



2025 – 2026

FAMILY HANDBOOK

1000 Penn Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102

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WELCOME

We are glad that you have chosen our program and we look forward to being a part of your child's early education. Our goal is to be a ministry to our community through providing excellent early childhood education to infants through 5-year-olds. The Early Education Center seeks to provide:

- A place where children experience the joy of learning
- A strong daily routine that develops key social skills and emotional control
- An environment that values differences
- Children with choices in self-directed activities
- A safe and loving school where children know that they are beloved children of God.

We believe that a child's family is the first teacher, and we seek to partner with you so that together we can create a climate where children are an active part of their early childhood education as they learn through play as well as guided lessons.

MISSION

The EEC seeks to partner with parents to offer a quality early learning experience by providing individualized instruction in a safe and healthy learning environment where children can learn, grow, and be successful.

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

Daily Operation Hours

The EEC is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday for children ages 6 weeks – 5 years old. For children 18 months and older, part-time care is available on a limited basis, and students are enrolled in full-time classes. Part-time students attend school 5 hours per day on different days of the week. A list of the EEC's scheduled closing dates are available on a school calendar that is distributed each August.

Child Care Regulation

TDFPS is the licensing agency that oversees childcare centers and childcare homes. A copy of the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers is in the Directors office at our center. Our most recent licensing reports are located on the bulletin board in the Day School Office. You may contact them at:

- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
1501 Circle Dr., Suite 310
Fort Worth, TX 76119
817.32.-8604
FAX 512.276.3513
www.dfps.state.tx.us
Child Abuse Hotline 1.800.252.5400

Inclement Weather

First Presbyterian Church and the EEC will rely on FWISD's decision about closure and delayed start to make decisions in the event of inclement weather.

If FWISD is CLOSED, then First Pres and the Early Education Center will be CLOSED.

If FWISD calls for a delayed opening, then

- All First Pres and EEC staff will report at 10 a.m.
- The EEC will open at 10:30 a.m.
- First Pres church office will open at 10:30 a.m.

Do not drop your child off prior to 10:30 a.m. as many of our staff members have children in area districts. Our 10:30 a.m. start allows us to have adequate staff in place prior to accepting children into care.

The director of the EEC will send a message via the ProCare Connect app notifying families of the decision to close or delay opening. The director of communications will post an announcement on Facebook (church and EEC) and on the church website www.fpcf.org.

If inclement weather begins after the staff and children are on campus, then the Senior Pastor, EEC administration and appropriate staff members will make a decision and communicate to staff and families by the most appropriate method.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

First Presbyterian Church has plans for emergency evacuations in accordance with local and state requirements and the church is equipped with an electronically monitored fire alarm and evacuation system with written policies for emergency situations. The EEC has four emergency procedures: Lockdown, Lockout, Evacuation, Shelter in Place. Emergency procedure signs and exit paths are posted in each classroom. All classes routinely practice monthly fire drills, bi-monthly severe weather drills and quarterly lockdown drills. Documentation of emergency plans and drills may be viewed in the Director's office.

Building Evacuation Plan

In the event we need to evacuate our building, we will walk able children across the street, and transport infants in evacuation cribs to shelter at Trinity Terrace Retirement Community. We will begin notifying parents immediately via direct message through the ProCare Childcare App and then phone call. Children can be picked up at 1600 Texas Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102.

Gang Free Zone

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. These specific locations include childcare centers. The gang-free zone is within 1000 feet of the childcare center.

Forbidden Items on Premises

Due to regulations that apply to licensed child-care centers, firearms, hunting knives, and other weapons are prohibited on the premises of the child-care center (See Minimum Standards for Childcare Centers, TX DPFS Licensing Division, section 746.3707).

Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity

Outside play is an important part of each child's growth and development. Each class has a scheduled time to enjoy playing outside. On the occasion that weather, air quality (including high allergen levels), or other incident prevents safe outdoor play, the Director or Assistant Director will instruct staff to utilize the gym. A Child Care Weather Watch chart is utilized to help assess weather conditions.

Winter – As temperatures approach 35 degrees F wind chill, our administration will assess the weather conditions. If temperatures fall below 35 degrees Fahrenheit wind chill, staff will keep children indoors and utilize the First Pres gym. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for winter play with warm jackets, coats, layers, mittens, hats, etc.

Summer – As temperatures and heat index approach 100 degrees Fahrenheit, our administrative team will assess the weather conditions. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for summer play with short sleeves, shorts, etc.

Absences

If your child will be absent for the day, please contact the office at 817.335.1231, ext. 254 and inform us prior to 9 a.m. Please also write a message to your child's teacher informing them of the absence via the Procare Childcare App.

