing God as the creator, and integrating the wonder of His love in our lives and the world around us.

PROGRAM GOALS: The curriculum is child-centered providing experiences that enable the child to develop at their own individual rate fostering their highest potential, intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually. The environment will introduce children to learning through creative art exploration, music and movement, role-playing, literature, science and math, uniquely challenging the child at their level of participation. Free play with a variety of media will enable the child to interact with his classmates and peers. Due to the differing developmental rates of each child, specific objectives will be implemented. Our program will provide each child with the opportunity to:

- Learn about God and His infinite love
- Approach learning powered by their personal interests
- Develop decision-making skills
- Engage in a variety of experiences through cooperative work and play
- Develop school readiness skills
- Foster a positive understanding and acceptance of self and others
- Develop individual talents and physical coordination
- Fine tune social/emotional skills within themselves

ORGANIZATION: While our program does not teach sectarian doctrine, we do want the children to know of God's love for them and the beauty of His creations. Regardless of religion, race, nationality, gender and ethnic origins, our preschool is a community outreach program of the First Presbyterian Church of Mesa. In an attempt to build a better understanding for persons of different backgrounds, multicultural activities will be an integral part of the curriculum.

Holidays: All Christian Holidays will be observed, remembering the religious significance of these seasons. We will be closed for Christmas, Good Friday, Easter and all Federal and State holidays as well. We follow the Mesa Public Schools calendar for their closures and will be closed for Fall Break (1 week), Winter Break (2 weeks) and Spring Break (1 week). Monthly tuition will remain the same regardless of closure.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

HEALTH: Before being admitted to attend First Presbyterian Preschool, each child must provide the following forms, as required by the Arizona Department of Health Services: Child Enrollment and Information Form, Blue Emergency Information form, Proof of up-to-date immunizations

THE DIRECTOR MUST BE NOTIFIED IF YOUR CHILD HAS A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE. The use of fever reducing medication is **not permissible** as a remedy for sending the child to school. Upon daily arrival, a temperature check will be administered and documented. Once admitted, each child must enter the classroom free of any signs of illness which include: **temperature (100.4*), cough, diarrhea, vomiting, runny green nose, rash or lice/nits (eggs)**. These are considered infectious and the child will not be admitted. Your child must be **symptom-free for 72 hours** before returning to school.

Should these symptoms appear while the child is at school, you will be notified immediately and the child will be isolated and sent home until illness has passed. The family MUST communicate daily with the Preschool office regarding their child's health and any symptoms that may be present. Preschool staff will not administer any medications unless prior authorization has been issued from the child's doctor with an official prescription and a signed consent form is on file.

DUE TO COVID19 and the standards of care required by the state of Arizona Department of Health Services and Childcare licensing, any person (child or family member) showing symptoms of COVID19 will not be admitted onto the school campus until such symptoms have passed and are symptom free for 72 hours. Due to the highly contagious nature of COVID19 and the unpredictability of the disease, the best practice is to keep the child home if the child or family member becomes ill. This isolates the issue and does not bring unidentified infection into the preschool setting.

IF a child in our care does test COVID19 Positive, we will close the preschool for up to 72 hours for disinfecting and cleaning depending on the circumstances. The families will be notified with verbal and written communication.

SAFETY & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: The safety of your child is of utmost importance for our program. Every effort and precaution is taken to prevent accidents and injuries. However, in case of an emergency or accident, every effort will be made to contact the parent or legal guardian listed on the emergency card on file. Parents are responsible to keep that information up to date and notify the director of any changes that are necessary.

All staff members receive First Aid and CPR Certification training as required by law. These procedures will be used if necessary until professional emergency personnel arrive. Our preschool performs emergency/ fire drills monthly & evacuation drills bi-annually with the staff and children. If your child does get hurt with minor injury, you will be notified with an "Ouch Report" that is sent home in the cubby. School and classroom rules are enforced for the safety of your child. For this reason, tennis shoes are recommended. Please avoid flip-flops and boots which cause many accidents on the playground.

