

PREP School 2023 - 2024 Parent Handbook



The PREP School
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Providing Readiness & Enrichment Preparation Since 1976

PREP School PHILOSOPHY

The PREP School offers a child-centered program of early childhood education that emphasizes experience; that is, we try to provide as many opportunities as possible for our children to see, feel, hear, smell, taste, act, think, explore and discover. We believe that the activities provided should address the child's development in all areas-mental, physical, emotional, social and spiritual. In short, although we believe that it is important for our preschoolers to master the fundamentals of such academic subjects as reading and math, we feel that it is even more important that they be given the types of enriching and challenging experiences on which all learning is based. Specific components of this philosophy can be described as follows:

The PREP SCHOOL CURRICULUM IS BASED ON ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE. For example, it is recognized that a two-year old does not have a long attention span and cannot sit still for long periods of time. Activities are planned to be appropriate for each age level and for each individual child, regardless of age.

THE PREP SCHOOL ADDRESSES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE CHILD, not just academic or intellectual development, but development of motor skills, language, social interaction, emotional growth and creative expression.

THE PREP CURRICULUM, THROUGH A PROGRAM OF PLANNED, DIRECTED PLAY, STRESSES "HANDS ON" CONCRETE EXPERIENCES. In the words of two great educators, we believe that "Children learn best by "doing" and that "Play is the work of childhood".

THE PREP SCHOOL FOCUSES ON SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES, WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND TALENTS OF EACH CHILD.

THE PREP SCHOOL CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED TO REFLECT NOT ONLY THE CHILD'S NEEDS BUT ALSO HIS/HER INTERESTS, through activities which relate directly to the child and his world.

THE PREP SCHOOL VIEWS PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION; We believe that good communication between school/staff and the home is essential. An active Parents' Group provides vital support for PREP. The PREP Parents' Group sponsors parent programs and fund-raising activities, and provides volunteer opportunities. All PREP parents are automatically members of the Parents' Group, and are encouraged to become involved with the School through participating in PREP Parents' Group activities. PREP Parents' Group meetings are held throughout the school year, and are open to all PREP parents.

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time during our school hours of operation to observe your child. the school's program activities, the building, the premises, and the equipment without having to secure prior permission.

THE PREP SCHOOL CURRICULUM IS FOUNDED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING A POSITIVE SENSE OF SELF-WORTH AND SELF ESTEEM IN CHILDREN. To fully realize his/her natural gifts and talents, a child must have positive and secure feelings about school itself; must have confidence in her/his own abilities, and most of all, must not be afraid to try something new or something that might not work. We believe that children best learn these concepts in an environment of mutual respect and through responsibilities appropriate to their developmental level. Building self-esteem and feelings of accomplishment are the foundation on which the curriculum is based.

THE PREP SCHOOL CURRICULUM

A. CONTENT

In order to meet our chosen objectives, PREP offers a comprehensive preschool curriculum which, at its most advanced level, encompasses the following areas:

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT - to provide instruction and encouragement in the areas of vocabulary development, phonics and children's literature

MATHEMATICS - to introduce basic concepts in the areas of numerical recognition, geometry, sets, time, money and measurement

NATURE STUDY - to foster a better awareness of the plants, animals and natural resources of our wide, wonderful world and our relationship to them

COMPUTER - to introduce preschoolers to basic computer vocabulary and skills

ART - to provide an opportunity for creative achievement, using a variety of materials

MUSIC - to give the experience of individual expression using not only the voice, but also body rhythm and a wide assortment of musical instruments

SOCIAL STUDIES - to explore such subjects as Community Helpers, Family Life and Transportation

HEALTH - to encourage the development of self-help skills in the areas of toileting, grooming, safety and nutrition

MOTOR SKILLS - to develop fine motor, or small muscle skills, as well as gross motor.

SELF DISCIPLINE - to help build a strong sense of self and self-confidence in the child while, at the same time, help him/her learn to relate effectively with others

B. RESOURCES

In addition to the general types of resources found in most preschools, such as learning centers and educational toys and equipment, PREP offers a wide variety of special resources for you and your child:

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY - a multi-purpose library with a variety of equipment, including books, puzzles, games. and a computer lab. All books in the library are available for checkout by PREP families.

INFANT AND TODDLER PLAYROOM - an indoor activity room designed to meet the special needs of the active and inquisitive infant and toddler.