Arrival Times

Arriving on time allows your child to fully participate in morning routines, build strong relationships, and engage in early learning activities with their class. We kindly ask that all children arrive **by 9:30 a.m.** We understand that occasional delays happen. If you know your child will be late due to an appointment or unexpected circumstance, please reach out to us in advance via the Procare App or call the EEC Director or Assistant Director.

- All children arrive by 9:30 a.m.
- Children arriving for care for the first time during a day will not be admitted into care after 12:00 p.m. Midday arrivals can be disruptive to the classroom's rhythm, particularly during lunch, rest time, and other transitions.

Late Pick Up

Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. If an unforeseen circumstance prevents you from picking up on time, you should notify the school immediately via the Procure app or phone call (817) 335-1231 or arrange for one of your authorized persons to pick up your child. If your child has not been picked up by 5:30 p.m., and you have not notified the EEC, the following actions will be taken:

- 5:30 – 5:35 p.m. – If notification has not been received, we will attempt to contact parents via the Procure App and phone call.
- 5:35 – 5:45 p.m. – If notification has not been received, a \$5 per minute fee will be added to your account and we will begin calling emergency contacts on file.
- 5:45 – 6:30 p.m. - If notification has not been received, a \$10 per minute fee will be added to your account and we will begin calling emergency contacts on file.
- 6:30 p.m. – If we are unable to reach you or any of your authorized persons, we will contact Fort Worth City police and Texas Child Protective Services (CPS).
- If authorities are contacted, they will be given the emergency contact information listed on your child's admission form.

Arrival and Departure Safety

For your child's safety please walk with your child while in the parking areas, entrance, and hallways of the EEC. No child should be left alone at any time, without parent supervision at arrival or departure, inside or outside of the church building. Parents are responsible for the safety of their children while on church property prior to drop-off and after pick-up.

Visitors

Visitors are required to show identification and sign in and out on the visitor log kept in the Director's office.

Volunteers

All volunteers, including parent/guardian volunteers, are subject to a criminal background check prior to volunteering at the EEC.

Release of Children

For security reasons, First Presbyterian Church has locked entrances that are monitored by video camera. Push the button located next to the door and the receptionist will open the door for you. Please do not hold the door open or allow an unknown person to follow you into the building. Children should be signed in and out using the Procure Childcare App. Children will be released only to persons authorized and approved by the parent on the EEC Admission Form. Each authorized person may be required to show photo identification, such as a driver's license at any time. We suggest that you list at least two other authorized pick-ups on the form if you are unable to pick up your child.

When a parent or guardian is unable to pick up the child due to unforeseen circumstances, verbal authorization for release of a child may be taken over the phone or in person with the EEC Director or Assistant Director. Written authorization using the Procure Childcare App Messaging system will also be acceptable before the unauthorized person arrives. When an unauthorized person comes to pick up a child, the Director, Assistant Director, or designated person in charge must verify that the person is authorized to pick up the child and must check the person's identity against a driver's license and the authorized parent release record in the child's file. They will make a copy of the driver's license and note the date and time of release on the copy as well as the child's name for filing purposes. A picture of the driver's license may also be uploaded into the Procure Childcare App.

Custodial Information

Persons identified as parents on a child's admission form will be allowed to pick up the child whose name is on the form. If a court order has issued an order limiting or restricting access of a parent to a child, a court stamped copy of such an order must be submitted to the EEC Director. The EEC shall not be used as a visitation site, nor will we be responsible for determining compliance with parent visitation schedules.

Employee Restrictions

The Early Education Center does not encourage staff members to provide independent, after hours, babysitting services for our families. If an EEC employee enters into an independent agreement with a family, EEC employees, their conduct, or any incidents while your child is in their care, off the EEC premises and outside of EEC planned events, First Pres and the EEC is not responsible or liable for any incident that may occur during that time. The babysitting arrangement should not interfere with the EEC employee's EEC schedule, duties, or responsibilities. The EEC employee may not, under any circumstances, transport your child to or from the premises of the EEC.

Ratios and Group Sizes

The EEC believes it is vital to the well-being of our students to provide continuity of care. Appropriate ratios and group sizes are kept in accordance with state childcare licensing requirements. The appropriate ratio varies with the age of children in each classroom. State ratios are posted in each classroom. Once children are in attendance, promotions from one classroom to the next will be made using three-fold criteria: age, developmental readiness, and room availability. The decision will be based on input from the team consisting of the child's parents, teachers, and administrative staff.

LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

Curriculum

The EEC utilizes the Frog Street Press and Handwriting Without Tears curricula. Frog Street Press is both research-based, and play based, allowing us to take the latest information on how children's brains develop and using it to inform our teaching practices. Rather than separating lessons into subject areas, Frog Street addresses each aspect of child development: Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Language and Literacy, and Physical (both fine motor and gross motor skills). Children are given multiple opportunities throughout the day to manipulate materials, explore textures, experiment with cause and effect, enjoy literature - both through teacher directed story times and student-initiated exploration - write with a variety of materials, experience free play, and engage in large group, small group, and one on one teacher led learning.

Assessment Plan

The EEC utilizes a multi-dimensional approach to assessment. We believe it is important to address the whole child during the assessment process. To this end, we utilize both the formalized Brigance Assessment Tool, the Frog Street Press Assessment Checklist, and the collection of anecdotal notes, observations, pictures, and samples of the child's work to assist us in getting a complete picture of a child's development, interests, and learning needs. Assessments help parents understand their child's developmental needs and goals. Using a multi-dimensional approach enables parents and teachers to discuss what assessment tools work best with each child, what methods best meet the child's needs, and ways to provide the best learning environment possible to allow the child to thrive. The EEC strives to be sensitive to each family's values, culture, identity, and home language. Should an interpreter be needed during Parent Teacher conferences, or other times of communication, one will be provided. All assessment findings and records are kept confidential.

The Brigance Inventory

The Brigance Inventory of Early Development is a comprehensive screening tool that addresses the full child. Using this assessment product, teachers are provided with an understanding of a child's development across seven fields: Physical Development, Language Development, Literacy, Mathematics and Science, Daily Living, Social and Emotional Development, and Approaches to Learning. The results of the Brigance Inventory help the teacher identify each child's

specific needs, create child specific lesson plans, monitor developmental progress, and share the developmental progress with parents. The Inventory also provides teachers with a well-respected and nondiscriminatory evaluation that may be used to refer students for further diagnostic evaluation or testing as needed. The Brigance Inventory is available in the Director's office for parents to view at any time.

Further Diagnostic Assessment

Each child's development is unique. While years of study have provided us with knowledge of when skills typically emerge, it is normal for children to excel in certain areas, while also lagging in others. However, when a child shows significant delays in any developmental area (speech, gross motor, fine motor, social, behavioral, and cognitive) it is imperative that this delay is addressed swiftly for the good of the child. Should a screening with the Brigance Assessment Tool reveal a developmental delay, the child will be given the complete Brigance Inventory or Early Childhood Development. This assessment is more rigorous and can help teachers, parents, and administrators gain a better understanding of the child's developmental needs. Once the Inventory results have been calculated, the child's Lead Teacher, parents, and EEC Director will meet to discuss the findings. EEC staff will share with parents the recommended next steps for diagnostic assessment and provide families with information regarding community resources. EEC staff will follow up with families monthly to ensure that both the parents and the child are receiving the help and support needed. While it is solely at the discretion of the parent what avenues to pursue, the EEC will continue to provide the best possible learning environment for the child and provide the parents with updates regarding the child's progress.

ADMISSION POLICIES AND REQUIRED FORMS

The Early Education Center is open to all children. A waiting list is maintained, and admission is provided relative to the child's position on the list and classroom availability. Church members and siblings of current students are given priority enrollment.

Non-Discrimination Admission Policy

The Early Education Center admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, and other school-administered programs.

Confidentiality and Liability

We strive to maintain confidentiality when it comes to the children in our program. All information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. We limit the sharing of information to those teachers, staff, and professionals that are part of the team working with your child. First Presbyterian Church is not responsible or liable for any arrangements made outside of the center between a Staff member and family.

Health Records

Current health records are kept on file for each child in attendance. These health records include an up-to-date immunization record, any known allergies and the treatment plan for an allergic reaction, any known health concerns and their treatment plan, permission to administer medication signed by the child's health provider, emergency contact information, permission to obtain emergency medical attention, the name of the child's primary health provider, and pertinent insurance information. Allergy information along with the child's picture and treatment plan is posted in the child's classroom. All other information is kept in the child's confidential file in the Director's office.

Inclusiveness

First Presbyterian Church works to realize the dignity and worth of each individual and to eliminate human barriers based on all assumptions which prejudice. Parents must inform the staff of any special needs and/or disability present in their children. The EEC requires documentation of special needs or disabilities to allow for reasonable accommodations to provide care, if we can do so without making adjustments to our state mandated teacher/child ratios. These ratios are

designed for the protection of all children in our care, and adjusting these ratios does not fall within the state guidelines for making reasonable accommodations. The EEC will make reasonable accommodations to integrate children with special needs into our program, with our primary focus.

