



## Parent Handbook

Trinity Preschool  
A Ministry of Trinity Ecumenical Parish

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# Table of Contents

Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives-----	3
Programs Offered-----	4
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	
Registration and Tuition Fees-----	5
Drop off, Pick up and Punctuality-----	5
<b>Health and Safety Policies</b>	
Immunization Records-----	6
Illness-----	6
Hygiene-----	6
Safety Precautions-----	7
<b>General Information</b>	
Family Contributions-----	7
Communication-----	7
Conferences-----	8
Snacks-----	8
Parties-----	8
Birthdays-----	8
Field Trips-----	8
Chapel-----	8
Parent Involvement-----	8
Inclement Weather Policy-----	9
Absences-----	9
Your Ongoing Responsibilities-----	9
Maintaining a Positive Attitude-----	9
Toilet Training-----	9
Discipline-----	10
<b>Supporting Children with Special Needs</b> -----	10
<b>Transition Plans</b> -----	10
<b>Exemption Status</b> -----	12

# Trinity Preschool

**Welcome** to Trinity Preschool! Trinity is licensed by the State of Virginia as a religious exempt childcare center.

## **Trinity Ecumenical Parish**

In the spirit of Ecumenism, we at Trinity are loving, serving, learning, and growing together in Christ, as one community of faith, in which we trust and respect one another as we fulfill our common calling to ministry and mission. We are Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and other Christians from many backgrounds, who are learning that we are enriched by sharing one another's traditions and strengthened by working and serving together.

## **Mission Statement**

To nurture young children through education, fellowship, prayer and compassion.

## **Goal**

To provide a caring and compassionate social and educational experience for preschool-aged children in a Christian environment. Our philosophy is learning through play, which research shows is the best way for young children to learn.

## **Objectives**

- To teach and model Christian values such as love of God and neighbor, kindness, sharing, and respect for one another and for all of God's creation.
- To provide support, guidance, training, and resources to parents, and to encourage parents in their role as primary teachers of their children.
- To provide an environment where children can learn to make choices, plan activities, and review accomplishments.
- To teach concepts of colors, shapes, alphabet, numbers, counting and other pre-math skills.
- To encourage pre-reading skills through the use of books, poetry, story telling, and dramatic play.
- To promote the development of speech and language, and listening skills.
- To provide enjoyable experiences in music and art, and in fine and gross motor activities.
- To continue to uphold the practices of Virginia Quality Rating and Improvement System.

## Programs Offered

Trinity Preschool follows the best practices as described by the Virginia Quality Rating and Improvement System. Each class is under the direction of two teachers. The Trinity Preschool Leadership Team reserves the right to include children born after September 30, into a class under certain conditions.

**Toddler Class – 2 years old by September 30** This program provides a creative and structured environment as a means to introduce the young children to socialization beyond their family unit. Through games and creative play, shapes, colors, counting and ABC's are introduced while increasing their attention span and listening skills. Music, art, science, and sensory experiences are provided each day. If needed, the children will have an adjustment time to separate from their parents. Teachers use "Milestones of Child Development" in making plans.

Maximum class size: 8 children

**Now I'm Three – 3 years old by September 30** This program provides socialization and aids in the development of listening and communication skills. Music, art, math, science, small and large motor skill activities, and sensory activities are provided. Children will learn colors, shapes, numbers, letters and name recognition. Teachers use "Milestones of Child Development" in making daily plans. Children should be toilet trained or close to it.

Maximum class size: 12 Children

**Pre-Kindergarten – 4 years old by September 30** This program sets goals of increased ability to do independent work and greater attention span, as well as ability to focus on the task at hand. Children learn patterns, letter sounds and recognition, visual discrimination, reading and math readiness, and fine motor skills. Teachers use "Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds in making daily plans.

Maximum class size: 12 children.

### **Optional Lunch Bunch**

May be offered for a nominal fee Mondays and Wednesdays, until 2:00, for children in the Threes and Pre-K Classes. Children bring their lunches. Minimum of 7 required.

### **Summer Camp – Ages 3 to 5**

A weeklong camp is held in June and July, Monday-Friday, 9:00 to 1:00, with parents supplying lunch, and the school providing a light snack. The themed camp includes arts and crafts, stories, music, games, outdoor play, and various learning experiences. The camp is open to children from outside of Trinity Preschool. Children must be toilet-trained. There will be a minimum number of children required.

# **Payment, Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures**

## **Registration Fee**

A registration fee is required for all of our classes and is due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable and is discounted when paid prior to June 1.

