



Family Handbook

Updated May 2019

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Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 7:00am-6:00pm
Serving Preschool Children from 8 weeks-Kindergarten
After School Enrichment Grades K-6th

Mission Statement: The mission of the Preschool of the Arts is to provide the highest quality care for young children in a rich and nurturing learning environment which utilizes the most current research in the field, while partnering with families to nurture childrens' cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.



OUR CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The curriculum at The Preschool of the Arts is dynamic and ever changing. Our curriculum will continue to grow and change along with the most up-to-date research on early childhood education. We combine the best curriculum elements from approaches such as Reggio Emilia, Emergent Curriculum, and Project-Based Learning creating communities of inquiry all in a positive, nurturing environment.

From our studies of education theorists like Piaget, Vygotsky, and by the educators at the Reggio Emilia Schools in Italy, our daily curriculum is based on allowing the children to discover topics through exploring, asking questions, researching, discovering, proposing ideas, and making choices in order to build a better understanding of the world in which we live. The curriculum has inspired us:

- To let the children take the lead, creating a child-initiated learning environment; which is based on developmentally appropriate practices and observations of the children at play.
- To believe that children are strong and capable learners who construct their own knowledge through hands-on exploration. Emphasizing the active role children play in acquiring knowledge, teachers carefully prepare learning projects to promote interactive, discovery learning.
- To focus on each child in relation to other children, the family, the teacher, and the community based on Vygotsky's research of social learning through interaction with peers, adults, and things in the world around us.
- To foster children's intellectual development through a focus on representation using a variety of different avenues: words, movement, drawing, painting, building, sculpture, dramatic play, photography and music. Children have access to many materials in order to discover and communicate what they know, understand and wonder.
- To design and use physical space to encourage encounters, communication, and relationships with every space having an identity and purpose. Classrooms are purposefully arranged with the belief that the environment is an important element in learning that fosters interaction among children. The outdoor environment is also considered to be a vital part of the learning environment with special emphasis on outdoor gardens; nature inspired art projects; nature photography and science exploration.
- To incorporate character education to build values in everyday decisions and interactions.



Teachers at the Preschool of the Arts...

- ... are facilitators of learning as they work with children as a partner, nurturer, and guide. Together, teachers and children will explore long and short-term projects.
- ... listen to and observe the children in order to discover what intrigues the children to build the curriculum on their interests rather than repetitive themes. Learning takes place in meaningful contexts to enhance the children's understanding of each topic explored.
- ...continually engage in discussions with other teachers, the children, and the parents in order to extend children's learning. Open communication allows sharing of ideas and the building of partnerships between teachers, school and families.
- ... see themselves as researchers, preparing documentation of their work with children. This documentation serves many purposes; it makes parents aware of their children's experiences and allows the teachers to better understand children. Documentation helps teachers evaluate their own work and exchange ideas with other educators. Documentation also shows children that their work is valued.
- ...continually seek ways to update their knowledge through staff development opportunities, self-directed learning and continuing education.
- ...are positive, role-models for children and families always showing respect for the child, the family, colleagues, and themselves.
- ...are up-to-date in state required trainings specific to the age range of children that they serve and all teachers are CPR and First Aid Trained



Attending The Preschool of the Arts

DRESS

Remember that your child comes to school to play and explore. Most days this means many children will have paint on their shirts and sand in their shoes. Parents learn quickly that a child coming home covered with a little dirt is a child who has been involved in discovery, following his or her curiosity without the confines of "keeping things clean."

For this reason, we suggest that children wear casual, play clothes that are not restricting. They need sturdy, soft-soled shoes such as tennis shoes that keep feet covered and safe. Please steer away from cowboy boots, patent leather, strapless crocs or other fragile, open-toed shoes. Hard-soled shoes and the pointed-toe boots are dangerous to children as they climb; strapless shoes fall off easy and are a tripping hazard; and open toed sandals may not give feet enough protection from sharp objects such as sticks.