Children with Special Care Needs – Reasonable Accommodations

Parents may be asked to sign release forms to allow sharing of information between center staff and other professionals and family agencies. Parents are expected to work cooperatively with the center staff and other professionals and to follow through on recommendations and action plans submitted by the center. We will partner with families and relative health professionals to determine if we can meet the needs of the child through a collaborative approach. Conferences will be scheduled to discuss a child's special needs, the results of referrals and evaluations, and the individual plans for the child and the family. We will assist a child with the use of adaptive equipment or devices that you provide, as long as doing so does not require special or skilled training and as long as proper use of the equipment is demonstrated. We will not be responsible for the purchase or maintenance of adaptive equipment recommended for a child. Regular monitoring and conferences will continue to evaluate the success of individualized plans or re-evaluation, as needed.

If a child is receiving any third-party intervention or therapy services from a qualified service provider, we will make reasonable accommodations for the child to receive these services while in care at the EEC. Parental request and approval by the EEC Director is required.

Required Admission Information

Parents must complete the following parts of the admission process annually:

- Early Education Center Online Admission Form
- EEC ACH Form for Tuition - Authorization Agreement for Automatic Withdrawals
- State required health forms completed prior to admittance:
 - A copy of your child's current immunizations or signed affidavit stating the reasons immunizations have not been given.
 - Physician signed Health Care Professional's Statement
 - A copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan for each child with a physician diagnosed allergy.
 - Medication Authorization Form, for children who require daily medications.
- Discipline and Guidance Policy signed and dated
- Consent and Release/Minor Form signed and dated
- Family Handbook Agreement signed and dated
- Copy of most recent court order affecting the custody, possession, or access to a child
- Registration and Supply Fees Paid (24 hours before first day)

It is a parent's responsibility to notify the center staff in writing of any change of home address, work/cell and/or home telephone number, email address, and/or emergency release information. The written notice should be given within seven (7) days of the change.

Immunizations and Signed Health Statement

The EEC strongly encourages all students to be up to date on their immunizations. A copy of your child's current immunizations or a signed affidavit stating the reasons immunizations have not been given must be on file before your child may be admitted into care. Texas state laws require that children enrolled in childcare have received the following immunizations and boosters: DtaP, IPV, Hib, Hep A, Hep B, PCV 7, MMR and Varicella.

A signed health care professional's statement, or documentation of the child's last annual check-up is required before a child may be admitted into our program. The signed professional's health statement informs the school of the date the child was last seen and that he/she can participate in childcare activities.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

The state of Texas requires vision/hearing screening for all four-year-olds. This testing should be completed at a well-check visit and copies provided to the EEC Assistant Director for your child's folder.

Registration

A one-time, non-refundable fee of \$150 per child, is due when your child's admission is confirmed by the EEC Director to reserve a spot in the program. Families will complete and submit the registration form and pay the registration fee online.

Supply Fee

An annual \$200 per child, non-refundable supply fee is drafted for all students who are one year old by September 1 of the upcoming school year.

Tuition

Tuition payments are made weekly by ACH Automatic Withdrawal only. A fee of \$25 will be charged for payments returned due to insufficient funds and children may not be able to return to the center until their bill has been paid or a payment schedule has been agreed upon with the director. We reserve the right to refuse care for families who have an outstanding balance at the end of the week. We reserve the right to change or modify fees and/or policies with two weeks' notice. Tuition remains the same regardless of school closures. If you have questions pertaining to tuition, please contact the EEC Director.

Sibling Discount

Siblings of currently enrolled children receive priority on our waiting list. A discount of 10% off the oldest child's weekly tuition is given to families with more than one child attending the center. This discount may not be combined with any other discount.

Vacation Week

Once your child is enrolled in full-time care for 6 months, you may request one week of vacation (no tuition due) per calendar year by notifying the EEC Director or Assistant Director. Two weeks' written notice is required for all vacation requests.

Summer Leave

Full-time families who would like to take an extended leave from care during the summer may pay a \$500 fee to hold their child's spot for the following school year.

Notification of Withdrawal

If you must withdraw your child from the EEC, for any reason, you are required to provide a written two-week notice to the EEC Director. If proper notification is not given, you will be responsible for the payment of a fee equal to two weeks of tuition.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Conscious Discipline

Our goal is to help each child develop the internal control needed to manage him/herself. We use the method of Conscious Discipline as the classroom management system in all our classrooms. Therefore, we use the following positive guidance techniques:

- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Setting clear and reasonable limits that protect the child's safety and welfare, the rights of others and the environment
- Designing and maintaining the children's environment so that it is a safe, comfortable, and interesting place
- Acknowledging appropriate behavior
- Learning stress relief breathing techniques
- Quiet Area/Safe Place