THE DISCOVERY ROOM - a nationally-recognized "hands on" nature museum, featuring over two dozen permanent displays, science experiments and a "Sharing Place" for fascinating nature finds.

TWO SEPARATE PLAYGROUNDS - one designated specifically for infants and toddlers; the other focusing on the needs of the older preschool child.

Although these and other resources are a valuable addition to our curriculum, the most important is OUR STAFF. The teachers at PREP are characterized not only by their gift for relating to children and their genuine love of children, but also by an attitude of professionalism and pride that ensures your child will receive the best possible program of early childhood education. Staff members at PREP participate in continuous training in the areas of child development, first aid and safety and curriculum planning.

C. EVALUATION

Individual parent conferences are scheduled during Parent Conference Week for Rooms G - K; however, parents and/or teachers may request conferences at any time throughout the year. Children in Rooms D-K will receive a yearly checklist of skills which have been introduced in their rooms. This checklist will be a part of the child's end-of-the-year folder, which will contain a varied selection of the child's work during the year, as well as pictures and other mementos of their experience here at PREP. Kindergarten children will also be given one group-administered assessment test during the school year, which assists teachers in identifying areas of strength and/or skills which may need improvement.

Our primary emphasis, however, in evaluating your child's progress is in the day-to-day contact that you have with your child's teacher. We will also keep you informed of school activities through the school newsletter and notes sent home. In addition, each teacher writes daily notes that are posted on the wall beside each classroom door. Please feel free to ask questions. Our teachers are always willing to discuss your child's progress, as well as any other concerns that you might have.

D. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities for spiritual growth are provided through daily emphasis on Christian values and God's love. PREP offers Chapel on Wednesday mornings for children in Kindergarten and Room H. Chapel will begin at noon in the sanctuary and will consist of Bible stories, songs and worship. All the children say a blessing before mealtimes, sing songs and are taught to treat others with respect, to share their possessions and to love their neighbor.

HOURS OF OPERATION

PREP School is open from 9:00 – 2:30 Monday – Thursday and from 9:00 – Noon on Fridays. During the summer month of July, Discover Days is from 9:30 – 2:00 on Tuesday and Wednesday.

THE PREP SCHOOL CLASSROOM

A. ADMITTANCE TO/DISMISSAL FROM CLASSROOMS

Morning Drop Off:

September 5th - 8th, 2023: *Parents will bring their children directly to their respective classrooms during the first week of school. Please let your child's teacher admit and dismiss your child at the door, rather than entering the classroom, in order that the class not be interrupted.*

Beginning September 11, 2023: *All parents need to pull through the porte cochere in the morning to drop off their children. A staff member will take your child to their classroom. The doors will be locked at 9:05. If you are later than 9:05 please call the office at 903-758-0320 and a staff member will come and let your child in and take them to their classroom.*

Afternoon Pick Up:

All children will be picked up at their respective classrooms in the afternoon.

PLEASE NOTE: *The downstairs doors are always locked. Only use the main entrance to the school.*

It is imperative that your child NEVER be left unattended.

Children will only be released to a parent or other designated person (18 years of age or older) authorized by the parent to pick up the child. Photo identification, such as a driver's license, will be required of all persons sent to pick up students. Please notify the school of any changes in normal pick-up procedures.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures: Procure App.

You are responsible for signing your child in to the school in the morning using the Procure App. There will be a "Procure Barcode" you can scan outside when you are dropping off your child in the morning. There will also be a tablet at your child's classroom door for you to sign your child in and out. Your child's classroom will also have a "Procure Barcode" posted outside their door.

In the afternoon you are also responsible for signing your child out using the "Procure Barcode" located on the outside of your child's classroom door or the tablet using your four digit pin. In the event you forget to sign your child in or out a PREP school staff member will sign your child in or out using the Procure App.

Drop off or Pick Up during the school day due to appointments, woke up late, etc...

Call the PREP office @ 903-758-0320 when you are on your way to school. We will meet you outside to help your little one get to their classroom or to your car depending on the situation.

B. PUPIL/TEACHER RATIO

Children at PREP are assigned to a classroom according to their age level, with each room designed to meet the specific needs of that level of development. Your child will have two classroom teachers, in addition to our staff of resource teachers. Children in the pre-K and kindergarten classes will have one certified teacher and one teacher's aide. The

pupil-teacher ratio of each classroom will vary according to the age level of the children. In the infant rooms, for example, the P-T ratio is approximately 3:1 (for a total of 6 children), while at the two-year old level, the ratio is 5:1. In every instance, the P-T ratio at PREP is lower than that required by the minimum standards of our state licensing agency.