At times, we may engage in project activities that will take us outside in wet conditions. Teachers may ask for children to bring raincoats and rain boots so they can explore the outdoor environment comfortably. An extra pair of shoes is always a good idea to send on wet days. During the spring and fall when the day may start out cool and then warm up, it is important to dress a child in layers of clothing (i.e., undershirt, short or long-sleeved shirt, sweatshirt, jacket.) This allows a child to take off clothing as the day changes.

Make sure clothing is easy to manage when a child needs to go to the bathroom. Too many snaps, buttons, and overall bibs may be frustrating and impair a child's sense of independence. Write your child's name on all clothes and store an extra set of clothes, including underwear, socks, and shoes in the child's cubby. As the seasons change, you will need to change the type of clothing that is stored.

HEALTHY MEALS

At The Preschool of the Arts, we believe that mealtimes provide opportunities for growth:

Social Interaction * Independence * Manners * Making Healthy Choices

Morning snack-A healthy morning snack will be served between 8:00-9:00am. All children are encouraged to eat breakfast before coming to school, but we provide an additional opportunity to ensure children eat a healthy snack to start their day. The snack includes two items from two different food groups.

Lunch- Menus are written and posted on a 2 week rotation to help children benefit from seasonal fruits and vegetables. Menus are posted in classrooms and are available on our website listing all meals that will be served. The meal is a hot lunch that consists of a meat, vegetable, fruit, bread and milk. The meal will be served family style as the children's developmental abilities allow, so the children will benefit from a positive meal atmosphere. Teachers will sit with the children and encourage them to try new foods, as well as, having a conversation with them. Children will be taught self-help skills and will be given the opportunity to serve themselves. Lunch is served each day between 11:00-11:50am based on the classroom schedule.

Afternoon Snack- Afternoon snack will be offered- but not required. All children are hungry at different times and they will have the freedom to choose if or when they will eat snack. Snacks consist of two items from two different food groups. Snack will be available in the classroom from 2:45-3:45pm for afternoon snack for the children to enjoy when they are ready.

All meals and snacks meet the food program guidelines. Diet restrictions and allergies are taken into consideration when preparing the meal schedules. If your child has special diet restrictions, please provide a doctor's note that specifically describes the allergy and foods to avoid. Parents are responsible for providing alternate food choices in case of an allergy.

TOYS FROM HOME

Resources and materials for our classrooms are carefully chosen based upon developmental and age needs as well as their appropriateness for group use. Toys from home rarely meet these criteria. Personal toys are treasured by their owners. It is unreasonable to expect that they will be able to be shared with all of their classmates. However, there are already many opportunities for children to learn the social skill of sharing in this environment, within reasonable expectations. Toys from home can also create a very competitive atmosphere. When one child brings in a Barbie® or super hero, everyone wants to bring in his or hers! Play also becomes focused upon that particular toy, rather than upon creative and open-ended exchange.

For these reasons, the staff of the preschool requires that toys be left at home or in the car when the child is dropped off. The exception is when your child has a security type toy (i.e., blanket or certain stuffed animal, etc.) to be used during naptime or during times they need comfort. These items are permitted and will be used during transition in the morning and during naptime. Please discuss with your child's teacher if your child will be bringing a security item. At times, classrooms may have a sharing time and will request items to be brought from home. Teachers will advise parents as to what kind of objects can be brought into school for that purpose.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In order to ensure the safety of all our children and staff, The Preschool of the Arts will be closed if Rowan-Salisbury School System **and** either Cabarrus County School System or Kannapolis City Schools are closed on the first day of an inclement weather event.

In the following days, the director will make a decision on closure or delay opening based on staff availability. If only one system is closed, consult WSOC Channel 9 for information about the preschool closing. Additionally, inclement weather announcements will be sent using the **Remind 101** text system. Please consult your Preschool of the Arts calendar for other closings due to staff development, holidays and special breaks.