- Encouraging verbalization and problem solving by providing positive suggestions, choices and/or redirection
- Dealing with the inappropriate behavior of a child by:
 - acknowledging the child's feelings, helping him/her to express feelings verbally, discussing the rules and appropriate alternatives
 - helping the child to understand the effects of her/his behavior
 - removing the child from her/his activity if necessary to regain self-control
 - waiting for the child to show he/she is ready to re-enter the activity and helping child to re-enter successfully

We do not use, nor do we allow anyone to use physical punishment, humiliation, threats, intimidation, or withholding of food as part of our guidance practice and policy as it is considered child abuse according to Texas Child Care Minimum Standards. We ask that all parents act in accordance with this policy while at school as well. If a child does not respond, we will notify the parents and work closely with them to develop a plan to help the child gain self-control and a positive attitude toward him/herself, peers, and teachers.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child.
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon the unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting 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.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Note: The Discipline and Guidance Policy meets Texas Minimum Standards

Suspension and Separation Policy

It is the goal of the EEC to help all students be successful and to avoid suspension and or expulsion. As we work towards this goal, at times we may find that our school is not the best fit for a child or their family. Our teachers provide written documentation throughout the year to communicate with parents on an on-going basis. Parents are notified in writing and if needed, a conference will be scheduled to discuss their child's behavior. In certain situations, parents may be encouraged to seek professional support and services.

At times, parents may be asked to pick up their child and keep him/her home the following day to work on behavior issues. If behavior is not corrected, as a last resort, families will be notified in writing of a one-week notice of their separation from the EEC, unless the child is an immediate health or safety risk to property or other persons. We reserve the right to separate a child or their family from our program if we cannot meet the social, emotional, and safety needs

of the child and/or due to aggressive and or unsafe behavior exhibited by the child. Other reasons for separation include but are not limited to: refusal to pay tuition and fees in a timely manner, disrespectful treatment of EEC staff or other EEC families by a parent or family member, failure to provide for the child's daily needs (diapers, wipes, formula, lunch, medical needs, changes of clothes, etc.). All personal belongings must be collected at the time of separation and families will be escorted from the building by a member of the EEC's administrative team.

Reporting Child Abuse

State law requires that all childcare workers and teachers are mandatory reporters in cases of suspected child abuse. Failure to do so can result in legal liability. EEC staff meet annual requirements for training on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse situations. A report is not an accusation, but a request for investigation and possible help for a family involved. We comply with all state and federal laws for reporting child abuse and/or neglect.

Controlled Substances

First Presbyterian Church is a controlled substance free facility.

- A child may not be released to a person who appears to be intoxicated or who is exhibiting questionable behavior when he/she arrives to pick up a child. Such behavior should immediately be reported to the Director so that appropriate measures can be taken. We will call the emergency contact person in the child's file and find alternate transportation.
- First Presbyterian Church is a smoke free facility.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Check

Daily health checks seek to identify potential concerns about a child's health including recent illness or injury in the child and the family. Health checks may serve to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases in child care settings by identifying children who should be excluded and enable the caregivers/teachers to plan for necessary care while the child is in care at the facility. When appropriate, our staff may conduct periodic health checks prior to the child's admittance to the building, the classroom, and/or throughout the day. The daily health check should be performed in a relaxed and comfortable manner that respects the family's culture as well as the child's body and feelings. The documentation should note that the daily health check was done and any deviation from the usual status of the child and family.

Illness and Exclusion Criteria

We are unable to care for children who are ill. Children cannot remain at school with a fever (a forehead infrared reading of 100.4 degrees or greater or an armpit reading of 99.4 degrees or greater), pink eye, impetigo, infectious mouth sores, strep throat, chicken pox, head lice, scabies, vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms/signs of possible contagious or severe illness. Other reasons for exclusion from care include an illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities such as outdoor play or if the illness results in a greater need for care than teachers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.

Please do not bring your child to school if he or she exhibits any of the following symptoms and/or conditions:

- Any reportable condition that a government agency or your child's physician has determined to be contagious.
- Any fever higher than the temperature allowed by Texas state licensing.
- Colored discharge from the nose.
- Conjunctivitis signs such as redness or discharge from one or both eyes.
- Deep, constant hacking or barking cough.
- Sore throat with swollen glands or tonsils, white spots in the throat, or throat that hurts when swallowing.
- Undiagnosed rash.
- Stomachache accompanied by vomiting, cramping, or diarrhea.
- Complaining of ear pain.

- Head lice and/or eggs.
- If your child vomits two or more times within a 24-hour period or has three or more instances of diarrhea/loose stools in a 24-hour period, they should be kept home until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

Children must be symptom/fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Fever free is defined as having a normal temperature reading without the use of fever reducing medications.

