



Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School

5121 Westminster Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

● www.shadysideschool.org ● 412-681-6311

Family Handbook

School Policies and Information

Dear Parents:

On behalf of the staff, I would like to welcome you to the Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School (SPCNS).

Our dedicated group of teachers is ready to challenge them and enrich their lives. We look forward to having your family become a part of our family and as such, want you to feel at home in our school. Please feel free to roam the hallways, observe your child at work, get to know some of the other families, become involved in the many activities offered by the Board of Trustees, and come visit your child's classroom and share a special talent or story.

Your child's experience here at SPCNS can only be enhanced by your enthusiasm and excitement about their learning environment. Please join us!

This Family Handbook is being provided to inform you of the policies and procedures we have set in place to allow our school to run more smoothly. Please keep it and refer to it for this general information. Copies of the school bylaws and other policies are available upon request. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns about any of this information, please do not hesitate to ask. I am available and happy to help you in any way that I can.

Sincerely,

Liz Buchanan

Director, SPCNS

director@shadysideschool.org

www.shadysideschool.org

The Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School (SPCNS) was founded in 1951, and has provided thousands of children with a solid educational beginning. The school is dedicated to providing a stimulating environment where children can discover and begin to develop their social, intellectual, creative, emotional, moral and physical skills. SPCNS prides itself in its excellence in providing a caring, nurturing environment to young children and their families.

Statement of Philosophy

The Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School focuses its philosophy on the basis that children learn best within the context of play. SPCNS provides a child-centered environment where children's individual needs are addressed and nurtured, where children's freedom of individual expression and creativity are encouraged, where children are provided with the opportunity to develop responsibility and self reliance skills, and where children are taught to problem solve through negotiation and respect.

SPCNS bases its teaching on a negotiated, interactive, fluid and dynamic curriculum which allows for the children's exploration of the world in which they live. Children are treated with dignity and respect and are taught to treat others in the same manner. Children's spirituality is nurtured through the explorations of God's wonders and through values which teach respect, open communication and peaceful conflict resolution.

Orientation Days

The goal of the orientation days is to help students to transition from home to school and to aid in easing any anxiety a child may feel during the first few days of school. At SPCNS this is accomplished best by giving each child an opportunity to spend time together with teachers and parents in the classroom setting.

Three, four and five year old Orientation

On the first day of school, three-, four-, and five-year-olds attend nursery school for only one hour. The first group comes from 9-10 a.m.; the second group attends from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Previous to the first day of school, your child's teacher will contact you to let you know when your child is scheduled to attend. Parents are welcome and encouraged to stay with their child/ren for some or all of the hour.

Two-year old Orientation

The two-year old classes become oriented to nursery school in a similar way. On the first day, half of the class attends with a parent or caregiver, and the other half comes on the next school day. Teachers will contact families in the weeks before school starts to determine the first day arrival time schedule.

Please note that since the Two-Year-Old Program is based on a philosophy of gentle separation, a parent/caregiver must remain in the classroom until the child is ready to build trust and confidence in their teachers. Parent/teacher communication is essential for the child's experience in this program to be successful.

General Information

Clothing

Children's play is their work and it can be very messy! Students create messy artwork every day. Children do wear smocks, but paint sometimes gets on clothes. Additionally, students will play outside on the playground, and/or the bikes, and possibly in the sand box or pea gravel pit. Clothing should be durable and washable. A student's clothing should be comfortable with buttons, zippers, etc., in working condition. Clothing that is tight can cause irritability and frustration. Shoes should be sturdy, stable and securely attached to the foot (please no crocks, flimsy sandals or shoes with heels). Please bring a change of clothing to nursery school in case of a toileting accident or spills.

Mark your child's jackets, sweaters, hats, mittens and boots with his/her name. Mittens are less frustrating than gloves for young children. Also, it is helpful to attach mittens to the jacket.