C. THE LEARNING CENTER

A learning center is a place where related materials are grouped together in a manner that allows children to direct their own learning. Learning centers give children an opportunity to become more responsible for their learning in an active "hands on" environment. Centers may be as simple as puzzles grouped together in a manipulative corner or as elaborate as a log cabin furnished with costumes and cooking utensils.

Although children in a learning center may appear to be just "having fun", play is, in fact, essential for young children to learn. Through play, children explore their world, try out new ideas and experiences, learn to cooperate with others, build language and problem-solving skills and so on.

PREP School classrooms contain a variety of learning centers. The four year old classroom, for example, contains such centers as: dramatic play, home life, blocks and building, puzzles, and manipulatives, arts and crafts, library, cooking, music, light table, office and writing. Through the use of these centers, learning at PREP emphasizes the fact that play is not only fun, it's FUNdamental!

D. A TYPICAL DAY

In order that you might better understand the PREP program, here's a sample schedule of what a typical day might be like in the three-year-old classroom:

9:00 ARRIVAL

9:00 - 9:30 LEARNING CENTERS/CIRCLE TIME - This time is a favorite one because children choose their own activities in centers such as block-building. They may also gather together for "circle time", which emphasizes sharing activities and language skills.

9:30 - 10:00 LESSON TIME - This time is used for a variety of activities which emphasize learning in one or more of the following areas: readiness skills in the areas of language, math and so on; general concepts such as up/down, over/under and near/far; and monthly units which include topics such as Community Helpers, Nutrition and Weather. These lessons might take the form of an art project, a visitor to the classroom, a storytelling session or a host of other options!

10:00 - 10:30 SNACK TIME - PREP provides a nutritious snack for all children each morning. Snacks usually consist of water and a healthy "munchie", such as fruit or cheese or crackers.

10:30 - 11:00 - OUTSIDE PLAY

11:00 - 11:45 - RESOURCE CLASSES - Children have two resource classes each day. These classes are taught in separate classrooms, by teachers who specialize in that particular subject. Six resource classes are offered: Art, Music, Nature, Motor Skills, Computer and Storytelling.

11:45 - 12:00 CLEAN UP TIME AND GET READY TO GO HOME

12:00 - 2:30 EXTENDED DAY CLASSES - The afternoon "extended day" is divided into three main areas: lunchtime (be sure to read the section on lunches); quiet time (all children are encouraged to rest for a brief time; none are forced to nap); and activity time. Since the children have been so busy during the morning, the afternoon activity time is a more unstructured time which may include such activities as outdoor play, games in the Children's

Library, arts and crafts and so on.

NOTE: Although specific times and lengths of sessions may vary, the topics outlined above are ones covered by each PREP classroom, beginning at the eighteen month-old level (Room C).

E. INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

It is extremely important that children have physical activity and outdoor play and at PREP school we provide opportunities for your children to participate in both.

If your child attends PREP school at least three hours a day they will be able to go outside and have unstructured play at least twenty minutes each day. If your child is at PREP the full five and a half hours then they will be able to go outside for unstructured play at least forty-five minutes each day split between the morning and afternoon hours (unless your child is napping). If the weather does not allow us to go outside the older children will use the gymnasium to play and the younger children will use the indoor infant/toddler playroom.

Children are also encouraged to participate in physical activities inside the classroom through a variety of fun activities the teacher's include in their lesson plans. For example, while studying animals the children will imitate animals. Crawling on their hands and knees, toddlers move, stretch, and play like animals. They can hop like a frog or waddle like a penguin. They can arch their backs, roll on their backs, reach as high as they can, and walk on all fours.

Why Is Physical Play for Toddlers and Preschoolers Important?

Children have high levels of energy that need to be expended, and the benefits of physical activity are critical to a child's physical and mental growth. Children who are physically active tend to do better in school, have longer attention spans, and have fewer behavioral problems. Being physically active also helps children to:

- Develop strong bones
- Develop gross and fine motor skills
- Build strength, endurance, and flexibility
- Build confidence
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- Decrease stress levels
- Improve social skills
- Improve balance and coordination
- Improve posture
- Improve concentration
- Improve sleep

Lack of or not enough physical activity can lead to several health issues for young children. A lack of exercise can lead to weight gain or excessive body fat, high blood pressure, bone health problems, and cardiovascular diseases. Active children tend to have fewer chronic health issues, are less likely to get sick, and have a greatly reduced risk of developing diseases or illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, and depression.