TRANSPORTATION/ DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

The following guidelines will help us transport our families safely and efficiently:

Safety

- All children must wear SEATBELTS or be in child restraint seats. Car seats must be in compliance with the current North Carolina Law on car seat safety. Children are safest in the back seat. Please buckle up yourself-in an accident your body can injure or kill others and it sets a life-saving example.
- Children are unpredictable. Please drive slowly and carefully. Hold your child's hand at all times when near the parking lot or driveway.
- At NO TIME should a child be left alone in the car, even for a moment. Children are not safe left unattended in a vehicle.

Parking

- The area in the front of the preschool can be utilized for drop off and pick up.
- Vehicles should not be left running in the parking lot while parents come into the school to drop off or pick up children.

Drop Off & Pick Up

- During drop-off, please escort your children inside their rooms and sign them in on the sign-in sheet daily. Please assist them in washing their hands before they join the class.
- For security reasons, the preschool will be locked at all times, with only currently enrolled families having access to the current electronic code to open the door.
- Please check your child's bathroom for soiled clothes and your child's folder for important art creations and notes.

- At pick-up time, please come into your child's classroom to sign them out. This is a great time to see what is going on in the classroom. The teacher may not have time to talk at length about your child's day due to supervising other children. However, feel free to linger in the classroom to view items created or documentation of projects.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

It is important to your child and to the Preschool of the Arts staff that you pick your child up promptly by closing time. Your predictable punctuality will ease anxiety and nurture trust and confidence in your child. Our staff and your child need your full cooperation and consideration. Late Pick-up fees are paid, in cash, directly to the staff member who stays with your child after operating hours.

However, in the event that you are late for your child's dismissal time, our Late Pick-up Policy is as follows:

- First occurrence: A written warning notice will be issued if the pick-up time is within 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, a \$15 late fee will be charged within the first hour.
- Subsequent occurrences: Lateness fines will be charged at a rate of \$5 for every 5 minutes late.
- 6-10 minutes late \$10
- 11-15 minutes late \$15, etc.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

On your child's birthday, you are welcome to come into the class to share your child's baby book or tell stories about the day they were born and then join us for lunch. We do not celebrate birthdays with sweet treats, but you are welcome to provide a healthy snack for the day in your child's honor. We appreciate your respect for this school tradition. We want to teach children to focus on celebrating their birth rather than just participating in a party. If you have any questions, please ask your child's teacher or the director.

HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To ensure the health of our students and families and prevent the spread of illness, The Preschool of the Arts will contact parents to pick up their child if he/she has any of the symptoms listed in the "When to Stay Home" section.

Before a child can return to school, the staff must determine that they are fully able to participate. This includes outdoor and large motor activities. In some cases a doctor's note may be required before a child may return. However, a doctor's note is not always

the determining factor in whether a child may return to school if they are unable to participate in routine activities or require one on one care.

The Preschool of the Arts understands that it is difficult to leave or miss work when a child is sick; therefore, we suggest that parents establish an alternative form of care for an ill child. When your child is absent due to being sick, please notify the school. This is a courtesy that everyone will appreciate. We will alert other parents if there is a communicable disease concern.

When to Stay Home:

(Children who have the following symptoms MUST stay at home until they are symptom free for twenty-four (24) hours)

- Fever-a temperature 100° or more, without fever reducing medication
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea or loose stools inconsistent with usual bowel movements
- Any suspicious rash
- Lice (until a child is nit free)
- Persistent colored nasal discharge (longer than five days)
- Any contagious illness, after being treated with prescription medication for a minimum of 24 hours
- Any symptom requiring one-on-one care or causing severe discomfort
- Any open, oozing sore, bacterial infection or bloody gums (including Hand, Foot and Mouth lesions)
- Chicken pox-lesions must be drying and the child must have no other symptoms. (Please note that the chicken pox vaccine is not completely effective and a vaccinated child can get this illness)
- Ringworm (unless covered by a bandage)

Prescription Medication -staff members may administer prescription medication under the following guidelines:

- Medication must be in its original container with the child's name, name of medication, amount and frequency of dosage, name of prescribing physician and date prescription was filled on the container.
- Parents must complete and sign a medication slip authorizing the administration of the medication for the length of time the medication is prescribed to be taken. Teachers will document the time, dosage and date medication is given. For chronic

conditions, the parent may give a standing authorization for up to six months. The authorization shall be in writing and shall contain the following: child's name, subject medical conditions or allergic reactions, names of the medications, criteria for administering the medication, amount and frequency of dosages, manner in which the medication shall be administered, signature of the parent, date the authorization was signed by parent, and length of time the authorization is valid (within six months).