If a child is well enough to attend nursery school, he/she is well enough to play outside. Please dress your child warmly (boots, hat, mittens) in winter and coolly enough in warm weather. Classes play outside every day

unless there is a low wind chill factor or rain. Layering a child's clothing is a good idea because extra clothing may be removed if the child is too warm or added if the child becomes cold. Please keep in mind that the children will go outside even when there is snow on the ground. Boots can be helpful whether there is snow or mud.

Snacks and Birthdays

Children bring their own snacks and drinks to school. Refillable water bottles and lunchboxes are ideal and will be kept in your child's cubby until snack time. Please, no tree nuts (this includes peanut butter) There is no refrigeration available, so please keep that in mind when choosing snacks. Please also keep in mind that snacks should be just enough to tide your child over until lunch. Having your child help choose their snack is a great way to introduce them to healthy nutritional decision making.

The nursery school also permits families to send in a birthday treat, such as cookies, rice krispy treats or brownies to help to celebrate a child's birthday. Please do not bring sheet cakes, heavily iced cupcakes or party favors – the simpler the birthday treat, the better for young children. *Please do not ask teachers to pass out party invitations or place them in cubbies.*

More and more, the amount of food allergies present in children increases our awareness about what we feed the children at the nursery school. We are extremely sensitive to allergies and as needed will make accommodations in the classroom or school-wide to ensure the safety of our students. We ask parents to be mindful of these food allergies when providing nutritional snacks or birthday treats to the class. Although the teachers will inform the parents of any such allergies in their classroom, if in doubt, parents are encouraged to ask further questions.

Holidays

As a Christian preschool we acknowledge Christmas and Easter holidays with stories, projects, and activities. Historically, during the Christmas season we have had a Christmas Sing during which the children participate in the retelling of Jesus' birth story through song and movement. Easter's focus is on rebirth and renewal.

The nursery school recognizes the excitement involved with Halloween celebrations. Our classroom celebrations tend to be very simple. Over the years we have observed that children are often frightened by costumes and masks. Therefore, we ask that you **do not send your children into school with costumes** and/or masks around Halloween.

Other Holidays such as Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day are celebrated on a very low key basis, with the goal being to tie the holiday in with universal values, such as family traditions, love, and friendship. The children in each class will make their own valentines. We request that if you choose to have your child make valentines for his/her classmates, that you please do not include treats. Each of the classes will have their own special celebration.

Although SPCNS follows Christian values and teachings, we also recognize that many of the families that we serve come from diverse faith beliefs. As such, we encourage families to share in their traditions with us. Please speak to your child's teacher if there is a special holiday tradition you would like to share with your child's class so that they can plan accordingly.

Snow Days

The following steps will be taken to inform families of our school closing when the weather is inclement:

- Once the Director has determined that SPCNS will be closed, she will immediately notify the 3 major TV networks: KDKA, WPXI, and WTAE. They will list our status on their channel and on their websites as well. We are listed as “Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School.” You may sign up through one of the TV stations’ websites to receive a text or email from them.
- The Assistant Director will send out a message to the family and caregiver Brightwheel accounts. It is your responsibility to enroll in Brightwheel and to update caregiver information in Brightwheel and ensure that it is updated if there are any changes.
- The Director will change the outgoing message on the phone (412) 681-6311 to indicate that we are closed.
- Teachers will **not** make phone calls to inform families of a school closing, unless we must be closed for a special circumstance other than bad weather (such as a power/water outage or other problem specific to the church).

Please note that our schedule prevents us from making up snow/emergency days at SPCNS. We do not have delays.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences are held twice per year. If you need to speak with a teacher outside of the regularly scheduled conference times, call the nursery school to arrange a time that is mutually convenient. We ask parents not to carry on long conversations with the teacher upon arrival or dismissal times at school, as they need to give her full attention to the children.

Parent Visits and Volunteer Opportunities

SPCNS has an open door policy for parents of currently enrolled children. Please feel free to volunteer to help with the nursery school in the classroom. The Board of Trustees holds a series of fundraisers throughout the year, and they encourage parent participation. If you are interested in participating in any of these events, please contact a member of the Board of Trustees (listed on your school directory).