Being physically active now will benefit children throughout their lives, so integrating exercise into a young child's everyday routine is crucial. If you're wondering how to promote physical activity in childcare or need ideas for physical activities for preschoolers in the classroom, read on for some ideas!

F. PROCEDURE FOR PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Parents will be notified by the school through a variety of ways. Communication may be transmitted by text messages sent through the Procure App, email, Facebook posts, verbal communication, and/or letters sent home with students.

MOST communication will take place through messaging via the Procure App.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

A. IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

The PREP School is required to have the following information for each school year. **NO CHILD WILL BE ADMITTED TO THE CLASSROOM WITHOUT THE FOLLOWING:**

1. **Health Statement:** A written statement from a healthcare professional who has examined the child **within the last year**, indicating the child is physically able to take part in school activities.
2. **Immunization Records:** A copy of the child's immunization record indicating all immunizations required by the Texas Dept. of Health is up to date. The record should include the child's name, birth date, number of doses and vaccine types as well as the month, date, and year the child received each vaccine. The local health authority may require a TB screening.
3. **Vision & Hearing Tests:** All four and five year old children are required to have a vision and hearing screening performed by a licensed or certified screener or health care professional. The screening results will need to be provided in your child's file.

Please note that varicella (chicken pox) is now required of all children on or after their 1st birthday. If your child has already had the chickenpox, you must complete the verification on your health form. Questions about immunizations should be directed to the school office or your child's pediatrician.

Teachers are not required to have vaccinations for preventable diseases.

B. ILLNESS AND INJURY PROCEDURES

No child will be admitted to the classroom if he/she has had vomiting, fever, or diarrhea WITHIN 24 HOURS.

Children will also be excluded from attendance for the following:

1. *The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities, including outdoor play.*
2. *The child has an oral temperature of 100 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.*
3. *The illness results in a greater need for care than our staff can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.*
4. *Severe sore throat.*
5. *Uncontrolled diarrhea*
6. *Two or more vomiting episodes within 24 hours*
7. *Abnormal breathing*
8. *Mouth sores with drooling*
9. *Suspicious rashes*
10. *Discharges from the eyes*
11. *Any communicable disease*

CHILDREN NEED TO BE SYMPTOM FREE FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. THE CHILD NEEDS TO HAVE GONE A MINIMUM OF 12 HOURS WITHOUT MEDICATION BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL. THESE POLICIES WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED TO ENSURE OTHER CHILDREN AND STAFF DO NOT BECOME ILL.

In an effort to maintain your child's health and to keep diseases from spreading, please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease and the PREP School will also notify the parents if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease. The children are taught to wash their hands throughout the day with an antibacterial soap. Teachers use a diluted bleach spray daily to disinfect tabletops.

If your child should become ill while at school, he/she will be isolated and you will be called. For this reason, always leave a phone number where you can be reached during the day (if different from the one listed on your enrollment form or in the Procure App.)

C. PRESCRIPTIONS/ DISPENSING OF MEDICATIONS

*If **medication** is to be given to your child, you must complete a medication release form, available in the school office. No medication of any kind, prescription or non-prescription, will be administered without your express, written consent. We ask parents to abide by the following procedures:*

Authorization to administer medication to a child must be obtained from the child's parent by the following:

- *A completed form in writing, signed and dated - Parents must sign an authorization form and include the time for the staff to administer each medication according to the label directions. Medication forms are available in the School Office.*
- *an electronic format that is capable of being viewed and saved (fax or email), or*
- *by telephone to administer a single dose of a medication.*
- *If you have someone else bringing your child to school, please send a signed note, giving the staff permission to give the medication and include the time the amount to be given. Authorization to administer medication expires at the end of each semester.*
- *Medication must be given as stated on the label directions or as amended in writing by the child's health-care professional. Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to the operation. Medication must be administered only to the child for whom it is intended and not be administered after its expiration date. Directions and time(s) for administration must be clearly written on medication form. Over-the-counter medication may only be administered in amounts according to the label directions or as amended by a physician.*

PREP personnel will administer medication. All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be brought to the PREP Office by the parent. Parents are to give the 1st medication of the day in the morning and/if needed after school at home. The only exceptions will be approved by the PREP Director.