Non-Prescription Medication-staff members may administer non-prescription medication under the following guidelines:

- Medication must be in its original container with written instructions including the child's name, name, name of medication, amount and frequency of dosages, criteria for administering the medication, signature of physician or other health professional, and date the instructions were signed by the physician.
- The permission to administer over-the-counter medications is valid for up to 30 days at a time for medications such as cough syrup, decongestants, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, topical antibiotics, or medications for intestinal disorders. Physician's written instructions are to include the length of time that administration of the medication should occur.

Topical, Non-Prescription Medication- staff members can administer these types of medication, such as ointments, diaper cream, sunscreen, teething medications, insect repellents, lotions, and powders with a written statement from a parent giving blanket permission. These permissions are good for up to one year. The authorization should include the child's name, name of ointment, expiration date for medication, criteria for administering, manner in which the medication shall be applied, signature of the parent, date the parent authorized, and the length of time the authorization is valid (up to 12 months).

INCLUSION POLICY

At The Preschool of the Arts, we believe that each child is unique, and can bring to our program valued qualities and skills. We also believe that most children can benefit from a social environment which includes people of many different backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives. Our environment and resources allow us to provide for the diverse needs of much of our community. In order to serve our community well, teachers and families may occasionally require professional consultation or special services from agencies outside PSA. We will support efforts to help our children be positively contributing members in the classroom. The Preschool of the Arts is not a therapeutic setting, but a place for children to develop the broad range of skills necessary for forming lasting and meaningful relationships with other people and their environment. We realize, however, that we are not always successful in meeting the needs of every child.

If a child enters our program, and at some point during the year it becomes evident that his needs are greater than what The Preschool of the Arts can reasonably provide, we will take the following steps:

- The child will be observed in the classroom setting by teachers, the director, and with permission from the parents, professionals from outside agencies;
- After observation, the director, parents, teachers, and/or other professionals will meet to discuss and develop a strategy determined to best meet the needs of the child;
- If a child's needs are found to put an exceptional stress on the classroom, a temporary third teacher, often a director, may join the classroom to provide additional support;
- Once a developed strategy has been put in place, times to meet for periodic review are scheduled. Open and frequent communication among all involved parties is imperative during this time to make a child's experience successful. Assessment will be based on input from parents, classroom teachers, the directors, and special service professionals, as well as the behavior of the child while at school. After sufficient time a determination is made about the child's continued presence in the classroom.

There are three possible determinations at this time:

- The classroom is a suitable placement for the child;
- A recommendation for professional consultation or special services is made, with the expectation that temporary intervention will enable staff and children to develop skills necessary for the mutually beneficial relationship;
- The Preschool of the Arts is unable to meet the child's specific needs.

When the staff sees the necessity for professional consultation, but the parents decline to use offered services, the parents may be asked to seek placement for their child in another program.

In rare instances, and after professional consultation, the school may determine that it is unable to meet a child's needs. The director will notify the parents of the decision and offer assistance in finding a more suitable placement for their child.

At PSA, the safety and well being of the entire class must always have priority over the individual needs of any given child. We hope to accommodate as diverse a population as possible, in the belief that diversity strengthens and enriches all members of a community.

SEVERE OR CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

As an inclusive setting, The Preschool of the Arts makes every effort to accommodate children with allergies to food or other substances (e.g., cleaning supplies and other chemicals, pollen) or children with chronic medical conditions who may require

medications or treatments during the school day. In a case of a severe/life threatening or other medical condition, PSA reserves the right to assess the child and our reasonable ability to keep them safe while respecting the rights of other children and families. If we feel the child's needs would be better served in an alternative setting, the preschool staff will make every effort to assist the family in making other arrangements for care if necessary.