School-wide Communications

In an effort to keep in constant communication with you about the events taking place in our school, we will send school-wide communication on a weekly basis. All communications, including school closings and upcoming events will happen via either Brightwheel (or emails, as needed on a specific basis). Please note the following important addresses so that you can keep in touch with us.

1. Our Website: www.shadysideschool.org
 - a. Includes important information about our programs, admissions, tuition schedules, policies/procedures and electronic copies of our forms.
2. Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SPCNS>
3. Our Instagram account, @spcnspgh

We will not be using email regularly, however when we do, in order for our email communications to get to you without a problem, we need you to do a few things on your end.

1. Please add our URL: shadysideschool.org to your preferred senders list.
2. Add the following address to your favorites list: kosth@shadysideschool.org and lbuchanan@shadysideschool.org

3. Do not flag our emails as spam. If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please do so by following the links listed on the emails we send you and we will make sure to remove you from our list.

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Parking

Parents may park in the circular driveway or on the street on Westminster Place or Amberson Avenue. Be aware that these public streets are heavily trafficked. When letting your child out of your vehicle, please exit onto the sidewalk and not into the street. Please pay attention to parking signs, as they are applicable even during pick up and drop off times. When parking on the circular drive, please do not park on the curves between the signs or on the sidewalks, as this obstructs the flow of traffic and poses a hazard for pedestrians.

Please do not leave babies or young children alone in the car. It is necessary and in compliance with the law that adults take all safety precautions to ensure the safety and well-being of their children.

Additionally, we would like to remind you not to leave any valuables in your car, as they are subject to theft and vandalism.

Access to the School

The Nursery School entrance is located by the circular drive on Amberson Avenue.

The following procedures will be in operation starting on your child's FIRST FULL day of school (after orientation has been completed):

- The Nursery School entrance door will be unlocked and supervised from:
 - 8:55 to 9:15 for drop-off
 - 11:55 to 12:10 for pick-up
 - 12:55 to 1:10 for Lunch Bunch pick-up
 - 2:20 to 2:40 for Wonderful Wednesday pick-up
- In the event that you need access into the Nursery School at any other time (including 2-year-old class pick-up), please:
 - Ring the buzzer (black box)
 - Turn to your right so that you can be viewed by the security camera
 - When you hear the door click, pull on the door handle or press the blue handicap button
 - In the event that the door is not answered immediately, please be patient and continue to press the buzzer button.

In order to ensure optimal classroom preparation and teacher supervision, families will not be admitted to the school prior to 8:55 am.

Three-, Four- and Five- Year –old Classes

Children attending the three-, four-, and five-year-old programs are expected to arrive in class between 8:55 and 9:10 a.m. Dismissal time is noon. Please make every effort to arrive on time as fatigue and anxiety are elements that affect a child's wellbeing. Furthermore, if a child consistently arrives late to school, he/she misses out on valuable opportunities for interaction and information sharing with their peers. All parents are expected to walk their children to their classrooms and make contact with a teacher in order to ensure the safe transfer of

responsibility. Children must be closely supervised and remain with an adult at all times until they are safely transferred to a teacher.

To ensure that each child is safely entrusted back into your care at the end of the school day, the children are dismissed from each classroom one at a time to a parent or caregiver. If you have made alternate arrangements for your child to be picked up by another adult, we prefer that you notify your child's teacher in writing of this change or leave a telephone message with the Director if a note is not possible.

Two-year old Classes

The two-year-old classes at SPCNS operate somewhat differently than the older classes. SPCNS encourages gentle separation to allow the children to feel secure in their new school environment. This means that a parent, family member, nanny/babysitter or other trusted adult **must** stay at SPCNS with the child until he or she is ready for the adult to leave. Separation may take a few days or weeks, or even months, depending on the child's individual development. Arrival time commences at 9:00 a.m.