Prescription and over-the-counter medications may not be stored in the classrooms, including children's cubbies, backpacks, etc. Exceptions to this rule are diaper creams, insect repellent and sunscreen; these will be stored in the child's classroom. Staff may not administer diaper creams, insect repellent and sunscreen unless the parent completes a written authorization form with specific instructions for administration.

Please check to make sure the medication has not expired. Our staff cannot give expired medication.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY TYPE OF MEDICINE (INCLUDING TOPICAL CREAMS) IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG OR BACKPACK.

D. ALLERGIES

All children with a known allergy must indicate such allergy on the PREP enrollment form. All allergies will require an action plan (only exception may be seasonal allergies). The Allergy Action plan for severe allergies which require an epi-pen must be signed by the prescribing doctor and the parent. The Allergy Action plan and medication must be on file with PREP before admittance to school.

IF YOUR CHILD BRINGS AN EPI-PEN TO SCHOOL, WE WILL NEED YOU TO PROVIDE THE ALLERGY PLAN FROM YOUR DOCTOR. I HAVE AN ALLERGY ACTION PLAN FORM IN MY OFFICE, SHOULD YOU NEED ONE.

E. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If critical illness or injury requires immediate attention of a physician, we will:

- **Contact emergency medical services or take the child to the nearest emergency room.**
- **Give the child first-aid treatment and CPR when needed.**
- **Contact the child's parent.**
- **Ensure supervision of other children in the group.**

F. SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

If Longview area schools (Pine Tree, Longview ISD, Spring Hill) close their schools because of bad weather (for example, snow or ice) PREP will monitor the situation and notify families if we are going to close. Information concerning school closing will be broadcast on KLTN channel 7 and we will also notify parents by posting it on our Facebook page, which is Prep Longview. We will also send out a message on Procare. There will be no make-up days for school closings.

G. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The children participate in fire drills once a month and severe weather, shelter and lock down drills quarterly. In the event of a disaster requiring immediate evacuation of the school, all children will be taken to the Mobberly Baptist Church (The Crossing Building), 625 E. 281 in Longview. Their phone number is (903) 663-3100. We will transport the children, using the church vans and staff vehicles. We will transport the children as safely as possible in the limited time we are given. Your child's safety will be our number one priority. Children with special needs will be given the necessary assistance they require. Our staff will stay calm and will remain with the children until they have all been picked up. The teachers will take roll after arriving at the new location to ensure all children are accounted for. Should we need to evacuate to a closer destination, we will go to the Trinity Episcopal Church, 906 Padon St, Longview, TX 75601, which is the white church next to First Christian Church. Their phone number is (903) 753-3366. We will notify parents as soon as possible in the event of an emergency.

H. CLEANLINESS

Our infant toys and cribs are sterilized with a non-toxic germicide each day. Restrooms are cleaned and disinfected at least once each day. Classrooms are cleaned and vacuumed each afternoon. Every effort is made to provide your child with a bright, clean environment for learning.

I. STATE LICENSING

The PREP School is licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services as a "Kindergarten and Nursery School". In compliance with state regulations, the following information is always available to interested parents: 1) Minimum Standards governing the operation of day care centers, kindergartens and nursery schools: 2) Yearly compliance evaluations and inspections and 3) Yearly fire, sanitation and gas inspections. Please notify the director if you would like to review any of this information.

J. SNACKS AND LUNCHES - PLEASE AVOID ALL PEANUT PRODUCTS

PREP provides a nutritious snack for all children each morning. Snacks usually consist of water and a healthy "munchie", such as fruit or cheese or crackers. Due to children's allergic reactions, **please do not send any food items with PEANUTS at any time.** If you choose to provide snacks from home, please understand that PREP is not responsible for the nutritional value of the meal/snack or for meeting the child's daily food needs.