SAFETY DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

Fire Drills

The law requires the school perform a monthly fire safety drill. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. The fire alarm is used to indicate this drill.

The lead teacher will quickly gather the children. Using a calm, and reassuring voice, he/she will explain what they are to do and remind them not to run. The teacher will count the children, determining everyone's location. The lead teacher is responsible to bring the class emergency contact information and the sign in/out sheets outside during the safety drill. Additional staff in classrooms or throughout the building will help locate children and lead them out of the building in an orderly and hurried manner.

Shelter In Place or Lockdown Drills

The law requires the school to perform one of these drills every 3 months in according to the Emergency Preparedness Plan. In the event of an unsafe situation on campus, these drills are used to provide a safe protected place for children, staff and visitors to gather. Staff gather quickly and quietly and proceed to their designated places in the building. Staff are responsible for bringing class emergency contact information, sign in/out sheets and any emergency medication. The fire alarm is sounded once for these drills and cell phone text messages would be used in the case of a real incident. KPD has a 3.5 minute response time to our facility so drills are conducted for 3.5 minutes.

The fire alarm system is not used to warn of severe weather to differentiate between this procedure and the fire safety evacuation. In the event of severe weather, all children and adults will move to the gymnasium, closing all doors to rooms and avoiding the windows. The children will sit on the floor facing the walls. Before allowing the children to leave the gym, an adult will check the conditions of the classrooms and playground.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

At The Preschool of the Arts, we feel that it is important to acquaint each family with our school and philosophy prior to enrolling a child. There is no screening process prior to admissions. We encourage families to visit the school and bring their child to become

acquainted with the environment prior to enrolling to ensure a smooth transition. All children will receive a registration packet that includes the following items: Handbook Acknowledgement Form, Application, Shaken Baby and Abusive Head Trauma Policy, Guidance & Behavior Management Policy. You will also receive a copy of the Summary of North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules that are required by the Division of Child Development. In order for your child to attend, all documents included in the registration packet must be completed, signed and turned in to the director before the child's first day of attendance. Infant/Toddler parents will also receive an Infant Feeding Schedule and our Safe Sleep Policy which are also required to attend on the first day. In addition, a children's Medical Report and a current copy of immunizations are required within 30 days from the first date of attendance to be in compliance with the state law. Children who are not immunized according to the state guidelines are given limited time to become current on immunizations. Immunizations are recommended by healthcare professionals to keep serious illness and disease to a minimum in group settings, therefore children must be immunized according to the state guidelines.

There will be an annual supply and registration fee prior to enrolling and during re-enrollment period each year. Registration and supply fees are non-refundable.

Registration occurs year round and requests are prioritized as follows:

1. Currently enrolled children;
2. Siblings of currently enrolled children;
3. Teachers' children;
4. Alumni Families;
5. Open community.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important to take care of all the financial responsibilities in a timely manner. Registration and supply fees are payable when you apply for a child's enrollment at The Preschool of the Arts. Fees are NOT refundable after the child is accepted and an enrollment slot is reserved. If a space is not available for your child, he/she will be placed on a waiting list and fees will be due upon acceptance of the space. Failure to remit fees within 5 days of notification will result in forfeiting your child's space.

Tuition Payments are due on the Friday before the week starts. All payments are considered late after Monday at 1pm of each week and are subject to a late fee. A \$10 late fee will be added to a child's tuition each time tuition is late regardless of the date on the check. An additional late fee will be assessed if payment is not received after the first notification. Payment must be received immediately in order to avoid any further penalty and to avoid losing the enrollment spot. Families may be required to set up a payment plan with the directors for the past-due balance only. Subsequent payments must be made on time to keep the spot.

Failure to follow said plan or failure to respond to requests by the directors will result in the child's position being released to a waiting applicant. The balance will be turned over to a collection agency and all deposits will be forfeited. A \$30 fee will be assessed for any check returned for insufficient funds. This fee covers costs and time incurred by the school.