Dismissal procedures also differ in the two-year-old classes. During the first semester parents and caregivers return to SPCNS at 11:20 a.m. to participate in a group "circle time" to bring a pleasant closure to the morning. When the children have more stamina, at the beginning of second semester, circle time will begin at 11:50 a.m. These time schedules maximize the ability of the toddlers to participate in nursery school activities without becoming over-tired or cranky.

Arrival

Help children remove coats, hats, boots, etc., and have them hang up their own coats. Assist children in washing their hands before they get settled in their classrooms. Always bring your child or carpool members into the classroom and present him/her/them to the teacher(s) before leaving. Children must be supervised at all times until presented to a responsible adult in the classroom.

Carpools

Although SPCNS advocates carpooling, please make all arrangements for the carpool directly with the driver. Please do not involve the nursery school in these plans. Changes for the day should be made before coming to school. Teachers should be notified in writing if a child will be picked up by a different carpool, or if someone other than a parent, regular driver, nanny, etc., will take the child home.

After School Play

After school many children wish to play outside on the grassy property in front of the circular driveway. ***Children must be supervised by the adults picking them up at all times.*** Please be mindful that Amberson Avenue is a heavily trafficked road. Parked cars either on the street or the circular drive pose hazards to children, as drivers do not have a clear view of small children playing. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that children are following safety rules while playing in church property after school.

The Church Parish Hall and the classrooms are not available for play after dismissal. Also, the sextons need to lock the grassy park fence at the end of the morning, so it is not permissible to play there.

The nursery school will not be responsible for any accidents or injuries that may occur on nursery school/church property after dismissal.

Admissions/Enrollment Procedures

Admissions Policy

Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School (SPCNS) admits children from the ages of two to five without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry or disability. When the parent or legal guardian of a child identifies that a child has special needs, the nursery school director and the parent or legal guardian will meet to review the child's educational and care requirements.

SPCNS does not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child. Parents of children with special needs are expected to fully cooperate with the school staff in order to provide the child with a positive preschool experience. Providing the school with evaluations and recommendations by the evaluating agency increases the chances of the child's success in his/her environment.

Returning families, members of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, and nursery school alumni will receive admission preference.

It shall be the prerogative of the nursery school director to place children in each class in such a way which will maintain a balance within the specified age group.

Children with Special Needs

To help SPCNS staff better understand the child's needs, the staff will ask the parent or legal guardian of a child with special needs to complete a "Special Care Plan" in conjunction with the child's health care provider(s). SPCNS will attempt to accommodate children with special needs consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If SPCNS is unable to accommodate the child's needs as defined by the child's health care provider(s) or the Individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan without posing an undue burden as defined by federal law, the nursery school director will work with the parent or legal guardian to find a suitable environment for the child.

Age/ Toilet Training Requirements

Children enrolling in the two-year-old program must be two years old by September 1 of the entering school year.

In order for a child to be enrolled in the three-year-old program, they must be three-years-old by September 30. Additionally, children enrolling in this program must be potty trained before the beginning of the school year. Teachers know that beginning school, having a new baby at home or other types of transitions may cause some regression and that accidents may happen while a child is engrossed in play. Please send your child to school in underpants (pull-ups are prohibited). Please send a change of clothing to school because, while we have extra clothes available, some children sometimes object to wearing "school clothes."

Enrollment

Prior to the child's enrollment, a visit and tour of the nursery school is strongly encouraged so that families and children can familiarize themselves with the environment, staff, and procedures.

The following forms will be completed and submitted to SPCNS prior to the child's first day of attendance. The information in these forms will remain confidential and will be shared with other staff only as required to meet the needs of the child:

- 1) Application for Admission and \$25 Application Fee – due prior to admission
- 2) Child Health Records including:
 - a. Child Health Assessment form – completed, signed and dated by the child's health care provider
 - b. Immunization records -- **Children attending SPCNS are required to be vaccinated according to the recommended immunization schedule endorsed by the American**

Academy of Pediatrics, except for the Influenza and COVID-19 vaccines. However, we strongly encourage that your children receive these important vaccines, as vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy for both these illnesses. We very much appreciate your compliance with the complete schedule. We count on all families to do their part to keep our community safe. Any child who is not up-to-date on his or her vaccinations due to a medical condition must present supporting evidence (documented by a licensed health professional), which will be reviewed by the Director of SPCNS prior to being considered for admission. Any under-immunized child will be excluded from school during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable illness.