If any of these symptoms develop while at school, the child will be isolated from the other children and every effort will be made to contact parents or individuals designated by the parents. The child must be picked up within an hour. When it is necessary for a child to see a health-care professional, a medical document indicating the child is well enough to participate in school is required to return. If your child is ill and will not be able to attend school, please contact the office by 9 a.m. with your child's symptoms/diagnosis. Families will be notified when a child has been exposed to a communicable disease while at the center. Notices are sent through ProCare App and parent email.

Medications

Parents must give written authorization on the "Authorization to Administer Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication" form for any medication that needs to be administered to a child at our center. All medication (prescription or over the counter) must be in the original packaging or container and must be clearly labeled with dispensing/dosage instructions, your child's first and last name, and the medication expiration date. The medication will be placed in the designated medication cabinet or refrigerator container in the Director's office. Medication (including lip balm, sunscreen, and diaper ointment) of any kind may not be stored in a child's cubby, or schoolbag. Children may not self-administer any form of medication. Without complete labels and instructions, medication will not be accepted and/or administered. Prescription medication must have the pharmacy's label showing the child's name, the doctor's name, medication name, prescribed dosage, and the date the medicine was prescribed. If your child has an adverse or abnormal reaction to a medication administered, we will document his or her symptoms and call you immediately for pick up.

Meals, Snacks, and Nutrition

The EEC provides time for students to enjoy a morning snack (as needed), lunch, and afternoon snack. Meals and snacks must be at least two hours apart, but no more than three hours apart. Students who arrive for care early in the day may eat breakfast at school. Parents should communicate with parents that their child needs to eat breakfast and what food(s) they want their child to eat for breakfast. Parents provide their child's lunch from home each day and appropriately packed for maintaining food or drink temperatures. Classrooms with children 18 months and up will not have an accessible refrigerator. Per Texas licensing, teachers may not heat student lunches, so please plan accordingly. The EEC keeps snacks on hand to serve for the afternoon snack. These snacks may be found in the Assistant Director's office. A snack menu is posted on the bulletin board outside the Director's office and on the snack closet door. Should you choose to provide a replacement snack or meal for your child, you will be responsible for meeting his or her nutritional needs. Please let us know if your child has any dietary requirements or food allergies. During meal and snack times, teachers sit with students and engage them in conversation. This allows staff the opportunity to model good table manners and teach social skills. Staff may get up to assist children as needed but should have a schedule in place that allows them to spend most snacks and mealtimes interacting with their students.

Medical Emergencies and Incidents

Careful supervision is always given to the children. If a child receives an injury at school, an incident report is completed, noting the type of injury received, first aid procedures administered, and the name of the person who administered the aid. This report is signed by the parent, teacher and administrator and is placed in the child's personal file at school. If an accident is an emergency, requiring more attention than can be provided by center staff, the parents will be immediately contacted. When the parents are unavailable, alternate names on the child's health form will be contacted. If no one can be reached, the child's physician will be called to determine what actions should be taken. If the emergency requires immediate medical attention, EMS will be called to transport the child to Cooks Children's Hospital

in Fort Worth. First Presbyterian Church and the EEC, will not be financially responsible for the medical payments of emergency or urgent care services after an accident.

Animals

Families will be notified if any animals will be at the center. Our classrooms may have class pets, such as fish or hermit crabs. All other class pets will be approved by the EEC Director and notice will be given to parents. Veterinarian statements, and proof of vaccinations, when applicable, will be available. Children will always wash hands after touching an animal. Please be sure to get permission from the office before bringing animals to the center.

Clothing

Busy, creative, learning play can be messy play regardless of the age of your child. We use smocks or shirts to cover clothing during art projects, but we cannot guarantee that spills or stains can be avoided. Please dress your child in play clothing that is washable and durable so that he/she can enjoy our activities without fear of soiling an outfit. Outdoor activities are an integral part of the program and are scheduled daily. Please ensure that the clothing your child wears is appropriate for the weather, including jackets in the cooler months. Except for young infants, all children must wear shoes. For your child's safety we ask that children not wear flip-flops, Crocs or cowboy/girl boots at the center. Sturdy shoes, including tennis shoes, will protect your child and other children from injury. Please send a complete, extra set of clothing for your child, clearly labeled with first and last name. Please remember to send a new change of clothing each time soiled clothing comes home, or the seasons change.

Biting

Biting is common in early childhood environments and among young children. Biting may be used as a form of communication for a lack of language skills, a way to make a child's needs known, or as a simple expression of curiosity, amongst other reasons. We take every precaution to prevent and minimize biting occurrences in the classroom. We follow strict confidentiality guidelines, and do not release the names of children or families who may be working through this developmental stage. When a biting incidence occurs, an incident report will be completed for both the child who bit, and the child receiving the bite. This report is signed by the parent, teacher and administrator and is placed in the child's personal file at school. Teachers keep confidential record logs of students who have bitten other children. These logs help teachers identify patterns to the biting behavior. Students who display a pattern of biting are shadowed in the classroom by a teacher. While, again, we can't prevent every biting occurrence, having a close teacher presence helps teachers stop a bite before it happens. The EEC does not expel children for biting.