DISCIPLINE & Expulsion Policy: It is very important that each child learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control while maintaining their self-image. This is accomplished by providing helpful guidance, encouragement and positive reinforcement. We focus on redirecting the child to make safe choices. We employ a thinking period as a discipline approach prior to phoning the parents. In the event that a behavioral issue arises which may require the expulsion of a child every effort will be made to work with the family to devise a plan of action which included providing resources appropriate for the situation. A child will be removed from the classroom/school if there is reason to believe that other children or teachers are in danger. The parent will be notified immediately. Under NO circumstances will corporal punishment be utilized.

SUNSCREEN: Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at school. We go outside everyday (weather permitting). We are not authorized to apply sunscreen to your child unless there is written permission by the parent.

POLICIES OF OPERATION:

PESTICIDE USE on the Premise: First Presbyterian Preschool will make written pesticide information available to a parent at least 48 hours before application occurs on the premises.

STATEMENT OF INSURANCE: The First Presbyterian Preschool meets the state of Arizona requirements for liability insurance. A copy of this is available by request of the director.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION: All children requesting to be admitted to First Presbyterian Preschool must be between the ages of **2 ½ year to 5 years old** (not yet in Kindergarten). **ALL children MUST be toilet trained and must be independent in the bathroom at the time of admission.** Every effort is made to place your child in the classroom of your choice. The child must be age-appropriate for the class that you are requesting according to the guidelines set forth at registration. All classes and waiting lists are filled as registration forms and fees are received. All completed class lists are subject to the Director's approval.

The Christian Education Committee and the Preschool Board in conjunction with the preschool Director, have the right to request the withdrawal of any child at any time.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES:

- First Presbyterian Preschool does not provide **transportation.**
- Prior to admission, a determination will be made for **children with special needs** to see if First Presbyterian Preschool meets the needs of the child. If not, we do make referrals and recommendations to services and programs in the area.

REGISTRATION, TUITION & ATTENDANCE

Annual Registration fee: There is an annual registration fee assessed for each child at the time of enrollment. The cost is **\$85 per child.** This fee is **non-refundable** and applies towards the insurance of your child and the initial start-up costs. This is an **annual fee.**

Tuition: **Tuition fees are due on the first day of each month.** Tuition will be considered **delinquent on the 10th of each month.** There will be a **\$20.00 late fee per week for late payments.** The tuition rate schedule is set at the time of registration. Tuition is set to cover all program costs and is a **flat rate per month regardless of illness, holidays, vacations or school closures.**

Discounts: There are 3 ways to receive a discount off of tuition costs.

1. First Presbyterian Church members receive 10% off monthly tuition rates
2. City of Mesa Employees receive 10% off monthly tuition rates
3. Families enrolling 2 or more children will receive 20% off monthly tuition rates for the 2nd child enrolled.

Withdrawing a child: Should it become necessary to withdraw your child, a **2-week notice is required in writing.** When **withdrawing a child after March 1st, the family is still responsible to pay the April and May tuition fees.**

ARRIVAL and DEPARTURE Procedures:

- **Anyone arriving to drop off or pick up is required to wear a face covering from their car onto the Preschool campus. Students will wear the mask during the arrival into the classroom and store their face covering in their cubby for the duration of the day while in our care.**

- **You and your child will have a documented daily temperature check upon arrival. If it is within normal range your child will be admitted to the preschool for the day.**
- **Class time starts promptly at 9am.**
- You **must sign your child in and out with the time of arrival and departure**, as required by Arizona State Licensing. This is very important! There will be clean pens available to sign your child in and out each day.
- Once your scheduled class time has ended, please **be prompt and arrive on time to pick up your child**. A **fee of \$15 for every 5 minutes you are late** will be assessed. Continual tardiness can result in removed from the program. **A face covering is required for pick up as well.**
- **Only designated individuals authorized by the parent or legal guardian on the emergency blue card will be allowed to pick up the child. You will be required to show a picture ID.**
- If an **unforeseen emergency** occurs that delays you from picking up your child on time, please **call the Preschool office**. (480) 835-7877
- You must also **call to report your child's absence for any reason. 10 absences in one month may result in a child's removal from the program.**

Parent Participation: We encourage you to become involved in your child's education. We practice an "open door" policy which means that you are welcome in the classroom at any time. There are many ways in which you can volunteer by providing nutritious snacks, donating supplies, reading a special story, sharing your occupation and attending all school functions and fundraisers. We also send home a "Parent-evaluation" asking for the family input of the child's skill. Please return it to the school so that we may partner together to make your child's learning experience the most beneficial for them.