Tuition payments may be made early-just be sure to indicate on the memo portion of the check where the funds are to be applied. Other acceptable forms of payment include checks, money orders, credit cards or cash. Make checks payable to The Preschool of the Arts. If you pay in cash, please be sure to get a receipt from the office. There are no refunds on early paid tuition unless the preschool is unable to make a placement for the child or provide services at that time.

Please turn in payments in the main entrance classroom in the locked payment box located by the walkway into the 2's classroom.

If payment is not received within the guidelines listed above, or a payment plan is not set up with the director within 10 business days from the date of notification, you will forfeit your child's placement in the class and will be held financially responsible for any past services.

Early Payment Discount

An additional discount is offered if all tuition is paid in advance. If tuition is paid for the entire year or for the first six months within two weeks of enrolling, an additional 5% discount will apply. There are no refunds on early paid tuition due to the discounting unless the preschool is unable to make a placement for the child.

Withdrawal Procedures

Your contract is for the entire school year; however at times there is a need to withdraw early. A two-week tuition deposit is required to hold your child's spot at registration. The deposit will be applied to your child's last two weeks in care. If the child is withdrawn without notice, tuition deposits will be forfeited. If you must withdraw your child for any reason, written notice of your intention to withdraw your child early is required and you will be responsible for the regular tuition payment for at least two weeks after your written notice is received. Two weeks notice is required and any withdrawal must be in writing.

ANTI-BIASED ENVIRONMENT

The Preschool of the Arts provides an environment welcoming to all people regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, special needs or abilities, economic level or family configuration. We take an active role in counteracting biases by providing opportunities to understand how and why we differ from one another, as well as how and why we are alike.

The PSA has a philosophy of respect for the uniqueness of each individual. We encourage children to value differences in themselves and others through the following methods:

- Modeling openness and respect for all people;
- Including classroom materials that depict peoples of diverse cultures, genders, ages, and abilities in a positive manner;
- Integrating diversity into our environment through the use of toys, music, art, books, cooking, stories, and activities in a developmentally appropriate way;
- Talking straightforwardly about biases and prejudices when they occur spontaneously in our environment;
- Asking families to keep specific secular holiday celebrations in the home where they can remain vital and meaningful;
- Creating shared traditions and celebrations from the common and valued experiences of the Preschool of the Arts community.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you have concerns or grievances, please first address the parties directly involved. If your concerns are not satisfactorily addressed, please notify the director in writing so that your concerns may be addressed appropriately with the parties involved.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Positive guidance teaches a child inner controls so that he/she may interact comfortably with others. Behavior management at The Preschool of the Arts takes the form of positive classroom management with NO corporal punishment.

Teachers at PSA will...

- Recognize that children are unique individuals who behave and learn differently. Teachers will be sensitive to each child's individual needs and developmental level. Many conflicts can be avoided by having realistic expectations.
- Respond quickly and directly to children's needs, desires, and messages, and adapt their responses to children's differing styles and abilities.
- Respect the children, their belongings, artwork, opinions, etc.
- Establish a warm atmosphere of cooperation and trust.
- Nurture healthy self-images by expressing respect, acceptance and comfort for a child, regardless of the child's behavior.