As concerned and caring parents, you can assist us in our program of increased nutritional awareness by providing your child with a well-balanced sugar free lunch. Lunches should contain foods in each of following food groups:

1. Milk or milk products - 1/4 cups milk or 2 oz. cheese
2. Breads or cereals - 2 slices of bread or 1 cup cereal
3. Vegetables or Fruits - 3/4 cup, to include at least 1/4 cup Vitamin C fruit or vegetable each day and 1/4 cup Vitamin A fruit or vegetable 3 times each week.
4. Protein products - 3 T. meat, fish or poultry OR 1 egg OR 1/2 cup cooked dried beans/peas OR 1 1/2 oz. cheese

Infants will be fed baby food or whatever else you choose to send. Nutritional guidelines for lunches should also be met for infants and toddlers. Formulas and other liquids should be sent in PLASTIC bottles. Please do not send warming trays or other types of electrical heating elements, as this type of equipment can create a fire hazard.

We realize that it is difficult to come up with a new and exciting lunch each day, especially for preschool children who constantly seem to be at that "picky eating" stage; however, we do believe that a well-balanced plan of nutrition is vital in providing our youngsters with the essential requirements for both physical fitness and mental alertness. As in every other phase of PREP, your child's well-being is our primary concern.

On that same note, please be sure that your child eats breakfast **BEFORE** coming to school each morning. Not only is a good breakfast important for growing bodies, it is also disruptive to the other children when one or two bring breakfast to the classroom-especially if it's from Chick-fil-A!

GENERAL POLICIES

A. LABELING

Please label EVERYTHING! - coats, lunches, pacifiers, bags, bottles, blankets, etc. Labeling helps us match the item with the correct child and also ensure that your child's belongings will be returned to him/her.

B. CLOTHING

*Dress your child for comfort. Our emphasis on pupil involvement in the learning process means that our children will be painting, gardening, cooking and the like throughout the day. This is not the time to wear that beautiful white Easter dress! Please send your child to school in washable play clothes. **Tennis shoes** are appropriate for the playground where children run and climb.*

If your child is enrolled in Rooms A - G (3 years and younger), please bring an extra complete change of clothing, including underwear and socks, even if your child is already toilet trained (accidents do happen!). We will keep these items for you at school or you may send them in your bag.

Infants should bring disposable diapers and a box of disposable wipes. Each infant will have her own storage area for these items.

C. REST TIME

Rest mats are provided for each child in Rooms C-K; however, your child will need to bring some type of cover for the mat. A king-sized pillowcase is a perfect fit. Mat covers will be kept at PREP and will be sent home to be laundered as needed.

A note about naps and older children: Many three and four-year-old children do not take naps. All children at PREP are required to rest for thirty minutes or so after lunch; however, children who are not sleeping at the end of this time are not forced to stay on their mats. Alternative activities are provided for children who do not nap.

As with nutritional guidelines, you can also help your child have a great day by ensuring that he/she gets plenty of sleep. Nothing makes a preschooler crankier than not getting enough rest. Preschoolers should be in bed no later than 9:00 p.m. (most earlier) on a school night.

D. OPERATIONAL POLICY ON INFANT SAFE SLEEP

The information below provides the required information per minimum standards §746.501(9) and §747.501(6) for the safe sleep policy.

Parents can review information on safe sleep and reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SIDS/SUIDS) at:

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/A-Parents-Guide-to-Safe-Sleep.aspx>

Safe Sleep Policy

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at PREP School at First Christian Church will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome/Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

- *Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep*

Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2427 and §747.2327].

- *Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full-size cribs and for non-full size cribs [§746.2409 and §747.2309].*
- *For infants who are younger than 12 months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib include: soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts, or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys/ animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)]. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing [§746.2429 and §747.2329].*
- *Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)].*
- *Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult [§746.3407(10) and §747.3203(10)].*
- *If an infant needs extra warmth, use sleep clothing or wearable blankets (insert type of sleep clothing that will be used, such as sleepers or footed pajamas) as an alternative to blankets [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)].*
- *Place only one infant in a crib to sleep [§746.2405 and §747.2305].*
- *Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal [§746.2415(b) and §747.2315(b)] or the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk [§746.2401(6) and §747.2315(b)].*
- *If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health-care professional [§746.2426 and §747.2326].*
- *Our child care program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas child care operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers) [§746.3703(d) and §747.3503(d)].*
- *Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound [§746.2403 and §747.2303].*
- *If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position [§746.2427 and §747.2327].*
- *Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally [§746.2427 and §747.2327].*
- *Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide Form 3019, Infant Sleep Exception/Health Care Professional Recommendation, signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2428 and §747.2328].*

E. BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special time for everyone; and we encourage you to come and bring cookies, cakes, favors or whatever you feel would make the day more special for your child. We ask only that you notify your child's teacher when you will be coming, in order that she might have the class prepared for your treat, instead of it in the middle of a finger-painting session.