Due to COVID19 the preschool campus is closed to outside visitors (including parents) in the classroom setting at this time and will remain closed until the state of Arizona Department of Health Services has issued a change in protocol regarding this issue.

Field Trips: On occasion walking field trips may be taken. Parent permission slips will be sent home in advance and must be signed by the parent for the child to participate. If parent volunteers are needed, it will be indicated on the permission slip. **Due to COVID19 there will not be scheduled fieldtrips at this time. It will be reevaluated when the state of Arizona Department of Health Services issues a change in protocol.**

Weekly Family Chapel with the Pastor: We encourage families to join us for our weekly family Chapel time with the Pastor every Wednesday at 9am. We sing songs of praise, tell bible stories and build up our Christian faith together as a community. The weekly chapel time is from 9am-9:20am on Wednesday, beginning in September. Please go directly to the chapel to sign your child in, not in the classroom. **Due to COVID19 there will not be scheduled group chapel at this time. It will be reevaluated when the state of Arizona Department of Health Services issues a change in protocol. WE WILL HAVE WEEKLY CHAPEL WITHIN EACH INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM.**

Snacks: As part of our cost sharing, we ask that families help us by providing nutritious snacks for their child's class. **Due to COVID19 there will not be family style meals at this time. It will be reevaluated when the state of Arizona Department of Health Services issues a change in protocol.** We still need your help providing individually wrapped snacks and juice boxes to be distributed to the children. If you are able to provide paper goods, utensils and napkins, we would greatly appreciate it. Styrofoam is not allowed.

Arizona Department of Health Services requires the following: All snacks must be nutritional and include at least 2 food groups. Juice must be 100% fruit juice. Milk must be in ½ gallon sizes and water is acceptable as well. All foods must be prepackaged in the original packaging. Fresh fruits and vegetables must come whole.

You will receive the preschool snack guidelines with your welcome packet. Snacks served for birthday celebrations must also meet the nutritional guidelines. Please **make any food allergies known to your teacher immediately.**

COMMUNICATION, PARENT INFORMATION & EVALUATIONS:

Newsletters and Notifications: Each month you will receive the classroom newsletter indicating the snack schedule, important information and curriculum details that you will need to support your child in the classroom. You will also receive a school-wide newsletter from the Director's Office. It will include information regarding policies, procedures and general information relating to school closures, special events and volunteer opportunities that are available. Please check your child's cubby each day. If you have specific concerns about your child and their development, please speak with your child's teacher. They are always available to answer any questions that you have.

Assessments, Evaluations and Teacher Conferences: Families are asked to assess their child's skill level at the start of each school year by using our Parent take-home assessment tool. This information will be kept in the student's portfolio file. Twice a year we conduct child assessments to determine the developmentally appropriate practices that we use for each child to fit their needs in our program. If it is determined that there is need for early intervention evaluations outside of our program, we will make those resources available to the family. You will receive a copy of these evaluations. We review this information with the families during our parent-teacher conferences. Parent-teacher conferences are offered twice a year or more frequently as needed.

A separate school-wide **Preschool Parent Satisfaction Survey & Evaluation** is conducted each spring. We ask the families to offer us feedback regarding our program, the needs of your family and how we meet those needs and suggested improvements. These are a valuable tool to help improve our program. We value your opinion and appreciate your input.

General Preschool Information:

First Day of School: In order for your child to become familiar with their teacher, classmates and new surroundings, we invite you to give them a big hug! Then, be assured that they are in good hands. This will show that you trust the teachers and reinforce that you will return at the end of class. We will call you if there are any concerns after you leave.

Children's clothing: Preschool can get very messy! Dress your child in comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting dirty. Please provide a little backpack with a change of clothes including underwear and socks. Accidents happen and the children are most comfortable in their own clothes when they do. Please label all items that you send to school: backpacks, lunch boxes, jackets/clothing, etc. Close-toed shoes are required! Flip Flop sandals and open-toed shoes are not the best option for their safety while at school.