## **Tuition**

Your tuition supports our program and must be paid in a timely manner. Tuition is due the first day of the month for your child's class. If late, you will be contacted with a polite reminder. A \$15 late fee may be charged. Tuition payments may be made by checks made to TEP (Trinity Ecumenical Parish), with child's name on the memo line. Checks may be given to Debbie Tyler in the office, or mailed with "attention Debbie" on the envelope. Tuition may be paid online at [www.tep-preschool.org](http://www.tep-preschool.org). Click on "Make a Payment" and find Registration and Tuition. Another payment option is the Give+ app. Tuition payments must be made regardless of child's attendance. Lunch Bunch payments may be made on the website as well. Paying monthly for Lunch Bunch days is encouraged, and any absences will be accommodated in future payments.

## **Drop Off**

Parents bring their child into the preschool room in the morning. Do not allow child to come into the building alone. Children hang coats and book bags, using assigned hooks or cubbies. Parents please use provided sign-in sheets when bringing your child to class each morning. This is the appropriate time to inform the teacher of any change in the pick-up of the child for that day. If a person other than those named on the Student Information Sheet will pick up the child, we require written notification.

## **Pick Up**

Children will be picked up from their classrooms, where the parents will sign them out. Teachers must know who will be picking up your child. We must have written permission if a person other than those previously named is to pick up the child. If your child is going home with another preschool friend, notes are required from parents of both children. If an individual not on the list comes to school to pick up your child, we will not release the child. We reserve the right to request to see a picture ID from unfamiliar individuals, in order to keep your child safe.

## **Punctuality**

A time may arise when you are unable to bring or pick up your child at the designated times. Please notify the teacher or the church office if such a situation occurs. We feel it is important for the children to arrive on time so that they may participate fully in the group, when the children are free to interact with each other and participate in activities. As doors may be locked, please use the doorbell or text the teacher upon arrival. Please pick children up on time, as teachers need this time to plan and prepare for the next day or to participate in a meeting. Consistent tardiness in picking up will result in a discussion with the parent involved.

# Health and Safety Policies

## Immunization Records

Children must have all immunizations recommended by the family physician, pediatrician, or the health department. A copy of the immunization record is required as part of registration.

## Identification

In order to comply with licensing requirements, and to insure that we are not inadvertently assisting in the harboring of a missing child, we require proof of your child's identity. Any one of the following documents will satisfy this requirement:

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security card. For your protection, this number will not be kept in our files.
- Passport
- Adoption or foster care papers

We also need to be informed of any previous childcare centers your child may have attended in the past.

## Illness

Sick children should not be brought to school. If your child has a fever of 100.4 or higher the day of school or the day before, or if he has an earache, inflamed eyes, flu symptoms, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, a bad cold, or a rash, your child needs to stay home. If your child becomes sick at preschool, you will be contacted immediately to pick him up. Children may return to preschool when symptom-free for 24 hours. Please do not send your child if a fever has been reduced by medication.

If an infectious illness is diagnosed in a child, the school will share that information, but NOT the name of the child.

Our policy regarding coronavirus is on file, a copy of which may be requested.

## Hygiene

We teach and encourage good health practices at school. Children and staff wash hands upon arrival, following any use of the bathroom, after messy artwork, before and after eating snacks, after outdoor play, and after touching their noses. Children are taught to cover their mouths with tissue when coughing or sneezing, or using the inside of their elbow, when tissues are not readily available.

Surfaces with which children and staff come into contact are cleaned and sanitized daily. These include those in the classrooms, bathrooms, hallway, and stairwell. Toys upon which a child has coughed or sneezed, or has placed in the mouth are removed and cleaned.

Head lice infestation has been extremely rare (once!) at Trinity Preschool. A policy regarding lice is on file, a copy of which may be requested.

### **Safety Precautions**

Fire drills are held monthly, and tornado drills, bi-annually. The school is inspected by the fire marshal each year. All of our fire exits are clearly marked. Teachers are First aid and CPR trained. have undergone Fingerprint-based background and Child Protective Services checks, and regular training in a safeguarding our children course. All doors are locked by 9:20 and remain so until 12:00, or 2:00 on Lunch Bunch days. The doors on our level are used only by the preschool during school hours. If a child arrives after the doors are locked or needs to be picked up early, the doorbell may be used or parent can text teachers. The elevator is disabled for the preschool floor during school hours. A security camera is in use, with film erased every 24 hours. It is not monitored and will be viewed only if there is a reason to do so.

## **General Information**

### **Family Contributions**

Your child must bring a backpack, labeled with his name, containing a zip log back with change of clothes, also labeled. The clothing should be updated as seasons change. Those children not yet toilet-trained will be asked to supply diapers and wipes.