Toilet Training

We will collaborate with you when the time comes to start toilet training. Please speak with your child's teacher to establish a plan. Children should wear a pull up and have plenty of extra changes of clothing during this time. Please label all clothing with your child's first and last name. To encourage development of independent bathroom skills, children's clothing should be easy for them to manipulate with a minimum of assistance.

Rest Time

Children 12 months and older are required to rest on a nap mat each afternoon. Children may choose to either sleep or relax quietly. After an hour, those children who are awake may participate in quiet activities until rest time ends. Nap mats are provided, but you may bring a small blanket from home to be used during rest time. Items brought for rest time will be sent home weekly for cleaning.

Safe Sleep

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at our School will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Consumer Product Safety Commission for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SUID):

- Always put infants to sleep on their backs, unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception letter signed by the infant's health care professional.

- 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.
- For infants who are younger than twelve months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet. Items not allowed in a crib include soft or loose bedding such as blankets, quilts, or comforters; pillows, lovies, stuffed toys/animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning aids. Also, infants must not have their faces, heads, or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, sheets, linens, or clothing.
- Do not use sleep positioning devices such as wedges or infant positioners.
- Ensure that infant sleeping areas are well ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception letter signed by the infant's health care professional.
- If extra warmth is needed, infants may sleep in a sleep sack, sleeper, or footed pajamas.
- Infants' heads are to always remain uncovered.
- Place only one infant in a crib to sleep.
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep, but it must not be attached to a stuffed animal, or clothing by a string, cord, ribbon, or other device.
- When a child can roll over unassisted, a sign is placed on their crib indicating they are able to roll over. Infants who can roll over unassisted are still placed on their backs to sleep.
- Children who fall asleep in restrictive devices such as swings, bouncy seats, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat, are moved to their crib immediately, unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception letter signed by the infant's health care professional.
- Crib sides must be closed and locked in place any time an infant is in the crib for any reason.
- Infants must always be observed and monitored by sight and sound.
- Awake infants have supervised "tummy time" several times a day.

Infant Rooms

To help our infants stay healthy and safe, we require any individual walking into an Infant classroom to either remove their shoes or wear shoe covers. Shoe covers can be found next to the sign in sheets by the infant classroom doors.

Sun Safety and Insect Repellent

To protect our students from potential sunburn, each family is encouraged to provide sunscreen for their child. The EEC recommends parents who wish their child to use insect repellent apply the repellent at home before bringing their child to school. Sunscreen must arrive at school in its original container, be labeled with the child's first and last name, and be SPF 15 or higher. Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child before dropping him/her off for school. Teachers will re-apply the sunscreen prior to afternoon outdoor play. Parents are encouraged to dress their child in sun protective clothing and may supply a broad brim hat for their child to wear while outside. Hats must be labeled with the child's name and may not be shared with other children.

Insect Repellent can only be used when public health authorities recommend their application due to an elevated risk of insect-borne disease. Insect Repellent must be brought to school in its original container, be labeled with the child's first and last name, and contain DEET. Insect Repellent can only be applied once per day on children older than two months. Parents must provide written permission for insect repellent to be applied to their child.

Personal Belongings and Toys from Home

The center, teachers and administrative staff cannot be responsible for personal belongings, so it is requested that items including toys and games be brought to school only on designated "share days". Children become very territorial with their toys, and this often causes problems in the classroom. One soft toy may be brought for rest time. War toys, weapon toys, violent action figures are not permitted at any time. Please be aware of choking hazards. Lost and found is in the office.

Water Activities

During the summer, the EEC will offer special “Water Days” held on the EEC playground. Parents should indicate on their child’s admission form, consent to participate in water activities such as splashing pools, water table play, or sprinkler play.

Provision for Nursing Mothers

First Presbyterian Church EEC encourages mothers of infants to continue breastfeeding while their child is in care. We provide a comfortable, private nursing room for mothers to use during the day. The nursing room is on the third floor on the south side of the building in the Bridal Room. We also will accept breast milk to use in bottle feedings for your child.

COMMUNICATION AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Procure Childcare App

The Procure Childcare App is our parent engagement app that is used on classroom Kindle Fire’s every day. The Procure app is compatible with both iOS and android tablets and phones. This platform gives us the tools we need to easily share your child’s daily activities, including photos and videos, easy messaging, contactless sign-in, and customizable push notifications. Upon enrollment, parents will be sent an invitation email to download the App and connect to the school.