Show & Tell: To reduce the exposure to outside germs and illness, please **do not bring any toys from home.** We are not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items that are brought to the school. **Play guns or weapons of any kind are not allowed at**

school. Each class will have a special way to do Show & Tell. The teacher will let you know when that will start in the classroom.

We are building a community together and strive to make this a safe place for open discussion. We look forward to a great year together! If you have general questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask. preschool@fpcmesa.org or (480) 835-7877



DEAR GOD and ME

Dear God, You made the mountains high;

You made the bubbly seas.

You made the pretty butterflies

And busy bumble bees.

You made the tiny grains of sand;

You made the big tall trees.

And then, Lord, with Your loving hands

You made a child like me.



Suggestions for Helping Your Child at Home

- Read to your child every day. Let them retell the story to you after you have finished.
- Talk with your child about everything. This increases their vocabulary and they feel respected, understood and valued for their input.
- Encourage them to be creative by providing paper, crayons, markers, scissors and glue at home. Ask them what they made but don't discourage their efforts.
- Reinforce school activities. Review what they bring home with them.
- Praise them for their efforts.
- Ask them to tell you more about their picture.
- Help your child observe the things around them more closely. Encourage them to use the five senses to compare and describe what they see, feel, smell, hear and taste.
- Practice writing their name. Include Capital letters and lower-case letters in their appropriate place, ie. Larry, Samantha, Michael and Ira.
- Allow your child to make mistakes. Help them navigate how to solve the problem, but don't give them the answer right away.
- Encourage autonomy by giving your child simple chores.
- Allow them to open their own packages
- Try to tie their shoes by themselves
- Ask open-ended questions to spark their curiosity and understanding like Why? What? How?
- Ask them to tell you more about something they are interested in
- Let them pour their own milk and cereal
- Ask them to help clean up a spill or mess to build autonomy, independence and responsibility

First Presbyterian Preschool of Mesa

Parent Agreement

Parent copy: Save for your Records

1. I agree to **pay the tuition fee on the 1st of every month**. I understand prompt payment of the monthly **tuition fee is required whether or not my child is able to attend school every day**. I understand **there will be no discounts on tuition due to vacations, sickness, closures or any other reason**. I understand a **late fee of \$20.00 per week** will be added to the monthly fee **if payment is made after the 10th** of the month.
2. **I will bring my child and pick him/her up on time each day**. I understand that continual tardiness can result in removal from the program. I agree to pay **the late pick-up fee of \$15.00** for every 5 minutes I am late.
3. I understand that **class begins promptly at 9:00 am** each day.
4. I understand that my child and my own temperature will be taken upon arrival each day for safety precautions.
5. I will **call the school** if my child will be **absent and state the reason why**. I also understand that **10 absences in one month can result in my child's removal from the program**.
6. I understand that my child will need to be signed in and out each day by me or by another adult (18 years or older) who has written permission on file at the school. I will call the school or send a note if someone else besides me is picking up my child. Any person picking up my child other than myself will need to have picture identification and officially be on the pickup list before the child will be released.
7. **I agree to keep my child home** if there are any signs of a fresh **cough, temperature (100.4*), rash, vomiting, diarrhea or lice**. My child must be **symptom-free for 72 hours** before returning to school.
8. I understand that **school staff must be able to contact me during the school day** in case of an emergency. I agree to keep the school notified of any changes to my personal phone numbers or the numbers of those with written permission to sign my child out of the classroom.
9. I understand the State of Arizona requires continuous ongoing assessment of each enrolled student. I will work with the preschool if early intervention evaluations are recommended for my child outside of this program.
10. I understand that should it become necessary to **withdraw my child**, a **two-week notice is required**. I also understand that if I **withdraw my child after March 1st**, I will **still be responsible for the April and May tuition**.
11. **I will contribute to the classroom snacks one day per month**. I understand that snacks must be individually wrapped and that juice must be **100% fruit juice**. I have read and understand the snack guidelines that were given to me.
12. I understand and accept the discipline and expulsion policy.

I have read the Parent Handbook and agree to the above policies.

Parent's Name (Please Print) _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Child's Name _____ Class _____

Keep for your records

First Presbyterian Preschool of Mesa

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I have read the Parent Handbook and agree to the above policies.

Parent's Name (Please Print) _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Child's Name _____ Class _____

Sign & Return to the school Office