As we do go outside every day unless precipitating or very cold, please remember coats, hats and mittens. Closed-toed shoes are highly recommended.

Your child's teacher will request certain items for you to supply the class. All teachers will request a family photo for each student.

Do not send in any personal items that your child may not choose to share with others. A book or show-and-tell, or item relating to current theme are exceptions.

### **Communication**

A strong line of communication between school and home is very important. You will receive information via this handbook, orientation sessions, newsletters, emails, texts, or notes coming home in backpacks. Please read all communications that you receive.

Likewise, we want you to feel free to share anything with us concerning your child. Your child's teacher is happy to accept your phone call, texts, emails, or written notes. Teachers will check backpacks for any communication you may have sent.

## **Conferences**

Teachers will hold two parent conferences during the school year, with a copy of your child's report given to you.

## **Snacks**

Parents provide snacks for their children each day. Snacks should be nutritious and from two different food groups. The children will bring water-filled bottles, which must go home to be cleaned each day. Parents will be made aware of any allergies in the class.

Children are encouraged to serve themselves and to use proper table manners.

## **Parties**

We enjoy celebrating holidays and learning about various traditions associated with those special calendar events. The classes will hold parties several times during the year for the families, with volunteer parents hosting. Treats may be served along with healthy foods. Please be aware of allergies.

## **Birthdays**

All children love the special recognition of their birthdays. If you choose to provide a treat, please inform the teacher in advance. You may come at snack time to share the celebration or simply leave the treat when bringing your child to school. Be aware of allergies.

## **Field Trips**

Each class offers at least two field trips per year. We do not provide transportation, but rather invite you and any other children in your family to attend the field trip, providing your own transportation. We may request to view your driver's license and proof of insurance. There may be nominal fees required for family members.

Trinity will also have visitors come to offer enrichment to our students.

## **Chapel**

The primary goal of chapel is to bring children to the understanding that God loves them dearly. Children attending Now I'm Three and Pre-K attend a chapel time twice a month, facilitated by the pastors of Trinity Ecumenical Parish. All classes include devotions during the school mornings.

## **Parent Involvement**

At Trinity Preschool, we believe that it takes a village, and welcome your participation in your child's experience here. Please speak with your child's teacher if you would like to share a talent, an experience, a story, art project or musical experience with the children. Volunteers are needed to host class parties, make play dough, handle Scholastic Book orders, coordinate/help with fundraisers, and other tasks the teacher may require.



## **Inclement Weather Policy**

In the event of inclement weather, our preschool follows Franklin County Public Schools. Please check for school closings. If FCPS are closed, Trinity will be closed. If they are starting one hour late, the preschool will meet at its normal time. If the public schools are starting two hours late, all preschool classes will meet from 10:30 – 1:30, with children bringing their lunch.

If the weather turns bad and FCPS is sending students home during Trinity school hours, we will notify parents and request students be picked up right away.

## **Absences**

Please let your teacher know if your child is to be absent for whatever reason. Not only does that help the teacher in planning for the morning, but ensures that a child has not been accidentally left in a vehicle.

## **Your Ongoing Responsibilities**

You may assist in the smooth operation of the preschool in the following ways:

- Please notify the director of any change in your contact information. It is important that we always have a way to reach you in case of an emergency.
- Inform us of any changes in the list of people approved to pick up your child from school.
- Update immunization records each time your child has had inoculations.
- Let us know if your child is to be absent, and if he has is an infectious illness.
- Please let us know of changes at home that may affect your child while at school, physically or emotionally.
- Please share any other information that might prove beneficial to the positive interaction of your child with the teacher and other students. Please know that all information is kept strictly confidential.
- Be an active part of your child's preschool experience in whatever ways you can.
- Read all communications!

## **Maintaining a Positive Environment**

At Trinity Preschool, we welcome comments, concerns, or questions that parents may have about the program. Our goal is a positive preschool experience for your child and you. If you have a concern about your child's class, please raise the issue with your child's teacher. If you feel more comfortable speaking with the director, please do so. The parent member of the Trinity Preschool Leadership Team is also available, as is either of the TEP pastors. Whatever the concern, we strongly urge parents to speak with a staff member, and refrain from discussing an issue in the hallway or parking lot. Please adhere to our policy of confidentiality.

## **Toilet Training**

All children entering the Now I'm Three class should be potty trained, or in the process. We understand that the child may still be in a diaper or pull-up and may have an occasional accident. We will work together with the parents in their child's training experience. However, if a child has more than two bowel movements in a diaper, the parent will be called to change the child, supplying a clean set of clothes if needed.