- c. Emergency Medication Administration Form
 - d. Current emergency information
 - e. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g. asthma, hearing or vision impairment, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizure, diabetes, etc.)
- 3) Child's personal history form
 - 4) Special Care Plan – for children with special needs

Withdrawal/Exclusion

Parents must notify the Director of their intention to withdraw their child/ren as soon as possible. Please refer to the Fee Structure and Payment Procedures for information on refund in the event of withdrawal.

Fee Structure and Payment Procedures

Tuition is billed twice per school year, and it must be paid in advance for each semester unless arrangements have been made with the director to pay monthly.

An application form must be submitted each year with a nonrefundable \$25 processing fee for each child. Parents do not need to reapply or send an additional fee for the second semester. Upon acceptance, families are required to make a \$200 deposit to reserve their spot. This deposit will be credited to second semester tuition.

If the director discovers that a child who has been accepted to nursery school is not ready for the classroom setting, tuition will be refunded. If a child must be withdrawn for any other reason later in the year, the parents will be charged for either a half semester or a whole semester depending on the **date and/or reason for withdrawal. Tuition Refund must be approved by the director and, if necessary, by the Board of Trustees.**

Families with two or more children attending the program simultaneously will pay full tuition for the first child and receive a sibling tuition discount of 1% of the lower tuition fee per semester. For accounting purposes, this discount will be credited as a 2% reduction of the second semester tuition.

Health and Safety Guidelines

Ill Child Health Policy

The health and wellbeing of every child in our program is very important to us. SPCNS makes every possible effort to guard against infections and spread of disease. If a child becomes ill during the time when he/she is participating in our program, SPCNS will call the parents or appropriate care provider and request that the child be picked up.

We strongly suggest you consider the following guidelines when trying to determine whether to send your child to school. If your child experiences any of the following, please keep your child at home.

- The child has experienced a fever of 100°F or higher in the last 24 hours.
- The child’s illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities.
- The child’s illness requires more care than staff is able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group.
- The child shows symptoms such as tiredness, irritability, lack of appetite, or unusual behaviors.
- The child has experienced diarrhea or vomiting in the last 48 hours. The child should be able to tolerate fluids and solids before returning.
- The child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease and has not had treatment for at least 24 hours.
- The child has yellow or green discharge from the eyes, or their eyes indicate possible conjunctivitis (“pink eye”).
- The child has lice or knits and has not yet begun treatment.

SPCNS requests that families notify the director within 24 hours after a child or family member has developed a known or suspected communicable disease.

We request that any child with flu-like symptoms (see COVID-specific restrictions, below) remain at home until 24 hours after the resolution of a fever of 100°F or more without the use of fever-reducing medications, and 48 hours after the resolution of vomiting or diarrhea. Flu symptoms may include:

- a sudden fever (100°F or above)
- a sudden cough
- headache
- tiredness
- chills
- aching muscles
- limb or joint pain
- diarrhea or stomach upset
- sore throat
- runny nose
- sneezing
- loss of appetite.

(This section appeared previously as a separate addendum to our Health and Safety protocols found in this document. For the 2023-2024 school year, we have incorporated the updated guidance and plan here.)

SPCNS Covid-19 Health & Safety Plan June 2023

This updated version of Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School's (SPCNS) COVID-19 Health & Safety Plan is based on the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) guidance for Early Care and Education (ECE) programs, and it outlines main strategies for SPCNS to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain safe operations. This guidance emphasizes implementing continuing layered COVID-19 prevention strategies to protect students, staff, and families and is based on current scientific evidence and lessons learned from our own experience and other schools implementing COVID-19 prevention strategies.