- Help children develop self-control by allowing them to experience the intrinsic pleasure in appropriate behavior as opposed to "behaving" solely to please adults.
- Encourage children to be independent and solve their own problems and arguments unless they need further guidance.
- Be constantly vigilant for potential difficulties and offer assistance through role modeling and brainstorming before a crisis erupts.
- Watch for signs of undue stress in children's behavior and apply appropriate stress-reducing activities and techniques.
- Model appropriate behavior so children will know what behavior is expected.
- If a child is behaving inappropriately, a teacher may model how to ask for something or interact in a positive manner. If a child persists in inappropriate behavior, he/she will be redirected to another area to pursue another activity.
- Provide varied opportunities for children to communicate. Allow children acceptable means of expressing anger, frustration, sadness, hurt or fear. Crying or clutching a pillow is an acceptable outlet.
- Calm children with a firm, loving hold to help prevent injury to persons or equipment.
- Use body language: hugs, pats, gentle restraint, or physical closeness often communicate better than words.
- When speaking to a child, use a calm, confident, matter-of-fact tone of voice. Get down on the child's level to speak to them. If teachers have an important message, they will walk over to the child to say it. They will not shout across the room unless the child is in immediate danger.
- State expectations in the positive form, such as "walk please" instead of "don't run."
- Speak to the behavior, not the child, such as "Hitting hurts. Let's find another way to solve this problem" instead of "You're a bad girl for hitting."
- Allow children to experience natural and logical consequences of their behavior. For example, the natural consequence of playing too roughly with friends is that they will not want to play with you. The logical consequence of spilled milk is that you need to clean it up. A natural consequence requires no outside involvement. A logical consequence needs an adult to follow through to help the child understand.
- When all else fails, a teacher may ask a child to sit away from the group in order to allow a child to calm down and to call his attention to inappropriate behavior. He/She should sit away from others for only a brief time period and the teacher will sit with the child to answer questions and discuss the situation quietly away from the group. The teacher will brainstorm with the child about other alternatives or (as a last resort) the teacher will explain the appropriate behavior briefly and simply. Teachers will take particular care to reinforce the child's positive behavior after the incident, as their self-esteem may need a boost.

Wise teachers realize that all children have moments when they just can't seem to get along. A few moments in a positive cool-off space (when it's not shaming or punishing) provides a cooling-off period, and children know they're welcome to return when they can get along and behave properly.

Teachers at PSA will not...

- Use corporal (physical) punishment;
- Place a child in a separate room, hallway, etc;
- Delegate discipline to another child;
- Humiliate, physically or verbally abuse, or neglect a child;
- Deprive a child of meals or force-feed a child;
- Discipline a child for toilet accidents or for refusing to use the toilet; force a child to remain in soiled clothing or on the toilet or use any other excessive practices for toileting;
- Discipline a child for not sleeping during rest period.

SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Teachers are trained in safe sleep strategies. Infants are not put on their stomach during rest time. Parents of infants will receive the safe sleep policy from their child's teacher. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the teachers or director for clarification.

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

At the Preschool of the Arts, we take pride in our school and want to provide the cleanest learning environment for your child. Teachers clean their rooms daily including vacuuming their floors, cleaning the bathroom, removing the trash and sanitizing eating areas. All toys are cleaned at least once a week and soiled toys are removed from the play area until sanitized. Our carpets and floors are steam cleaned every six months. Diapering areas are sanitized before and after each diaper change.

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

The Preschool of the Arts is committed to providing authentic, on-going assessments for the purposes of program-planning and to identify the strengths and challenges for each child. A focused portfolio will be created for each child in addition to other appropriate assessment tools utilized in the classroom. Assessment information is confidential and is only accessed by the teachers and administrators for planning purposes. There will be a formal scheduled family-teacher conference each year to share assessment

results. During these conferences, families and teachers will partner to provide the best plan for the children's education. In addition to these conferences, families and teachers are encouraged to communicate on a daily basis informally in person or by telephone, notes, journals, email etc. At anytime if families have questions or concerns, feel free to make an appointment with the teacher for a formal conference. Parents and other family members are welcome to visit and observe in the classroom, as well.

FAMILY-CENTERED PRACTICES

We have an open-door policy at The Preschool of the Arts. Your child will be pleased, and it is an opportunity to see your child with his or her peers in a neutral setting. Families are always welcome in our school and meaningful participation is encouraged. If you have an interesting activity to share with the class, please contact the teacher to schedule a time to visit. Teachers will help families know when and how to transition in and out of the classroom to prevent added stress for the children.