Remember, no peanuts!

F. FIELD TRIPS

Our kindergarten students will enjoy a field trip during the year. We ask that parents volunteer to transport children the day of the field trip. The parents will be notified within 48 hours of the trip of the location and time of the trip. The teacher and the aide will also transport the children on the trip. The children will be required to wear a PREP school t- shirt.

G. HOLIDAYS

We follow the Longview ISD schedule for MOST holidays, September through May, although there may be a few exceptions from time to time. All holidays and special events are listed:

1. In your school calendar, included in your admission packet
2. In your monthly newsletter, THE PREP School Press, which you will receive the first week of each month and
3. On the board outside the classroom door.

H. SCHOOL PARTIES

School parties are also listed on the PREP calendar. Here are some other party guidelines:

1. Parties are planned by the individual Room Mothers and volunteers for each classroom.
2. Parents may sign up to help with parties at Open House OR during the two weeks prior to the event
3. For Rooms C - K one party is scheduled for each holiday, for example, one Halloween party. The parties are scheduled so that they are sometimes on Tuesday, sometimes, Wednesday and so on. All children enrolled in the class are welcome to attend.
4. Party times will vary by class. Classroom teachers and room moms' will inform you of the times.

I. TUITION AND OTHER FEES

Tuition fees are assessed on a monthly basis and are due at the first of each month, unless other payment arrangements have been made through the school office. **Monthly tuition fees are payable regardless of absences caused by illness, school holidays, vacations and the like.**

Tuition will be due on the 5th of each month. A late fee will be charged on the 6th. If tuition payments are not received or posted on the 5th of each month, a fee of 10% of your tuition will be charged on the 6th.

A yearly, **non-refundable** registration fee will be collected from each child. This fee will be the equivalent of one month's tuition. If registering your child in the Spring for the following year 1/2 of the registration fee will be due at the time of registration, with the remaining 1/2 due on or before June 1. If registering after June 1 or during the school year, the entire fee will be due at the time of registration. A NOTE ABOUT ADDING DAYS/EXTENDED: Registration fees will also apply to any days added, including extended days, during the school year.

Arrangements should be made with the office if you plan to bring your child before 9:00 a.m. or pick up your child after 2:30 p.m. **Early arrival/late pickup fees are assessed at a rate of \$5.00 per ten minutes early or late.**

Reminder notices will be sent out on the 6th of each month for any fees due.

J. CARPOOL DROP OFF

After the first week of school all children will be dropped off under the porte cochere (Rooms A-D and siblings) or the little playground parking lot (Rooms G-K) with a PREP teacher. Children will be physically escorted to their classrooms. Carpool hours are from 8:45 - 9:05. The doors will be

locked at that time, if you are running late you can call the office and a staff member will come and let your child in and escort them to their classroom.

K. PETS

Parents will be notified in writing if animals will be on the premises. We will ensure the animals create no unsafe or unsanitary conditions. Children will wash their hands after handling any animals. We will keep the playground free of unfamiliar animals. The kindergarten class has a pet guinea pig that the kindergarten students help take care of.

L. ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES:

Enrollment for the following school year will be completed in January and/or February of the current school year. Children currently enrolled in PREP school will be notified first and given an opportunity to enroll before the general public. Enrollment at PREP school is on a first come first serve basis. Enrollment forms will be made available to parents during this time.

The general public will be able to enroll after the children currently enrolled deadline has passed. Parents will be notified of policy changes via the Procure App, email, Facebook posts, verbal communication, and/or letters sent home with students.

DISCIPLINE

There will be times when a child is having a difficult day at school. Hopefully by talking to the child, the teacher can learn why he/she is unhappy or having problems getting along with friends. The teachers will first listen to the child and try to make the situation better. If a child is making a bad decision, the teacher will redirect the child, getting them involved in an activity that they can enjoy.

The children are taught to respect their teacher and friends. The teacher is a role model by showing love and kindness to each student. The children are encouraged to arbitrate their own disagreements by talking out their problems, under the guidance of the teacher. This same technique is used in solving differences between the child and the teacher, so that there is an example for them to follow. If a teacher continues to have a problem with a child's behavior, she may ask the parent for suggestions.