In selecting the most appropriate layered prevention strategies, SPCNS carefully considered multiple factors, such as the level of vaccination among children, staff, families, and the community; the physical space in which the program operates; the families and children served; and the current levels of community transmission, outbreaks, or trends. SPCNS reserves the right to modify this Health & Safety Plan if circumstances change regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Any such changes will first be reviewed by our medical consultants, Board

of Trustees, and any other advisory groups, and then be communicated to all families and nursery school stakeholders.

Prevention Strategies:

Promoting vaccination

Vaccination is still the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. While vaccines do not prevent infection or transmission, people who are up to date of their COVID-19 vaccines are at a lower risk of symptomatic or severe infection. All SPCNS teachers and staff who work with children are required to be up to date on their vaccines, as medically appropriate. All eligible children and families (including extended family members who have frequent contact with children in SPCNS) are strongly encouraged to be up to date on vaccines, as medically appropriate. **Please stay in touch with your child's pediatrician and your family PCP with regard to the latest guidance.**

Mask usage when appropriate

When transmission levels of COVID-19 are rising or high, people can protect others as well as themselves by consistently wearing high-quality (KN95, for example), well-fitting masks in public spaces. According to the CDC, ECE programs should weigh a variety of considerations when choosing when to mask. Currently, mask usage is optional when not exposed to, or recovering from, COVID. See below for mask wearing guidance due to illness.

Ventilation

In general, improving ventilation is an important strategy to prevent the spread of airborne diseases. Along with other preventive strategies, bringing fresh outdoor air into a building helps keep virus particles from concentrating inside. This can be done by opening multiple doors and windows, using child-safe fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows. Classroom windows and doors will be open if possible to bring in fresh air whenever classes are in session. Additionally, HEPA filter air purifier units operate in each classroom.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Adults and children should practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19. SPCNS will monitor and reinforce these behaviors and provide adequate handwashing and sanitizing supplies. Children will wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds upon arrival at school, before and after eating, after playing outdoors, after using the bathroom, and whenever hands are visibly dirty. Parents are encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon entry as well. If hands are not visibly dirty and soap and water are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used. Staff will supervise the use of hand sanitizer. In addition, staff will wash hands before and after encountering bodily fluids, used masks, or handling food garbage. Children will be guided to cough and sneeze into their elbow or a tissue, and to refrain from touching their eyes, nose, mouth, and mask.

Cleaning and disinfecting

An enhanced cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting schedule in compliance with CDC guidelines will be followed. In general, current CDC recommends that cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential virus that may be on surfaces. Teachers and church Sextons will help with cleaning procedures. High touch hard surfaces such as countertops, door handles, light switches, tabletops, etc. will be disinfected after school is dismissed each day. Mostly toys and educational materials that can be cleaned and

sanitized will be used. Toys that children have placed in children's mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be set aside until they are cleaned and sanitized.

Guidelines for illness:

Staying Home

Staying home when sick is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of SPCNS and prevent spread to others. The overlap between COVID-19 symptoms with other common illnesses means that some people with symptoms of COVID-19 could be ill with something else. This is even more likely in young children, who typically have multiple viral illnesses each year. To further reduce the transmission of the disease, children who have symptoms of infectious illness or certain symptoms of COVID-19 should remain at home

- Any adults, staff, or children who have a fever of 100.4 °F or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted to SPCNS. Nursery school families will self-monitor and report any signs of illness to SPCNS.
- If symptoms emerge during the school day, the child will leave the classroom with a staff person and kept comfortable until picked up. We ask that you come within one hour to take them home.
- Your child will be excluded from school if s/he has any ONE of the following symptoms of COVID-19, and may not return until symptoms are resolving: Fever over 100.3; shaking or chills; shortness of breath or trouble breathing; new loss of taste or smell; new body aches; nausea or vomiting; diarrhea; severe cough

Exposure/Testing

All children and adults, regardless of vaccination status, if known exposure to COVID-19

- Do NOT need to quarantine
- Get tested at least 3-5 days after the last exposure
- Monitor for symptoms.
- Children and adults are strongly encouraged to wear a well-fitting mask around others for **5 days** after the last close contact, test if symptoms appear. **Although we hope that families will choose to mask, we understand that not every person is able to do so and we respect the decisions families make regarding masking after a COVID-19 exposure.**

Testing/When to return

The length of time the child must stay out of school will depend on whether the child has COVID-19 or another illness. Parents will inform the school if their child has had a COVID-19 test and what the result is when available.