TOILETING AND POTTY TRAINING

Children will have numerous opportunities to use the bathroom throughout the day. We encourage children two years and up to begin potty training. We ask families to refrain from using diapers at school for children two years and up. Diapers do not allow the children to sit on the potty or participate in their own training. We do allow pull-ups, but strongly encourage training pants as soon as your child has shown signs of wanting to potty on their own. The training pants allow them to recognize sooner when they have had an accident. Families are responsible for providing their own pull-ups and training pants. If children are having multiple accidents in training pants, we will need to use pull-ups do to sanitation issues. Please send an adequate supply each week to meet your child's training needs. If you have questions or need suggestions for training at home, see the Director or your child's teacher for more information.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We are required by law (code section 7B-101) to report any suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services in the county in which the child resides. The teachers perform a health check during greeting time to assess children's health when they arrive at school. Any unexplained or suspicious markings will be investigated and may be subject to the preschool reporting suspected abuse or neglect. The teacher will notify the Director and the Director will call Social Services. The family will not be notified by the school if this occurs.

PARTICIPATION and THE PRESCHOOL OF THE ARTS COMMUNITY

The Preschool of the Arts is a nonprofit organization. A great percentage of your tuition money goes toward compensating our staff. We rely heavily on parent involvement and fundraising for all of the school's other needs. Volunteerism is a vital part of our success!

We all have different reasons for coming to The Preschool of the Arts and different future educational goals for our children. The one thing we all have in common is the desire for our children to enjoy themselves and have a positive preschool experience. By becoming involved with our school, your entire family benefits enormously. Children learn by imitating their parents. Volunteering expresses your enthusiasm for school and your involvement demonstrates community spirit. Helping out at PSA is also a great way to get to know other parents and meet the people who make it the outstanding place it is.

We understand that not all parents have the time or skills they feel are necessary to contribute. Be assured, there is something for every level of expertise, interest, and commitment. Sometimes we just need people with an opinion. If you still don't feel you have enough time to volunteer, maybe you have a family member or close friend who could help out in your stead. Preschool of the Arts volunteer activities are fun and stress-free! Please consider volunteering. You just might enjoy yourself!

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM

All parents spend time in the classroom at one time or another. The following guidelines, as well as the policy on Behavior Guidance, page 16-18, are designed to help you learn and adhere to PSA's philosophy while in the classroom:

- Get the child's attention before speaking to them. Children are often so absorbed in what they are doing that they do not hear us when we speak. Putting your hand on his shoulder and repeating his name helps.
- Give children only the help they need.
- A child may be given a choice between two things. You may say, "Will you wash yourself or shall I do it?" This means the child will be washed in any case. Never give a choice if there is not one.
- Foresee troublesome situations and prevent them.
- Know what children are capable of achieving at their age level.
- Encourage cooperation (thereby discouraging competition).
- Be consistent.
- Accept individual differences in children.
- Speak to behaviors, not the child.
- Allow the children to learn from experience.
- Use a pleasant, well-modulated voice, enunciating and articulating clearly.
- Try to interact at the children's level, e.g., sitting on the floor or in chairs.
- Defer difficult discipline issues to the teachers.

Remember to...

- Be friendly and interested, calm and unhurried.
- Wear comfortable, washable clothing.
- Stoop down often in helping children.
- Be willing for the child to “act his age.”
- Use few, well-chosen words.
- Avoid using the negative commands like “stop running” or “no talking”-instead say “please walk” and “silent lips, please.”
- Be consistent in routines.
- Remain out of the children’s play when possible unless they invite you to participate.

Remember the child...

- Is an individual who is eager, active, and curious.
- Needs as much freedom as the environment permits.
- Needs to know what behavior is inconsiderate and harmful to others.
- Needs to know what limitations exist in the use of equipment and materials.
- Needs to know that you are there to help and support him.

PARENT EDUCATION FORUMS AND EVENTS

Throughout the year, we offer parent information and information about other education forums in an effort to support parenting in our community. These forums, led by child development experts, help parents understand important aspects of child development, ask questions regarding parenting and child development, and develop relationships with other families. We also plan various events throughout the year at times that are convenient as possible for families. By participating in the events, families are able to stay in touch with all the happenings at the school and meet other families in your child’s class and in the school.

COMMUNICATION

The Preschool of the Arts welcomes open communication between home and school. The staff encourages communication by:

- Providing information daily about the child’s experiences
- Writing notes, text messages and making phone calls frequently
- Exchanging information through journals