Please Note: We will NOT be setting up online billing through the Procure App. We will continue our billing and Accounting through the church's accounting office only.

Parent Participation

Parents are the first and most important teachers of their children and they are valued participants in our program. Our goal is to provide a partnership between parents and teachers so there will be a bridge between home and school for young children. We depend on your involvement as parents to make our program complete.

There are many ways that parents can become involved in our program:

- Assist with a field trip.
- Share a talent, information about your job, or a hobby, as it relates to a topic being discussed in the classroom.
- Assist with special events throughout the year.

Open Door Policy

The EEC welcomes parents to visit their child at any time during operating hours. Parents can feel free to enjoy lunch with their child, observe learning time in the classroom, participate in outdoor play, or visit music class. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in any way they feel comfortable – read a story to a class, help with a class project, plan a class party, volunteer to help plan, set-up, or work a special event.

It is our goal to partner with our families to give our students the best early learning experience possible. If you ever have a question or concern about your child’s development, learning needs, goals, or classroom environment, please know we are here to listen and respond. We provide multiple ways for you to communicate with your child’s caregivers and the EEC’s administrative team. We want you to always feel like your voice is heard! Teachers utilize the Procure Parent Engagement App, Parent/Teacher Communication Logs, weekly newsletters, emails, phone calls, and face to face conversations to connect with the families of their students. The EEC administrative team sends out weekly newsletters and can be reached via email or phone:

Director: Alyssa Martin, amartin@fpcf.org; (817) 335-1231, ext. 254

Assistant Director: Stephanie Olvera, solvera@fpcf.org; (817) 335-1231, ext. 256

Daily Communication

We have several ways of sharing information with our families.

- EEC weekly email newsletter/updates
- Office bulletin board
- TV screens located around the church building

- Telephone – we encourage parents to call with any questions or concerns to the office staff or their teachers
- Student folders located just outside the classrooms
- ProCare Parent Engagement App
- Weekly classroom newsletters

While we know receiving messages from your child's teacher throughout the day are comforting for parents, please understand it is our priority to provide attentive, quality care for each child in attendance. Please understand that because we do not pay for our staff's cell phones, it is against our policy to ask teachers to communicate with parents via cell phone. Teachers will communicate with parents regularly utilizing the ProCare Parent Engagement App, weekly newsletters, emails, and phone calls. If you have any concerns regarding your child while he or she is in care, please contact a member of the EEC Administration team.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are held twice a year. The first conference is in the fall semester and is an opportunity to discuss the coming year's goals and objectives. The second conference is in the spring allowing for discussions about the accomplishments made during the year. Even though conferences are twice a year it is common to have additional conferences throughout the year, which can be initiated by the parents, teacher, or administrative staff.

Parent Surveys

Parent surveys are conducted at selected times throughout the year. Please take a moment to complete the parent survey so we may better understand and serve your family and child's needs. Your opinion is imperative to our success.

Field Trips

We enjoy giving children the opportunity to learn about our community by providing exciting recreational and educational field trips. We notify parents in advance of all field trips and encourage parent participation! Transportation is provided by chartered bus service. Notice of the field trip will be posted and sent home with children.

Birthday Celebrations

We encourage parents to help us celebrate your child's birthday at the center. Parents who choose to bring a store-bought birthday snack will have it served during our afternoon snack time. **Only store-bought food is allowed under State Licensing.** Please check with your child's teacher about specific food allergies. We have found that mini cupcakes, cookies, or muffins work best, and we have less food go to waste. Invitations to parties outside of school will only be passed out if all the children in the class are invited.

Special Events

We have various special events throughout the year as the opportunities present themselves. These special events create a time and place for families to develop friendships with others and strengthen the bonds between teachers and families. These events will be noted on the School's annual and monthly calendars.

Parent Concerns

We have an open-door policy and encourage you to bring any concern to us so that we can discuss the issue and resolve the matter to your satisfaction. If a problem or difficult situation arises, parents are asked to talk to their child's teacher. Prompt action from parents and teachers is necessary to facilitate quick resolution. If a problem still exists after conferring, you may schedule an appointment with the Director. This meeting may include the Director, parents and other staff involved. At this meeting we will define the problem, generate possible solutions, develop a plan of action, and decide on a means of progress assessment. If resolution is not achieved after consultation with the Director, the matter can be brought to the Director of Children's Ministries and Outreach. If an agreeable solution is unlikely, and the parents or First Presbyterian Church choose to terminate enrollment, a two-week written notice is required, unless otherwise noted by the Director of the EEC.

EEC FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

I, _____ have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the First Presbyterian Church Early Education Center Family Handbook. I have received a printed or electronic copy of the Handbook for my personal reference.

Child's Name _____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date