If your child has confirmed (via PCR or home RAT) COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 (exposed and symptomatic but not tested), your child may return to school after

- **Testing** negative via home test or PCR.
 - **Home Rapid Antigen Test (RAT):** They receive two negative RAT results, taken 48 hours apart, on or after day 5 (of either symptom onset or a positive test) **and** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving

- **PCR:** They receive a negative PCR test. (These tests can remain positive even after the contagious phase of illness has ended).

OR

- **Waiting** a minimum of 5 days (we recommend 10) since symptoms first appeared **and** 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** other symptoms of COVID-19 are significantly improving. SPCNS prefers, but does not require, that students test negative before returning.

Community notifications

- SPCNS will notify staff and families of children who were close contacts as soon as possible (within the same day if possible) after we are notified that someone in the program has tested positive.

Additional Considerations

Any visitors to SPCNS, including but not limited to direct service providers (DSP) and early intervention support, must adhere to the provisions in the SPCNS Health & Safety Plan. Visitors and DSPs must sign in on the log provided near the office. SPCNS will base decisions regarding all other issues of curricula, classroom management, and other daily school operations upon the guidelines for ECE programs issued by the CDC, when appropriate.

Administration of Medication Policy

SPCNS will only administer medications needed on an *emergency* basis. SPCNS will not administer medications without signed consent from the parents and information from your child's physician indicating how and when the medication should be administered.

Prescription medication must be presented by parents/legal guardians in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with:

- Child's first and last names
- Name and strength of the medication
- Date the prescription was filled
- Name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription
- Medication's expiration date
- Administration, storage and disposal instructions.

Non-prescription medications must be presented by parents/legal guardians in a child-resistant container. The medication must be labeled as follows:

- Child's first and last names
- Specific, legible instructions for administration and storage
- The name of the healthcare provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Additionally all medication must be presented to SPCNS with written instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration or administration.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, out of the reach of children.

Medications will not be used beyond the expiration date.

It is the parents' responsibility to provide SPCNS with the medication at the beginning of every school year and request to take the medication home at the end of the school year. All medications remaining at SPCNS at the end of the last day celebration will be appropriately discarded.

Epi-Pen Use in Case of Emergencies at SPCNS

Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School has two Epi-pen Juniors in stock in a safe and secure location to be used in the event of an emergency for any child who does not have one of their own. Our staff have been certified in First Aid/CPR and in the use of Epi-Pen Juniors, and Mrs. Hall is a registered nurse. Protocol requires that any time an EpiPen is administered, the individual must be transported via ambulance to the Emergency Room.

A. If your child has been diagnosed with an allergy/health condition that requires the use of an EpiPen, it is still your responsibility to provide your child's EpiPen to the school on or before the first day of class along with medical orders.

B. The state law requires schools to provide parents with an opt-out for parents who wish their child to be exempt from the provisions of the law. If your child has a chronic medical condition, please discuss this form with your child's physician to ensure that there are no contraindications to administering epinephrine to your child. The opt-out form is supplied to parents annually if for any reason you do not want your child to be administered epinephrine in the event that they would have a life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). This form should be completed and returned to the nursery school office.

Protecting our children from the sun

In an attempt to support the health and well-being of all children, the SPCNS would like to strongly encourage parents to apply sunscreen to their child prior to their arrival to school. We'd also encourage you to take further precautions by sending a hat to school with your child. The children spend a good amount of time outside, many times in areas where they are exposed to direct sun. Please be mindful that unprotected exposure to the sun poses health risks to children and adults alike.