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to ask that a child be removed from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

WHEN A CHILD IS HAVING A PROBLEM IN THE CLASSROOM

Staff will try to redirect children from negative behavior.

Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriate activities, supervision.

Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.

Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.

Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.

Children will be given verbal warnings.

Children will be given time to regain control.

Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.

Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.

Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.

The director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.

SCHEDULE OF EXPULSION

If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion.

An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the school.

The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion policy.

The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to the school.

PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION

Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payment.

Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.

Verbal abuse to staff.

Parent threaten physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.

CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION

Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.

Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.

Ongoing physical abuse to staff or other children. This can include hitting, biting, pushing, etc..

The Director may always retain the right to dis-enroll a child when that is in the best interest of the child or other children at the center.

Staff and parents will follow the following discipline/guidance procedures while at PREP School.

1. Discipline and guidance of children must be consistent and based on individual needs and development and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

2. Positive methods which encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction must be used. Staff will use praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior. Teachers will remind a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements. They will redirect the child's behavior using positive statements and using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development. which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

3. There must be no harsh, cruel, unusual treatment.

4. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment is prohibited.

5. Children will not be humiliated, yelled at, or rejected.

6. Children will not be subjected to abusive or profane language.

7. Punishment will not be associated with food, naps or toilet training.

8. No pinching, shaking, hitting or biting a child is allowed.

9. Nothing can be placed in or on a child's mouth.

10. A child cannot be locked in a dark room, bathroom or closet with the door closed.

11. You may not require a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

12. Staff is encouraged to use brief, supervised time away from the group, if necessary. Children will never be left unattended.

PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT TRAINING POLICY

Each staff member at PREP School is required to receive a minimum of one hour of annual training concerning physical and sexual child abuse awareness, issues regarding different types of abuse and neglect, and warning signs that a child may be a victim of physical or sexual abuse or neglect.

Information is available to help increase parent awareness of child abuse prevention techniques, as well as community organizations that have training programs available to staff and parents. For further information on how to prevent, identify warning signs, and report physical or sexual abuses or neglect, parents are encouraged to go online to:

Report Abuse By Phone:

1-800-252-5400

Online: Texas Abuse

HotlineExternal Link

Call our Abuse Hotline toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nationwide, or report with our secure website and get a response within 24 hours.

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact_us/report_abuse.asp

www.itsuptoyou.org

www.childabuse.com

Parents are always welcome to speak privately with staff members about concerns or questions they might have about guidance and discipline with children. Staff members are willing and able to provide a variety of positive guidance examples and techniques that parents can use.

*If any staff member suspects child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, that same staff member is **required by Texas law** to report their suspicions to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Failure of any staff member to report suspected abuse to TDPRS or law enforcement is a crime.*

*If a parent or staff member wishes to obtain assistance, intervention or to report possible abuses or neglect they can call **1-800-252-5400**. The calls/reports can remain anonymous.*

GANG- FREE ZONE

House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This statute requires that information about gang-free zones be available to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers. PREP School is a Gang-Free Zone.

GUN LAWS

No weapons, including firearms, hunting knives, bows and arrows and any other weapons are PROHIBITED on the premises of PREP School.

NOTIFICATION TO THE PARENTS

PREP School is licensed by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. We will ensure that we meet the Minimum Standards set by the child care licensing division. A copy of our license and latest inspection report will be displayed by the school office. Copies of the latest fire, health and gas inspections are available for the parents to view. Please ask the director to see these inspections. The weekly snack menu will be posted as well and each classroom will post a copy of the activity schedule and evacuation plan.

Parents are welcome to visit PREP School at any time during our hours of operation to observe your child, the center's operation and program activities, unless the center has a change in policy due to a Public Health Emergency. In that case parents will be notified. If parents want to volunteer on a regular basis you will need to speak to the director regarding the requirements, such as references, a background check, including an FBI fingerprint check and possible TB test, which could be required for volunteers. We encourage parents to help with school parties and special activities.

You may contact the local licensing office at (903) 233-5232 or (903) 753-0083 or go by 1750 North Eastman Road Longview, TX 75601 between 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. You may go on-line to the Texas Health and Human Services website at www.txchildcaresearch.org.

The policies and procedures of PREP School are set by the state licensing standards and the PREP School Board. If you have any questions regarding the policies and procedures of PREP School, you may discuss with the director.

Like us on Facebook - Prep Longview

Website: prepschoolfcc.com