## **Discipline**

Based on a philosophy of exhibiting kindness and respect for each other, our children are taught to interact appropriately with their peers: to share, take turns, and to use their words to express their wants and feelings. Children are encouraged to work out their problems on their own and to ask for help if they need it. Teachers use praise and thanksgiving when a child displays a positive behavior or response. They use methods of positive discipline to reverse inappropriate behavior. They speak respectfully to the children, modeling appropriate ways to interact with their classmates. Children are reminded that they are loved and valued as a child of God, no matter what. Teachers will confer with parents if a problem continues so that together they may assist the child in his development.

## **Supporting Children with Special Needs**

Trinity Preschool attempts to meet the individual needs of all children, including those with special needs, be they physical, educational or behavioral. The school has the benefit of having on staff an individual who holds a degree in Special Education and Learning Disabilities, with experience in Early Intervention. This individual will offer suggestions for teachers. Trinity will use all its available resources and will work closely with parents to serve all children.

## **Transition Plan**

The teachers strive to make the transitions to the following year's classes smooth and comfortable for the children. The parents are included in this process.

### **Toddler to Now I'm Three Class**

At Trinity, the Toddler and Now I'm Three classes use the same room, as they do indoor playroom and outside areas, so the children are already familiar with the settings. The parents of the Toddlers will have the opportunity to bring their children to the current Threes class at a mutually agreed upon time to meet the teachers and ask questions. The children will visit the chapel and meet the Pastors. Teachers will pass evaluations and any special information on to the Threes teacher.

### **Now I'm Three to Pre-K Class**

The Threes are familiar with the indoor playroom and outdoor play areas as well as the Pre-K teachers whom they see during joint activities or Lunch Bunch. Parents may visit the pre-k class to meet the teachers and ask questions, at a mutually agreeable time. The children will be shown the church library, which the pre-K children visit bi-weekly. They will also meet the science teacher that comes monthly to Pre-K. The teachers will pass evaluations and any special information on to the Pre-K teacher.

## **Pre-K to Kindergarten**

The Pre-K teacher will learn the dates of kindergarten registration for Bedford and Franklin Counties and will pass that information on to the parents. The teacher will provide books about kindergarten to share with the children. At the spring conferences, the teacher will speak with the parents regarding kindergarten readiness skills and share any screening results. The teacher is happy to complete forms and provide recommendations, conference reports, records, etc., for the next school year, if requested by the parent. As exciting as it is for a child to enter the world of kindergarten, experience has shown that talking about that transition can be overdone, in some cases leaving the child with a bit of anxiety about the unknown and reluctance to leave the comfort of preschool. It is suggested that teachers and parents be aware of the child's attitude regarding the upcoming transition

# Exemption Status as a Religious Institution

Under the exemption law, the following public notice statements are to be provided to parents:

**1. Staff Qualifications.** All staff complete a fingerprint based criminal records and child abuse and neglect registry check, and a Child Protective Services check, a Staff Health Report signed by their physician stating individual is free of disability that would prevent him/her to care for children, and the Parish's Safeguarding Children Workshop.

Lead Teacher: Teaching degree or certificate in Early Childhood or Elementary Education. Experience in teaching young children is preferred. A nurturing personality knowledgeable in child development, and ability to work well with parents.

Assistant Teacher: Experience in working with young children, with a nurturing personality. Able to work cooperatively with teacher.

All teachers are First Aid and CPR trained bi-yearly, and participate in ongoing professional development.

**2. Physical Facility.** Trinity Preschool is located on the lower level of Trinity Ecumenical Parish, 40 Lakemount Drive, Moneta, VA, 24121. The preschool occupies three rooms. There is a large playground surrounded by a secure 6-foot wooden fence, and includes a thick matting of engineered mulch. For inclement weather, there is a large open room where children may play with balls, riding toys, and puppets. Kitchen facilities are not used by the preschool.

**3. Enrollment Capacity.** Each class is facilitated by one instructor and one assistant. The Toddler program has a cap of 8 children, the Now I'm Three Class has a maximum of 12 students, and the Pre-K class has a cap of 12 children.

**4. Food Service.** The school does not offer food service. The families supply nutritious snacks and children bring a water bottle which goes home each day to be cleaned. Special treats may be brought in for special occasions. On days delayed by inclement weather, the children bring their lunches from home.

**5. Staff Health.** As stated above, all staff members are certified by medical personnel to be free of any disability that would prevent her/him to care for children. Documentation is on record at the preschool.

**6. Transportation.** Parents transport their own children. No bus or van service provided.

**7. Liability Insurance.** Trinity Ecumenical Parish maintains a policy through Church Mutual Insurance, covering Trinity Preschool.