Safety and Emergency Guidelines

Our health and safety procedures also include the highly unlikely serious situations that might require our school to alter dismissal, relocate during an emergency, or even lockdown. A variety of safety experts and resources were consulted in creating our plans and the staff have been trained on numerous occasions. The emergency plan is posted in each classroom. In case of emergency, families will be notified using the Brightwheel app.

With regard to the threat of other types of emergency situations (e.g., severe weather, fire, building damage, utility failure, civil disturbance, hostile intruder or agitated visitor), depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

- **Immediate evacuation:** Children are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc. We gather in the front yard surrounded by the circular driveway. If it is necessary to remain outside for a longer period of time, we may move into the Grassy Park.
- **Evacuation/Relocation:** Total evacuation of the facility if a risk is prolonged or prevents our re-entry into the building. In this case, children will walk to one of two relocation facilities and we will contact you to pick up your child there. Our primary relocation center is **The Mansions on Fifth at 5105 Fifth**

Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15232 and our secondary location is **Rodef Shalom, 4905 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.**

- **In-place sheltering:**
 - Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response. We have identified numerous spaces throughout the building where the children could be sheltered safely under these circumstances.
 - If it is determined that there is a danger in the neighborhood or area, we will employ a modified lockdown procedure wherein all of the children will be kept inside their classrooms and all of the outside doors will remain locked until the danger is resolved. By placing children in classrooms, we are able to manage them in a safe and supportive manner.
 - If it is determined that there is a danger inside the building, we will employ a full lockdown procedure wherein the children will be sequestered in their classrooms until the danger is resolved.

In any of these circumstances, we will contact you with important information, as well as with any alternate plans for dismissal, as soon as we are able. We ask that you do not call SPCNS during an emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information. Please do not come to the school until you have been told to, so as not to interfere with emergency responders.

Release of Student Records Policy

SPCNS is committed to ensuring the privacy of its students and families. Whenever information regarding the child's educational records is requested by an outside party (e.g., for admission and enrollment in another school or for judicial processes), SPCNS will adhere to the following policy for the release of information:

- I. The educational records of a student shall not be released to any third party except as follows:
 - a. To another school in which the student seeks to enroll, with the prior written consent of the parent or legal guardian; and
 - b. To a third party upon proper service of a valid subpoena or judicial order. In this situation, the records will be released pursuant to the subpoena or judicial order only after the SPCNS gives prior written notice of its compliance to the student's parent or legal guardian.

- II. The student's medical records shall not be released to any third party, except pursuant to a valid subpoena or judicial order.

III. Release of Directory Information

- a. No directory information shall be released over the telephone, including confirmation of the identity of any student at Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School.
- b. Directory information regarding a student shall not be released except as follows:
 - i. The SPCNS may publish a School Directory for the sole personal use of the students, their families, The Board of Trustees, the employees, officers and directors of the school and may not be used for commercial purposes.
 - ii. Upon prior written consent of the student's parent or legal guardian

- iii. To a third party upon proper service of a valid subpoena or judicial order. In this situation, the records will be released pursuant to the subpoena or judicial order only after the Nursery School gives prior written notice of its compliance to the student's parent or legal guardian.

IV. Definitions

- a. "Directory information" shall mean the student's name, names of parents/ legal guardians, street and e-mail addresses of student and parents/legal guardians, telephone number(s) and email address(es).
- b. "Third party" shall mean any person, corporation or institution other than the student, the student's parents or legal guardian, the Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School Board and officers and employees of the Shadyside Presbyterian Church Nursery School.

Tax Information

The SPCNS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. As such, donors are eligible to receive a tax deduction from their donations to the school.

Your cancelled check will serve as your receipt of tuition payment. In the event that you need an official receipt, please do not hesitate to contact the nursery school office.

In January, you will receive a tax letter from the Nursery School reflecting all tuition paid for the previous fiscal year.